

BlueDevil II

88th Regional Support Command

August 2002 Vol. VII, No. 2

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www.usarc.army.mil/88thsrc/

CG's Corner

Brig. Gen. Michael W. Beasley

I'm going to take a few moments to recognize the great work done by a hard-driven and too often maligned element of the Blue Devil's soldier and civilian community -- my own Headquarters staff of the 88th RSC. I allow myself this luxury because, as the staff will readily tell you, I am the one most responsible for generating the taskings requiring the hard-driven responses... and the guy who does most of the maligning!

Quite simply, we've got the best senior staff officers, NCOs and civilians of any organization in the U.S. Army. They prove their incalculable worth and total dedication every day of every week in providing outstanding management, administration, support and assistance to our 240 units and 22,000 Blue Devil soldiers. Additionally, they support our four direct reporting organizations (the 84th and 85th Training Divisions, the 416th Engineers, and the 244th Aviation Brigade), with another 9,000 soldiers in a myriad of ways.

To briefly recap some of the Staff's accomplishments over the past year may be informative to many of you out 'in the field.' The 88th RSC Staff --

- managed, coordinated and supported 88th RSC units and soldiers who won recognition for DoD, Department of the Army (DA, FORSCOM or U.S. Army Reserve Command-Level awards in the areas of Energy Conservation (DoD, Communities of Excellence (USARC), Maintenance (DA), Supply (DA), Public Affairs (DoD, DA and USARC), and Soldier/NCO of the Year (USARC and FORSCOM);

- created and focused a management team on identifying and fixing those units on the verge of making higher readiness standards in personnel strength, DMOSQ, training and logistics -- increasing our overall Command readiness;

- obtained a 99.9% Command funds obligation rate in 2001, and is well on the way to another superb year of coordinating and executing the budget;

- generated and published "state of the art" documents such as the *88th RSC Family Readiness Deployment Guide* and the *Headquarters Anti-Terrorism/ Force Protection Plan*, both of which have been used extensively

throughout the USARC;

- established a tracking system to evaluate more than 40 areas of command performance;

- ensured that every commander and SSA has a computer, and are on a reliable network system for communications, administration and management. Following the events of Sept. 11, the Staff put secure communications in every MSC and battalion headquarters;

- implemented our very complex and detailed 'Phase III RTD Plan,' which will provide retention and recruiting support to every facility in our Command by October, 2002;

- continues to manage the best Internal Control System, the best Equal Opportunity Program and the best Educational Support Program in the USARC;

- sets the pace for the entire Army in integrating BASOPS and facilities management support with other critical systems support functions (such as personnel, information management, health and welfare of soldiers, training, logistics, physical security and environmental affairs); and,

- directed the mobilization and assisted in the deployment of 25 RSC units in support of Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom, while continuing oversight and support for every other operational deployment (including units to Bosnia and Kosovo), exercise, and annual training for each unit and soldier in the Command.

So it has been a busy and eventful year indeed. One constant factor among all the changes, however, has been the consistently superb performance of the Staff of the 88th RSC. We all owe you, the Staff, and the officers, enlisted soldiers, and civilians who comprise it, a hearty "Thanks!"



"...we've got the best senior staff officers, NCOs and civilians of any organization in the U.S. Army. They prove their incalculable worth and total dedication every day of every week..."

- Blue Devils!



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On the cover

Spc. Jon P. Green, a mechanic with the 733rd Maint. Co., adjusts the door of a Humvee during command maintenance day at Fort Bragg, N.C. Green and the 733rd are deployed to Fort Bragg in support of Operation Enduring Freedom/ Noble Eagle.

Photo by Spc. Christopher Rowe, 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.



On the back

Spc. Angela L. Knapp, 428th MP Co., checks paperwork while working a traffic checkpoint while deployed to Fort Hood, Texas.

Photo by Spc. Christopher Rowe, 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.



From the editor

The *Blue Devil II* is for soldiers, DA civilians and family members. We invite readers' views.

Please stay fewer than 150 words and include your name, rank and address. Anonymous letters will generally not be used. We may condense your views because of space. We can't publish or answer every one, but we'll use representative views. Write to: Letters, *Blue Devil II*, 506 Roeder Circle, Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4009, or email: 88PAO@usarc-emh2.army.mil

No school money

I was more than troubled when I recently called the education office to inquire of the status of my application for tuition assistance and was calmly informed that they were out of funds.

Out of funds?! As I was expressing my incredibility to the poor victim on the other end of the phone, I was being told at the same time that the tuition assistance wasn't included in my enlistment contract, therefore, the Army didn't have to follow through and could slide through the convenient loophole of the fine print.

Nice words can't describe how disappointed I am by this. Of course I've weathered worse storms and will inevitably come out on top again, but what about the principle of the matter?

If the military is concerned about the soldier first, wouldn't the soldiers' further education be of the utmost importance and make them even stronger assets?

If this is how soldiers are paid back for their dedication and voluntary service to our country, then the Army should be ashamed. It greatly angers and disturbs me.

I was told that additional funds for Fiscal Year 2002 have been requested for tuition assistance. However, there is a catch. If the funds aren't received before my classes start, my application will be denied, no matter how early I had it in.

How does that help? I suddenly do feel like an Army of one, trying to figure out how I am going to pay a large amount of tuition in the fall when I sometimes wonder how I will make my rent.

What about other soldiers in the same situation? I can't help thinking of single parents and young students, other soldiers maybe depending on this assistance. I can't help feeling frustrated and bitter seeing new buildings and roads being built, and additional annual training days being offered, but the tuition assistance bucket is empty.

I'm wondering how any of this makes sense when the military is having problems with retention. I have a feeling that they will be losing some more good soldiers.

**Sgt. Nicole Nelson, 364th MPAD,
Fort Snelling, MN**

Editor's note -- We contacted Barb Stetler, an education services specialist for the 88th Regional Support Command for a response to this letter (see below).

Check out the next issue of the Blue Devil II for an indepth look at the educational benefits available to soldiers, from CLEP and DANES testing to tuition reimbursement and how to use your Montgomery GI Bill benefits.

School money coming??

I can certainly sympathize with your expected loss of tuition assistance dollars to help you cover your schooling expenses for the Fall 2002 term. Unfortunately, many soldiers have

heard the same message, "The 88th RSC is currently out of tuition assistance funds," when calling the Education Office this past Spring and Summer.

The leadership of the 88th Regional Support Command has been very concerned about the shortage of dollars appropriated by Congress for Fiscal Year 2002. Brig. Gen. Michael W. Beasley, 88th RSC commanding general, is actively involved with our senior leadership in attempting to secure additional dollars from the Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve to assist soldiers with their fall tuition.

You are correct, tuition assistance is directly related to retaining quality soldiers, enhancing their career progression, and increasing the combat readiness of the Army. The very reason for funding the program is to recruit and retain quality soldiers in the Army Reserve.

I am concerned about your perception that the "Army didn't have to follow through and could slide through the convenient loophole of the fine print." Based upon the comments we receive from soldiers, when they are informed that the fiscal year (FY) 2002 tuition assistance account is depleted, the perception is that by being in an Army Reserve unit, soldiers are guaranteed the tuition assistance dollars.

Tuition assistance is a benefit, not an entitlement, and I want to take this opportunity to explain the basics of the program.

Tuition Assistance (TA) is authorized for voluntary off-duty education under section 2007, Title 10, United States Code provisions and Department of Defense Directive 1322.8. As with any federal government program, the program is provided through funds appropriated by Congress. For FY 02 the 88th RSC received \$1.3 million for use by the soldiers we serve.



Command Sgt. Maj. John Werner

From the Top

There are some phrases I just don't like. "Business as usual," or "That's the way it's always been done," are excuses that have no place in the military. The fallacy of these statements can be easily seen by looking at the Army Reserve's role in our national interests. The Army Reserve of today is no longer the Army Reserve of yesterday. Our mission has changed in the past decade. It's no longer one weekend a month, two weeks a year, and collect a paycheck. Yet, for some soldiers and NCOs that complacent attitude is still prevalent.

I see this complacency far too much across the RSC. Some units are still not ready for mobilization several months after being alerted. Individual soldiers are unprepared for deployment or school. Misinformation and frustration abounds because leaders are not asking the

proper questions or seeing through tasks. Many times, units don't do anything to prepare for a mission until the last minute, and by then it's too late.

What to do? Easy. Be proactive. Don't wait for the deployment or annual training or that extra mission requested by battalion. Get your people ready NOW. If your unit is alerted for possible mobilization, focus on NBC, focus on force protection, focus on specialty skills, focus on records update, focus on your family. As a leader, you need to focus on your soldiers. Make sure they understand what it means to be alerted, what it means to be mobilized, or simply what it means to attend annual training. I've seen far too many young troops quit their jobs or school and turn their life upside down when their unit gets alerted, only to find out later that they are not being deployed with the unit.

Individual soldiers are responsible for their professional readiness, but leaders have the extra responsibility for the soldiers under them. If you are complacent in that responsibility, so will your soldiers. If that happens, you'll be standing in front of your commander on the day of mobilization explaining why your soldiers are not ready to move out. Don't let that happen. Earn your pay. Be proactive. Be a leader.

Take the point!

The current Army Reserve policy is the money is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis. Therefore, the earlier soldiers submit their request the greater the chance of having their requests approved.

All eligible personnel can apply for the tuition assistance dollars. Tuition assistance is not an enlistment or reenlistment incentive.

The application for the program is the DA Form 2171-E "Request for Tuition Assistance - Army Continuing Education System." The program is not restricted to a specific personnel classification (i.e. enlisted only), unit designation (i.e. Tier status), or occupational specialty (i.e. MOS/AOC); therefore, it is not considered an incentive.

The 88th tuition assistance procedures require that requests be in the education office a minimum of two weeks before the class starts. If the education office is not able to provide tuition assistance dollars or the soldier is not eligible for the program, the soldier is notified before the start date so, if necessary, the course can be dropped without a penalty fee.

The Tuition Assistance Program has been a greater recruiting and retention success story from my perspective. The number of soldiers using the program during FY 02 nearly doubled from FY 01. Unfortunately, as your letter points out, the dollars allocated to the program did not double.

At this time, I do not know what

the 88th RSC's share of the FY 03 tuition assistance budget will be. The FY 03 dollars will cover classes starting on 1 October 2002 or later.

I do know that it is important that soldiers interested in apply for the program during FY 03 visit the 88th RSC web site and get the FY 03 procedures and forms. The updated forms and procedures will be available after 1 Sep via the Internet or by calling the Education Office at 1-800 THE ARMY, ext. 3081.

Ms. Barb Stetler,
education services specialist,
88th Regional Support Command,
Fort Snelling, MN
1-800-THE ARMY, ext. 3432
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OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

Access control points and adjusting to active duty are typical for...
Reservists in the Hood

Steady drops of sweat fall off the patrol cap of the military police officer as he leans in the window of his HUMMVEE, listening intently to a radio dispatch. From here, high atop "Radar Hill," the Apache Helicopters fly by at eye level and hundreds of pieces of neatly arranged vehicles and artillery lay spread across the Fort Hood landscape.

The soldiers serving high atop Fort Hood in the sweltering heat belong to the 428th Military Po-

lice Company from Arlington Heights, Ill., part of the 88th Regional Support Command. The unit deployed to Fort Hood Texas in early October to provide additional security in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

Unit strength was low prior to the Sept. 11 attacks. Being deployed didn't seem likely, but on Oct. 2 the unit was alerted and on Oct. 3 they were mobilized. Before they knew what happened, around 80 Army Reserve MPs, five motor pool personnel, three cooks, three supply personnel, one nuclear biological and chemical specialist and one administration clerk were on their way to Fort Hood, Texas.

No one was certain of what his or her mission was going to be. The unit was trained to deal with enemy prisoners of war. Many figured they were going to be sent to Cuba to handle detainees brought from Afghanistan. Instead the 428th made Fort Hood their new home.

The company went through a condensed mobilization orientation briefing (MOB) and a week-long Military Police Orientation Course. In less than a month, the 428th had assumed its mission. The MPs were in charge of the many access control points (ACP) located in and around post. ACPs are where all the entrance/exit gates are on a post. ACPs are also placed in front of sensitive areas on the post itself, such as "Radar Hill."

The company found itself taking on heavy responsibility early on in the deployment, said 1st Sgt. Martin P. Grooms, 428th MP Co. first sergeant. Security was extremely tight and traffic flow was slim to none.

"When we assumed mission, we were wearing full battle gear, body armor, kevlar's, M-16s, 9mms, and a Humvee on each point with a SAW guarding the entrances to the post," said Grooms, "For three to four months every access control point and HRT on this installation was manned by a Reservist 24 hours a day."

Threat levels are on a lower level now, but the soldiers of the 428th still face their most difficult challenge – being away from their



Handcuffs are one piece of equipment soldiers in the 428th MP Co. need for daily inspections while deployed to Fort Hood, Texas.



Spc. Jason B. Thrams, 428th MP Co., directs traffic while deployed to Fort Hood, Texas.

BlueDevil II

Spc. Angela L. Knapp, 428th MP Co., checks paperwork while working a traffic checkpoint while deployed to Fort Hood, Texas.



families and loved ones. The unit recognizes the importance of their mission, but it was hard to watch active duty personnel spend time with their families over the holidays. You could see it in their faces. You could see it in their eyes, said Grooms.

“Family is the biggest thing. You don’t know what you have until you’re gone. The money’s good, the experience is good, family is better,” said Spc. Jason B. Thrans of the 428th MP Company.

Every morning the soldiers wake up and crawl out of their “modular homes,” which provide just enough room for two soldiers. The company’s first formation is called guard mount. The Sergeant of the Guard forms the group in the center of their tiny community.

An inspection is performed to ensure all the soldiers have the necessary equipment to perform their jobs throughout the day including handcuffs, nightsticks and body armor.

Next the soldiers travel to headquarters to participate in a consolidated guard mount with the rest of the MPs on post. Another inspection is performed and weapons are drawn. The MPs are also briefed on any new information. After the consolidated guard mount the MPs head to their posts for a 12-hour shift.

While on duty the MPs are looking for anything suspicious. During vehicle inspections soldiers are looking for odd wiring, packages, boxes or suspicious behavior. Driving under the influence, narcotics, weapons are just a few of the violations the 428th is prepared

to handle on the job.

“A lot of these guys had never been on active duty before,” said Grooms. “The only time they put on an MP brassard was at Annual Training or the drill hall. They had never actually gone out and strapped on a 9mm with live rounds in it, put handcuffs on somebody and actually experienced the high optempo.”

Being on active duty was a new experience for many of the soldiers, Grooms added. The unit went through a lot of “growing pains,” but their hard work paid off. Unit readiness is better than ever. Physical training failures are seven times less than before deployment.

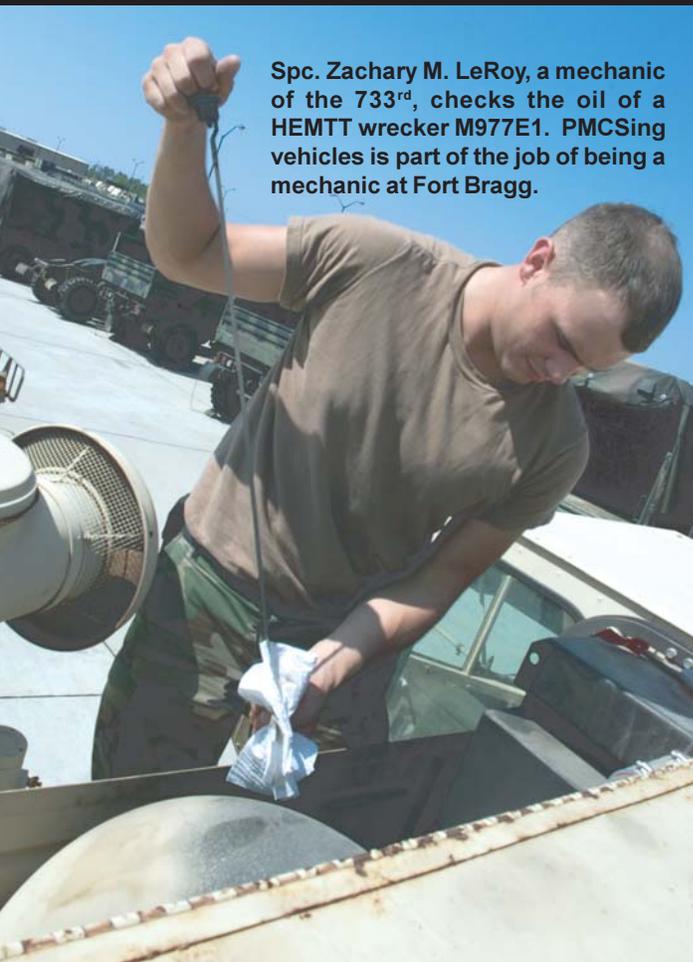
“We’ve gotten in shape,” said Grooms. “We’ve got soldiers doing the right thing doing what they’re supposed to do. It’s been exiting for me to see this company go through a little bit of a transformation.”

Story and photos by Spc. Chris Rowe, 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.



Nightsticks are one piece of equipment soldiers in the 428th MP Co. need for daily inspections while deployed to Fort Hood, Texas.

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM



Spc. Zachary M. LeRoy, a mechanic of the 733rd, checks the oil of a HEMTT wrecker M977E1. PMCSing vehicles is part of the job of being a mechanic at Fort Bragg.

Right to

Maintenance Company soldiers meet deployment challenges, earn respect of active duty soldiers at Fort Bragg.

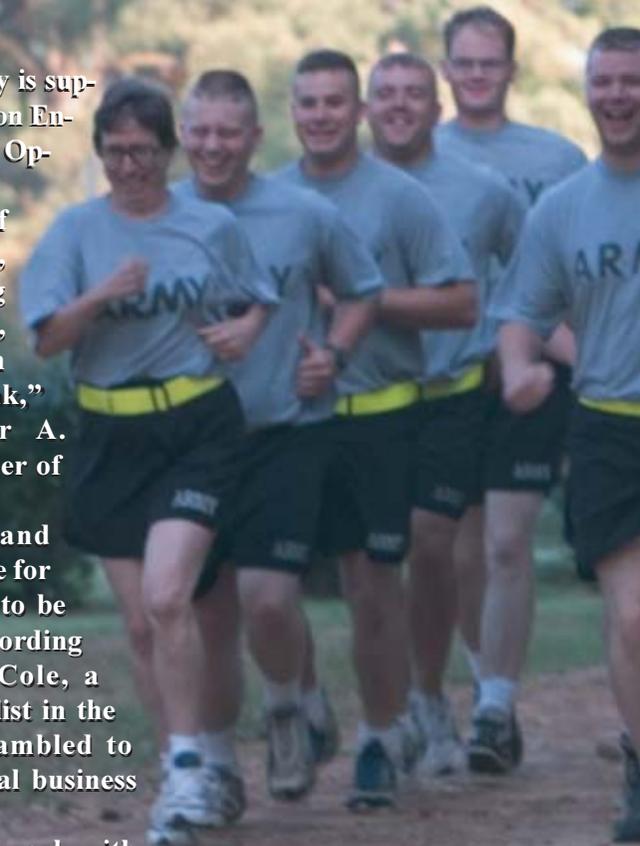
After 9/11, the company is supporting both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Noble Eagle.

"It's a lot of change real quick, it's like drinking through a firehouse, but if you don't swim you're going to sink," said 1st Lt. Dar A. Mathison, commander of the 733rd.

Prior planning and preparing in advance for deployment proved to be a wise decision, according to Spc. Galen J. Cole, a stock control specialist in the 733rd. Soldiers scrambled to take care of personal business before departing.

"One day I'm at work with oil on my hands, and the next day I'm in BDUs (Battle Dress Uniform) with an M-16 on a plane, not knowing where I was going," said Cole.

In fact several of the 733rd's soldiers have oil on their hands while at work. Many soldiers work as mechanics and engineers in their civilian careers. This has proved to be a great benefit to the 528th, said Mathison.



The jump from inactive to active can be a difficult one. Especially when that jump might be from a C-130.

From their maroon berets and airborne patches, to their unmatched mechanical skills and sense of duty, the 733rd Maintenance Company of Decatur, Ill., part of the 88th Regional Support Command, has become a part of Fort Bragg, N.C.

The 733rd was the first company from the 88th RSC to deploy after the Sept. 11th terrorist attacks. They were brought to Fort Bragg to provide maintenance support to the 528th Special Operations Support Battalion.

The 733rd was called into action Oct. 2, 2001. The soldiers were alerted and on the road to Fort Bragg within 72 hours. The first Reserve soldiers to augment Fort Bragg af-

Bragg

“These guys can pick up any piece of equipment that is in their field and fix it,” said Mathison. “New, old, it doesn’t matter. It doesn’t matter if they’ve never seen it before; it doesn’t matter if they’ve worked on it 1000 times.”

Many of the soldiers had never been on active duty besides basic training and advanced individual training. The plunge into an active duty lifestyle was challenging to some of the troops. Leaving loved ones at home was the hardest part for most of the soldiers in the unit.

The company underwent extensive training once it made the journey to Fort Bragg. A land navigation course, field training exercise, weapons qualification and lanes training were some of the exercises performed by the company as it transformed into an active duty company. Active duty personnel evaluated all of the exercises.

Being the first ones “out the door” had its challenges, said 1st Sgt. Marshall J. Mingus, company first sergeant for the 733rd. There were a lot of lessons learned, and lessons are still being learned. Since their deployment the company has been “laying the framework” for themselves and for those who may follow.

From heavy-wheeled vehicles to night vision goggles, the 733rd is responsible for fixing a wide variety of equipment. Light wheeled-vehicles, heavy arms, generators, and air-conditioning units are a small example of the different types of equipment the soldiers know how to fix.

Some of the soldiers have been able to participate in schools at Fort Bragg and obtain certifications that otherwise would not have been available. Spc. Jorge A. Rodriguez, of the 733rd, is one of the

soldiers who went to airborne school during the deployment.

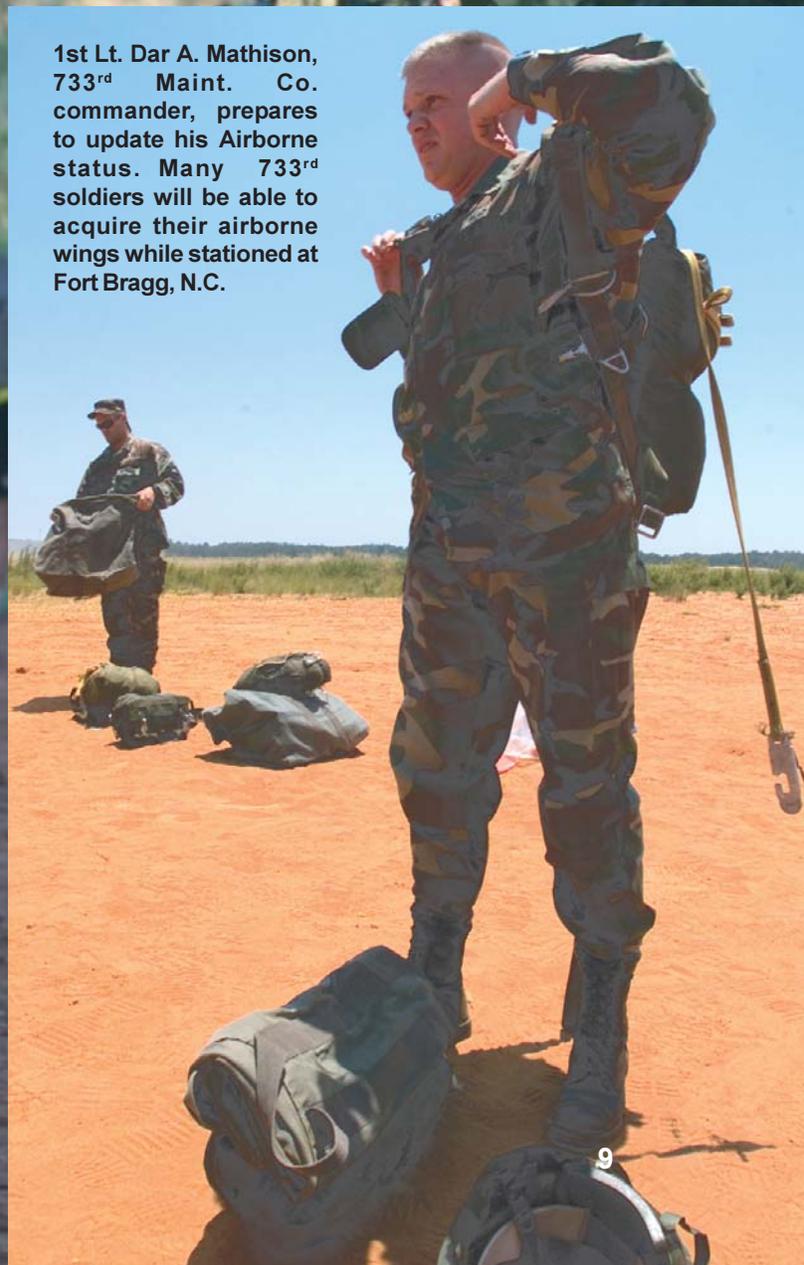
“I felt great, especially after my last jump,” said Rodriguez. “When I got up and walked and I wasn’t hurt, it was the greatest feeling. Better than when I graduated basic or AIT. It was like ‘you did it, you’re one of the few that have done it.’ It felt pretty good.”

The 733rd has become an integrated part of Fort Bragg, and has surpassed many expectations, said Mingus. Some soldiers have been sent down range and several others have volunteered to go. These reservists have earned the respect of the active duty soldiers here at Fort Bragg, Mingus added. ♣

Story and photos by Spc. Chris Rowe,
364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.

(Background) A group of 733rd Maint. Co. soldiers smile as they complete their morning jog. The unit is required to run up to 7 miles a week while deployed to Fort Bragg, N.C.

1st Lt. Dar A. Mathison, 733rd Maint. Co. commander, prepares to update his Airborne status. Many 733rd soldiers will be able to acquire their airborne wings while stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C.



OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

Donning the maroon beret is more than a... Color change

When active duty units stationed at Fort Bragg, N.C. were called up to service in Afghanistan, reserve units were deployed to Fort Bragg to take their place. The Illinois-based 733rd Maintenance Company, part of the 88th Regional Support Command, was one of the first Army Reserve units to be deployed after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

The 733rd's mission is to support the Special Operations units stationed at Fort Bragg. Their primary tasks are supply and vehicle maintenance, but can also involve air conditioner and water cooler repair. The unit has been a great asset to Fort Bragg, said 1st Sgt. Marshall J. Mingus, first sergeant for the 733rd.

In their transition from reserve status to active duty at Fort Bragg, the 733rd was required to switch to the maroon beret and sew on the "Airborne" shoulder tab. However, the switch wasn't as easy as changing hats and putting on a patch, said Mingus.

To put on the maroon beret, "there was a rite of passage," said Mingus. The unit was required to pass a series of trials specified by the active duty Airborne units. These trials included a six-mile road march, standard PT test, obstacle course, confidence course, and weapons qualification. These tests all made sure that the unit was in the right mentality, said Mingus.

Once they completed these trials, they donned the maroon beret and were also allowed to wear the Airborne shoulder patch, even though few of them were jump qualified. However, "becoming qualified for jumping solidifies the reason for wearing the new beret," Mingus said. Being activated gave the unit the opportunity to send individuals to airborne school, something Mingus highly recommends for his soldiers.

Unfortunately, because of the part-time nature of the Army Reserve commitment, its soldiers sometimes adopt a different mentality, Mingus said. The reserves are sometimes looked down upon by active duty personnel, but Mingus said this activation has been a great example of how the reserves can hold their own in an active duty environment. They met or exceeded the standards put before them, and because of experiences from civilian careers, they worked very efficiently, Mingus said.

But despite the implications surrounding the more elite maroon beret, when it comes down to everyday wear, "a hat's a hat," Mingus said. The soldiers have the same obligations to their country no matter the color or style of their headgear. ♣

Story and photo by Pfc. Adam Dielschneider,
364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.



Sgt. David Monell, 733rd Maintenance Company, wears a maroon beret as he is promoted to staff sergeant while deployed for Operation Noble Eagle at Fort Bragg, N.C.

ARMED FORCES RESERVE CENTER



The 49th Military History Detachment, pose with Col. William C. Kirkland (center) before they deploy to Afghanistan (from left to right) Sgt. 1st Class Brandi Schiff, Maj. Phillip Karns, Pfc. Michelle West, Sgt. 1st Class Dan Schiff.

Unit writes history, sets standard

The 49th Military History Detachment, Forest Park, Ill., has the distinction of being the first history unit to be sent to Afghanistan.

Half of the four-person unit had returned home from a rotation in Bosnia seven months ago when the call came to pack again.

"We deployed to Bosnia with the 318th (Press Camp Headquarters) as fillers because they were short-handed on staff," said Sgt. 1st Class Brandi Schiff, referring to herself and her husband, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Schiff. "This deployment is with our own unit and our jobs will be very different than in Bosnia."

A military history unit goes wherever the Army send troops, recording everything.

"We'll write the history books—literally," said Dan Schiff.

The sergeants don't have many problems deploying so soon after returning from a Bosnia rotation.

"I've been trying to get to ANCOG (Advanced Non-Commissioned Officer Course) for a while now," said Brandi Schiff. "This will be the third time I've been activated before I can attend the class. I'm worried I won't be able to go."

This class is required for promotion to master sergeant.

For Pfc. Michelle M. West, the deployment is a whole new world.

"I wanted to get out of it at first," admitted West. "But after thinking about it, I was getting excited; I've never been overseas. I feel okay about going with the others since they've all been deployed before."

The unit will be deployed for up

to a year under the 18th Airborne Corps in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

"Family support for the unit is outstanding," said Maj. Philip Karns. "They immediately offered help in family matters and employment problems. I like that they gave all of us a phone card. I've never received one during deployment in other units and I'm happy they are taking care of my troops."

One nice thing about this deployment, according to unit members, is that they get to set the standards for military history units that will follow them.

"It is a special treat to actually get to say and mean that we set the standards!" said Brandi Schiff with enthusiasm. ♦

Story and photo by Sgt. Noreen Feeney, 318th PAOC, Fort Sheridan, Ill.

Immediate Protection

World Trade Center attacks prompt call

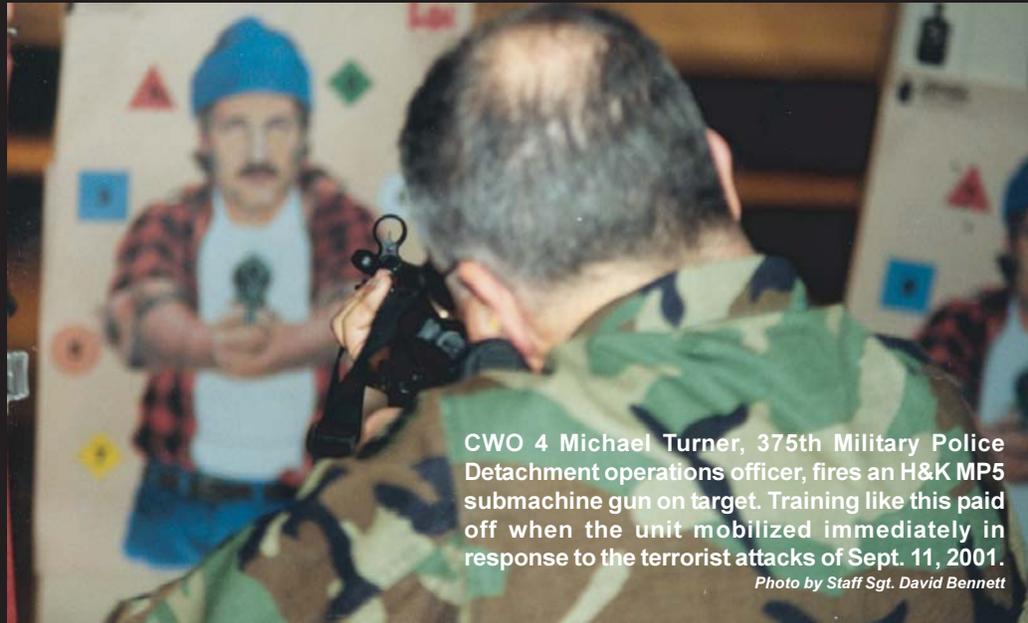
Before the shock of the events on Sept. 11 settled over an unbelieving public, members of the 375th Military Police Detachment in Columbus, Ohio, were already preparing for the inevitable call.

CWO Cesar Blanco, a special agent with the 375th, was working his regular shift as commander of support and logistics for the City of Chicago Fire Department that day when city officials realized that some of Chicago prominent buildings — including the tallest of them — the Sears Tower, could be next. During the time he was overseeing evacuation activities and other emergency safety procedures in Illinois, he knew his presence in Ohio would soon be expected.

“It was a race,” said Blanco, who arrived in Columbus the night of Sept. 11. “I was getting calls from the city and I’m getting calls from the operation officer at the unit. Soon my wife was packing for me.”

Blanco was one of 17 special agents assigned to the 375th who would make the trip that day.

One of two Army Reserve detachments that assist the Protective Service Unit located in Fort Belvoir, Va., the 375th is often tasked to provide protection for the secretary and deputy secretary of defense, the chairman and vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Army chief and vice chief of staff, and the secretary of the Army.



CWO 4 Michael Turner, 375th Military Police Detachment operations officer, fires an H&K MP5 submachine gun on target. Training like this paid off when the unit mobilized immediately in response to the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

Photo by Staff Sgt. David Bennett

Immediately after the terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C. the request for all available special agents came, said 2nd Lt. Russell Compton, commander of the 375th.

“When the first plane hit, a spouse had called in to let us know,” Compton said. “When the second plane hit, the 701st MP Group was calling and asking how many people were trained (to carry out protection duties).”

Sgt. 1st Class Sean Lewis, 37, was returning from a dental appointment in Cincinnati when he was notified. Because airports were shut down and aircraft grounded, he and another unit member rented a car to travel to Washington, D.C. All the soldiers would get to their destination by rental car.

“The nature of the unit is that the member are very autonomous,

so we’re well-versed in taking care of things individually,” Lewis said. “We did get a lot of support from the unit to accomplish the mission.”

The 375th falls under the 701st Military Police Group, based at Fort Belvoir, Va.

Soldiers of the 375th are assigned to either the local Metro team providing protection services in and around the Pentagon, or on a travel team escorting principals abroad. On either team, agents are responsible for every detail of security planning involving every move a principal will make. Whether it is departing home, arriving at the airport or going to the bathroom, the agent assigned is responsible for welfare of that official.

Since receiving their mobilization orders, assignments for the

reservists have been as varied as the schedules of the principals they are assigned to protect.

“As their schedules become more grueling, our schedules become more grueling,” Blanco. “We have to be in position always. Someone is working around the clock. After six months, you become used to it.”

CWO Michael Turner, operations officer for the 375th, has spent the last nine months assigned to a travel team. His accommodations have ranged from a hotel in Brussels to a tent in Afghanistan. The 57-year-old Turner, who has been the unit more than 25 years, said the kind of rapid response the unit demonstrated that day isn’t unique and there have been other occasions the unit has mobilized with little warning. With 105 Reserve special agents, but 20 active agents assigned to the Metro and travel teams now, Turner said the unit’s intensive training and travel schedule throughout the year pays dividends in real world situations.

“Since we regularly work with our active duty counterparts, there is really no transition at all ” he said.

Though the work has been challenging, balancing the work with family obligations might be harder.

Staff Sgt. Tanya Shoup, 35, holds a unique position among those assigned to one of the Metro teams. Not only does she serve on the three-person security team protecting Army Chief of Staff Gen. Erik K Shinseki, Shoup is the only mother among the 17 soldiers of the 375th.

Separated from her husband, Shoup has the difficult task of carrying out her protection duties while ensuring that her two daughters understand the meaning of her absence.

“The hard part is that on the job, you must maintain 100 percent (concentration), but everyone still beats themselves up for missing school plays and soccer games.”

“It’s hardest trying to explain to my younger daughter, who is six,” Shoup continued. “She equates the Army with her mom being away. My 10-year-old understands more of why I have to be away. As I’m here providing protection, ultimately, I’m protecting her.” ♣

Story and sidebar by Staff Sgt. David Bennett, 367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio

August 2002



CWO 3 Robert Moledor receives his promotion from Secretary of the Army Richard White. U.S. Army photo

MPs get special recognition

Two members of the 375th Military Police Detachment (CID), Columbus, Ohio, received special recognition earlier this year when Secretary of the Army Richard White promoted them.

Sergeant 1st Class Sean Lewis and CWO 3 Richard Moledor are two of the 17 special agents with the 375th who deployed to Washington, D.C. the day after Sept. 11 to provide protective services to top military officials there, including Secretary of the Army Thomas E. White. The soldiers, serving on protection detail for White at the time, were promoted a few weeks apart.

Lewis, 37, was promoted Feb. 1. in a ceremony in Gen. White’s office. He said he informally requested the honor, but was surprised when it actually occurred.

“My partner from California and I were promoted at the same time,” he said. “We thought it would a once in lifetime opportunity.”

Lewis, who is married with three children, is a fraud investigator with the Criminal Investigation Division.

Moledor, 39 received the same honor from the secretary of the Army a few weeks later. Moledor, a detective with the Columbus Police Department, said the promotion was suggested by a staff assistant to General White, much to the delight of Moledor, a 17-year member of the unit, as well as the oldest of his three children, his 12-year-old son.

“I dress in civilian clothes a lot, so he knows my job is different from most in the military,” Moledor said. “He loves all this stuff. ♣



CWO 4 Michael Turner (far left in civilian clothes) works a protective detail for Gen. Eric Shinseki, chief of Staff of the Army (far right in uniform) while in Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina. U.S. Army photo

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

Three MPs mobilized for Operation Enduring Freedom are also...

America's most

When most people heard that the long-running television show "America's Most Wanted" was on Fort Dix, N.J., they immediately wondered what fugitive was lurking around the installation eluding justice.

The video production crew captured on tape three men, but the three were not fleeing the law-- they were the law. The trio are law enforcement officers, who have been called to active duty as U.S. Army Reserve soldiers for Operation Enduring Freedom.

The soldiers, members of the 377th Military Police Company, based out of Cincinnati, Ohio, have gotten used to a TV crew being around their Reserve Center and now the ranges at Dix.

"We get teased a lot," said Staff Sgt. Neil Berkeley. "Where's your camera crew?" is a commonly asked question.

"I think it is good publicity for our unit and the Army Reserve and for our departments," Berkeley said, also mentioning that, "Understanding how a civilian profession can work well with the government when something like this happens," is another benefit of the "America's Most Wanted" feature on the citizen-soldiers.

Berkeley has been in the Reserves for a decade, spending the last eight years as an MP, and he has received excellent support from the city of Newport, Ky. where he is employed at police officer.

Employer support has also been outstanding from the Dearborn County Sheriff's Department in Indiana, where another 377th soldier, Sgt. Jason Wyatt works.

"They gave me a going-away party, they just have been wonderful," Wyatt said. The department gave Wyatt a gift certificate to buy things for the deployment and is planning to send plenty of mail once he provides an address.

Wyatt is not the only soldier expecting mail.

1st Lt. Brett Buelterman, first platoon leader for the 377th, will also have an eye out for the mailman. In fact Buelterman, who works as a deputy sheriff for Clermont County, Ohio, purchased a digital camera before leaving for Dix, in preparation for the birth of a child in November. The other star MPs also have babies on the way, with Berkeley and Wyatt family additions expected in January 2003.

Buelterman doesn't feel the TV crew following him distracts from being a leader. "I will just tell them wait a minute, I got to really work for a few minutes."

Tom Morris the "America's Most Wanted" producer for the segment understands, having following the three police officers turned MPs since January.

The program idea started with a phone call to the show's offices by the Army Reserve.

The cameras caught the trio at work in their respective departments, at home with their families, and then continued the coverage with the call up to active duty at the 377th's home station.

"We got them packing up and kissing their wives and kids goodbye and then getting on the buses for Fort Dix," said Morris.

The video crew spent three days

t wanted

following the unit, filming the soldiers qualifying with M203 grenade launchers, 9 mm pistols and M-16 rifles, including a night fire on Range 32.

The last day was the start of a Mission Rehearsal Exercise where Morris became an active role player as a captured prisoner.

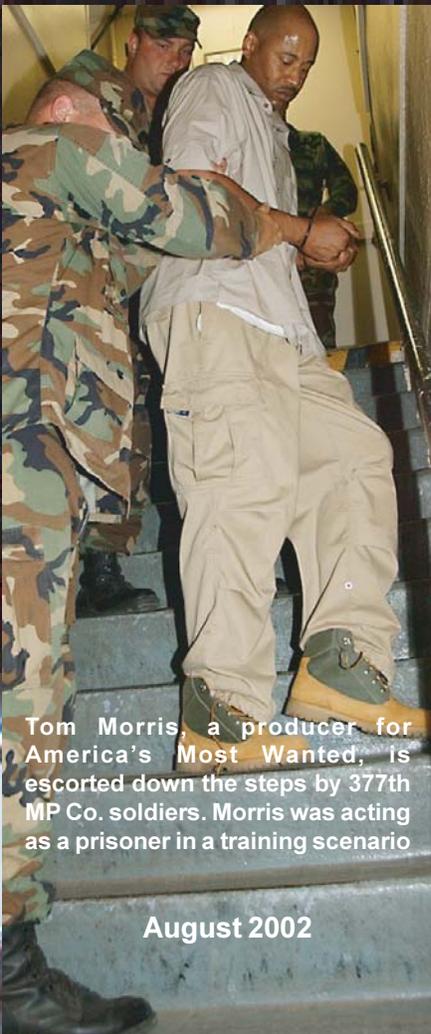
After spending nearly two hours with hands bound, laying face down in the dirt and sitting in a

prison cell, Morris was all smiles as he emerged from the prison, as the video footage of his experience will add to the reality-based TV show.

The story on Berkeley, Wyatt and Buelterman should be aired as part of an anniversary special about the terror attacks of Sept. 11. ♣

Story and photos by Kryn P. Westhoven, Fort Dix PAO, Fort Dix, NJ

(Background) 377th MP Co. soldiers deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom night qualify at a Fort Dix range.



Tom Morris, a producer for America's Most Wanted, is escorted down the steps by 377th MP Co. soldiers. Morris was acting as a prisoner in a training scenario

August 2002



Tom Morris, a producer for America's Most Wanted, interviews Staff Sgt. Neil Berkeley (left) and Sgt. Jason Wyatt for a planned Sept. 11 special.



Training rounds for the M203 grenade launcher line the table at a Fort Dix, N.J. range.



Sgt. Jennifer D. King, a personnel administration specialist with the 645th Area Support Group out of Southfield, Mich., adds color to a head wound.

Medics used moulage in an effort to... **Make it real**

Reserve medics from around the U.S. came together at Fort McCoy recently to hone their lifesaving skills during Operation Golden Medic.

The operation featured exercises with realistic scenarios, including life-like injuries intended to keep the medics on their toes.

Using moulage techniques, medics and soldiers from the 348th General Hospital of Albany, N.Y., the 645th Area Support Group of Southfield, Mich., the 114th Combat Support Hospital of Fort Snelling, Minn., the 452nd Combat Support Hospital of Milwaukee, Wis., the 349th General Hospital of Los Angeles, and the 1207th U.S. Army Hospi-

tal of Columbus, Ga., transformed mannequins into combat casualties for a mass casualty exercise.

“We try to make it as real as we can,” said Capt. Karen G. Caudillo, a nurse with the 452nd Combat Support Hospital located in Milwaukee, Wis. “Seeing real flesh exposed is different, of course, but we try to get it as close as possible to give them a good idea of a real battle field situation.”

Scenarios like this, Caudillo said, are very helpful and very effective. “It shows the soldiers what is going to be expected of them and what they are going to have to do to accomplish the mission,” she added.

Spc. Tammy A. Rivers, a respiratory specialist with the 114th Combat Support Hospital, Fort Snelling, Minn., said, “They aren’t real people who are yelling and screaming, but all these (mannequins) are going to be coming in while the soldiers are still trying to set up a hospital. It should be some really good training.”

Creating life-like casualties does not happen by accident or at a quick pace. Caudillo and Rivers spent about an hour and a half on one mannequin that was to simulate a victim of multiple lacerations and punctured globe area around the eye.

When all is said and done, the group of medics and soldiers will have prepared more than 500 male and female “victims” made up of three ethnic groups (African-American, Caucasian and Hispanic). Seventy percent of the mannequins are anatomically correct.

Caudillo put the groups hard work into perspective. “I like doing this. I like to make it look real,” she said. “It takes some creativity too. I paint broken tongue depressors to make bones stick out. It’s a fun job and I take pride in it.” ♦

Story and photo by Spc. Tony M. Lindback, 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.

825th delivers water so troops don't get hosed

Over, under, or around? These are the options when Army water treatment specialists encounter an obstacle in the process of laying out thousands of feet of hose.

Water specialists with the 825th Quartermaster Detachment from Willmar, Minn., know how to handle all three options when the need arises. This year, that need did arise for 18 soldiers from the unit while conducting annual training at the Devens Reserve Forces Training Area, Mass., for the annual Petroleum, Oil and Lubricants Exercise (POLEX).

POLEX encompasses water missions. "Human beings can live without food for an extended period of time, but only a relatively short time without water," said Lt. Col. Daniel Puhl of the 457th Transportation Company, which oversees the 825th during POLEX. "They (the 825th) are the conduit between the water purifiers and the distribution system."

Puhl touched on the core of the 825th mission; "to pump thousands of gallons of water over varying terrain and distances of up to 10 miles using relay pumps, while maintaining water purity in potentially hostile environments."

"Today we laid 10,000 feet of hose," said Staff Sgt. Bruce Carlson. Carlson's soldiers operated heavy lifting equipment to hoist a large water hose over an asphalt road so that vehicles could pass underneath. The hose was suspended on a steel cable strung between two large poles placed specifically for this purpose, although sometimes trees can be used, he said.

Earlier, soldiers dug a channel across a dirt road and laid the hose through a steel pipe placed in the channel. "We can pump 36,000 gallons an hour, but the water purification unit can only make 3,000 gallons an hour. What

we usually do is wait until we have about 50,000 gallons ready and then pump it all at once," said Sgt. 1st Class Mark Leyendecker.

Since the terror attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, being a priority unit has added significance for the 825th soldiers. "These troops have to be ready to go anywhere, at any time," Puhl said. "9/11 has given them a greater sense of urgency to know their jobs well, because they could be deployed tomorrow."

The 9/11 attacks have also brought about a heightened awareness concerning bio-terrorism on water supplies. Security has always played a role in the water specialist's operations.

"We have to continuously monitor the hose by patrolling and looking for signs of sabotage," said Leyendecker. "We have to maintain local controls and monitor water pressure. Excessive pressure can blow a hose." Booster pumps placed at least every two miles have automatic pressure valves to maintain constant pressure, but they are not infallible.

Water specialists train in the entire water supply operation, but water treatment units often specialize in one of three general

aspects of the water distribution network: water purification, the hose distribution system, which the 825th operates, and finally, the water storage facilities.

"We train to lay the hose, take water quality analysis to maintain cleanliness, and ensure customers get a quality product," said Leyendecker.

This year, that's especially important, since unlike some prior exercises that were simply static layouts of the equipment, these soldiers are pumping water to other soldiers in the field involved in military training. ♦

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Nate Orme, 214th MPAD, Richmond, Va.



825th Quartermaster Detachment soldiers anchor a hose over a road at Fort Devens, Mass.

In the field or in garrison, public affairs soldiers can help... When the camera turns to you

Army Rangers, Special Forces and infantry soldiers are the focal point of movies like “Hamburger Hill,” “Platoon,” “Rambo,” and “Saving Private Ryan.” Characters worry about small gunfire, field artillery and mechanized infantry. However, for the soldiers working public affairs in real-world situations, it is the shooting done by a camera that can often cause the most damage.

The Army has soldiers trained in public affairs and journalism who work with the media and act as spokespersons for the military and their units.

These public affairs journalists are a proactive force. The print and broadcast journalists are trained to get stories, shoot footage and write press releases to alert other media of any and all news. The Army tries to keep good relations with the media by reporting on all news - good or bad.

“You can’t stop media from reporting news, but we can assist the media in getting accurate and timely information, information that shows the Army’s point of view,” said Pfc. Zia Ul Haq, a print journalist with the 211th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD), Bryan, Texas.

“Our job is to let the public know what happens and when it happens,” said Spc. Justin A. Carmack, a print journalist with the 350th MPAD, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Ind. “Maximum disclosure with minimum delay is our goal. If you don’t let out everything you can, the media, and the people at home, think you are hiding the truth from them. We are here to keep the Army in the best light possible when it comes to the media.”

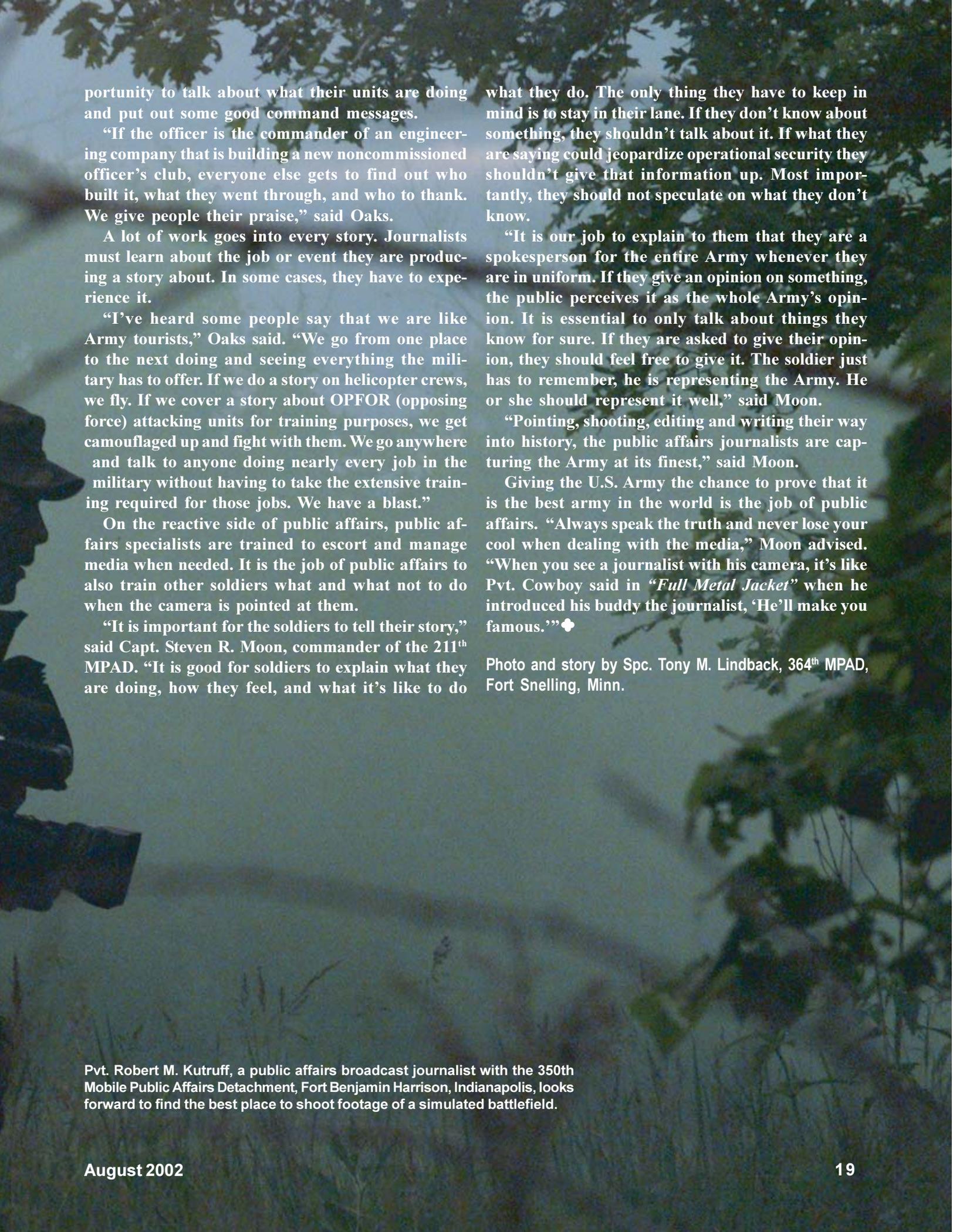
While cameras and reporters can sometimes seem intrusive, they provide a great opportunity for the Army to show off, Carmack explained.

“We have to tell people what the Army does so we don’t seem like such a secretive organization,” added Staff Sgt. Theresa L. Thompson-Inge, a 211th MPAD broadcast journalist. “When they know what the Army does, they have more faith in us. If it is bad news, we just have to explain that accidents do happen – we’re humans. We also have to explain what

we do to prevent the same kind of thing from happening again. It is easier to get backing on nearly any subject when other people know your side of the story.”

Telling the story of the average soldier isn’t always easy. “The hardest part about what we do is convincing the soldiers we’re trying to do stories on that we are not going to let them fry,” said Thompson-Inge. “We’re here to make them look good.”

“Officers are especially hard to get on camera, said Spc. Kirby P. Oaks, a broadcast journalist with the 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn. “A lot of officers seem to avoid interviews, or never relax if they do give an interview. Officers should realize that it is an op-



portunity to talk about what their units are doing and put out some good command messages.

“If the officer is the commander of an engineering company that is building a new noncommissioned officer’s club, everyone else gets to find out who built it, what they went through, and who to thank. We give people their praise,” said Oaks.

A lot of work goes into every story. Journalists must learn about the job or event they are producing a story about. In some cases, they have to experience it.

“I’ve heard some people say that we are like Army tourists,” Oaks said. “We go from one place to the next doing and seeing everything the military has to offer. If we do a story on helicopter crews, we fly. If we cover a story about OPFOR (opposing force) attacking units for training purposes, we get camouflaged up and fight with them. We go anywhere and talk to anyone doing nearly every job in the military without having to take the extensive training required for those jobs. We have a blast.”

On the reactive side of public affairs, public affairs specialists are trained to escort and manage media when needed. It is the job of public affairs to also train other soldiers what and what not to do when the camera is pointed at them.

“It is important for the soldiers to tell their story,” said Capt. Steven R. Moon, commander of the 211th MPAD. “It is good for soldiers to explain what they are doing, how they feel, and what it’s like to do

what they do. The only thing they have to keep in mind is to stay in their lane. If they don’t know about something, they shouldn’t talk about it. If what they are saying could jeopardize operational security they shouldn’t give that information up. Most importantly, they should not speculate on what they don’t know.

“It is our job to explain to them that they are a spokesperson for the entire Army whenever they are in uniform. If they give an opinion on something, the public perceives it as the whole Army’s opinion. It is essential to only talk about things they know for sure. If they are asked to give their opinion, they should feel free to give it. The soldier just has to remember, he is representing the Army. He or she should represent it well,” said Moon.

“Pointing, shooting, editing and writing their way into history, the public affairs journalists are capturing the Army at its finest,” said Moon.

Giving the U.S. Army the chance to prove that it is the best army in the world is the job of public affairs. “Always speak the truth and never lose your cool when dealing with the media,” Moon advised. “When you see a journalist with his camera, it’s like Pvt. Cowboy said in *“Full Metal Jacket”* when he introduced his buddy the journalist, ‘He’ll make you famous.’”♣

Photo and story by Spc. Tony M. Lindback, 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.

Pvt. Robert M. Kutruff, a public affairs broadcast journalist with the 350th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Fort Benjamin Harrison, Indianapolis, looks forward to find the best place to shoot footage of a simulated battlefield.

By Master Sgt. David E. Johnson,
367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio

**Want to keep your
soldiers? Then ...**

Train t

After soldiers have received enticements to serve one enlistment, more incentives are offered to reenlist. They ask “Should I stay or leave the Army Reserve?”

Good training, camaraderie and good leadership keep soldiers in the Army Reserve, senior noncommissioned officers and soldiers say.

According to Master Sgt. Gilman “Rick” Duckworth, operations noncommissioned officer at 643rd Area Support Group (ASG), Whitehall, Ohio, financial incentives aren’t the primary reason why soldiers reenlist or get out of the military.

“Quality training is the primary reason these young people joined the Army Reserve,” said Duckworth.

“The soldiers want to do in the Army Reserve what soldiers do in the active Army,” said Master Sgt. Joseph Greene, senior retention NCO at 643rd. “They want to be in the Army.”

“You know what would be a great retention tool for the Army Reserve?” asked Spc. Scott Sells, a transportation management specialist with 869th Transportation Detachment, Columbus, Ohio. “Good NCOs.”

Sells recently was promoted to sergeant and is a fulltime Active-Guard Reserve recruiter.

“Quality training is imperative to keep soldiers attending their scheduled drills,” said Duckworth. “These young soldiers want confident leaders. If they lack confidence in their leaders, they will leave and go elsewhere, whether it’s the National Guard, a different branch of service, or a different Army Reserve unit.”

“When I left active duty and came to my first Army Reserve unit some years ago,” recalled Greene, “I immediately enforced active duty discipline and standards on the troops, something they were not accustomed to. My battery commander came to me at the end of my first drill and told me, ‘We are only going to have two soldiers at drill next month because you’re too hard on them. You need to coddle them.’”

Greene disagreed, and continued to enforce his active-Army discipline.

“Not only did they all come back the next month,” said Greene, “but within eight months, our strength shot up so much, my battery was having trouble finding vacant slots for soldiers. We were over strength because the soldiers in my unit told their friends, and recruiting increased so much and retention was close to 100 percent. Soldiers wanted to join my unit because of the

(Background) Soldiers from the 391st Military Police Company clear a room as a part of MOUT training at Fort Knox. Realistic training like this helps retain quality soldiers.

Photos by Spc. Chris Putman, 367th MPAD

to retain



training environment.”

Greene, who is assigned to 88th Regional Support Command at Fort Snelling, Minn., Retention Transition Division, but attached to 643rd, now trains retention NCOs throughout Ohio.

“Last month, I took 14 soldiers from a different unit out on a field training exercise with me,” said Duckworth. “I didn’t know any of them prior to the exercise. I taught them proper troop-leading procedures, how to survive in battle, force protection. Now they’re all calling me during the week and want to know when we can all get together and do it again. They want that confidence from their leaders, and too often, they don’t get it. That’s all the proof I need that quality training improves retention. All 14 of these soldiers want to stay in, but only if they can train like that each and every drill.”

Another aspect of improved training is the camaraderie created and fostered by accomplishing tasks as a team.

“Camaraderie is the biggest retention tool the Army Reserve needs to foster,” said Staff Sgt. Mark R. Sirianni, Sr., training NCO for the 454th Transportation Company, Columbus, Ohio. “In all my years in the Army, that’s what keeps soldiers in. Being part of a team.”

“Soldiers want to feel like they’re doing something meaningful during their weekend training,” said Staff Sgt. Stephan J. Carlin, an 88th RSC retention NCO, attached to 643rd.

Much planning and effort goes into preparing a unit’s training for a drill weekend. Collective training is what gets soldiers working together to foster cohesion and teamwork. That teamwork needs to be in place to accomplish the mission of any given unit.

“There’s so much to do,” said Sgt. 1st Class Paulette Sanford, a security NCO with 643rd. “If soldiers did their additional duties for just two hours a weekend, they would feel a sense of accomplishment that they helped their unit.”

Leaders are key to creating the proper training environment in units.

“If leaders -- NCOs -- aren’t subject matter experts,” explained Duckworth, “and show confidence in their ability to teach soldiers how to survive, I blame them for low morale and low retention in a unit. That’s a first sergeant’s and command sergeant major’s job.”

Changing a unit’s training atmosphere from lackadaisical to intensive may generate some disgruntled members who decide to leave the Reserve or search for a different unit.

“When units have NCOs who change training environments and enforce standards, some soldiers – ‘Sunshine Patriots’— will bail out,” said Greene.

Duckworth added, after a few months, word gets out about a good unit with good leaders, and soldiers who want to be soldiers are banging at your door to get in.♣

A Ceremony in Context

“Remove cover!” It was a typically cool and crisp spring morning in central Minnesota. The hopeful sound of the returning songbirds provided a beautiful and uncomplicated fanfare for the historic occasion despite the slight northerly reminder of the lingering remnants of winter. It was but another beginning in the perpetual seasonal cycle.

As I stood in formation awaiting the next command from the commandant, I realized that it was also the dawning of a new era in the military; a convergence of time-honored traditions and new ways of thinking as the armed services experienced a subtle metamorphosis.

It was the first and only time during my fifteen years in the Army that someone ordered me to remove my hat while outdoors and it felt a little strange. During that moment between transferring the camouflage baseball cap to my right cargo pocket and donning the new black beret, I thought about the significance of the ceremony and its importance among the military annals.

Like many other people who proudly wear the uniform, I am a third generation soldier. My grandfather, who passed away this past Christmas Eve, served as a Navy seaman patrolling the South Pacific during the latter days of the Second World War. I remember seeing a black and white picture of him in his sailor whites and matching white cap.

During his lifetime, my grandfather shared many funny stories about his time at sea, but there were some that put the time period into perspective. Just before his passing, he told me about the time he was on a transport ship carrying important and heavy machinery. There were six of these transports in the patrol and they warranted a destroyer escort given the reported Japanese submarine traffic in waters surrounding the Philippines. However, at times the escort was not able to protect all of the ships.

On one such occasion, my grandfather was below deck when the alarm sounded. He raced up the steps to the main galley and learned that the transport a mile ahead took a direct torpedo hit and exploded. As they passed

the flaming remnants, he realized that could have easily been his ship. If it had been, my father would not have come along and I would not be writing this today.

Thoughts of my father also came to mind. Already a sergeant in the Air Force, he volunteered to serve in Vietnam in 1967. Like most soldiers in the theater at that time, he was just nineteen years old. I remember looking at pictures of him in his olive drab uniform and matching cap. He was very thin at that time and could not have weighed more than one hundred and forty pounds soaking wet. Given the intolerable heat and humidity of that region, I was surprised he maintained any weight at all.

Like most typical Air Force support personnel in that arena, his duties kept him busy on air bases far behind the main area of fighting. Uncomfortable and feeling that he was not doing enough, he further volunteered to join a small Ranger team and clear out fields near the front combat line. Their goal was to provide the supply planes a safe place to land and unload for those engaged in the main fight effort. Needless to say, it was a very dangerous job and he somehow survived his required one-year tour. My father’s convictions were so strong that he volunteered for a second tour in 1968 to assist those same Ranger teams. He survived the Tet Of-



fensive and the most amazing thing is that he returned from both tours without a physical scratch.

Looking over the sea of black berets in front of me, I listened as the band played the Army Song. After the formation, one of my colleagues approached me as I followed the crowd into the building.

“So what did you think of it? That was some ceremony, huh?” he asked.

I thought about it for a moment and realized that it was a significant ceremony simply because it was made possible by those willing to sacrifice their lives before us.

“Yes, it certainly was,” I finally said as we entered the building. ♣

Capt. Robbie L. Schryver, 88th RSC , Fort Snelling, Minn.

Chann 88th NCO of year

Staff Sgt. Michael T. Chann of the 367th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment was recently chosen as the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) of the Year for the 88th Regional Support Command.

Chann, a broadcasting journalist in Whitehall, Ohio, has been with the Army for 11 years. During that time, he has combined his commitment to the military with his love of the theater. He attended the University of Connecticut where he received his bachelor's and master's degree in puppetry.

It was during this time that took a break from his time in the Connecticut National Guard, where he had served six years. However, after entering into the inactive reserve for a short period of time, he decided that he missed the structure of the military.

"My wife actually encouraged me to get back into the military," Chann said. "If she hadn't prodded me I may not have joined back up. Now I'm a lifer."

Top among his peers at the Defense Information School at Fort Meade, Md. where he earned his military occupational specialty (MOS) and at the primary leadership development course (PLDC), as well as serving six-months in Bosnia in 2001, Chann's next career progression came earlier this year when he was nominated by his unit to compete for NCO of the Year.

The first reviewing board that Chann appeared before was for the 325th Finance Battalion where he competed against three other reservists.

"I had two weeks to study a packet they gave me and get my class A's in order," he said. "I didn't really think I would win."



Staff Sgt. Michael T. Chann, 88th RSC NCO of the Year, inspects a video camera.

After winning at the first level, Chann went before the 643rd Area Support Command review board in Whitehall. Competing against six other soldiers, this board would determine the lone soldier who would advance.

"I was a little nervous," Chann said. "I knew that making it to the 88th RSC level was great and it wouldn't be an embarrassment if I lost because I had already made it so far, but I won."

It was at the 643rd board that Chann received an Army Achievement Medal for his accomplishment. Finally this summer, Chann prevailed as NCO of the Year for the 88th.

The United States Army Reserve Command Board for NCO of the Year was held at Fort McPherson, Ga. was his next competition.

"I spent six months in Bosnia working around colonels and majors," Chann said. "That made it a little easier to stand before sergeant majors. It also helped being in Public Affairs and having the ability to talk to people."

Unfortunately, Chann did not receive the title of Army Reserve NCO of the Year, but he did bring a good idea of the process, which he thought was valuable.

"It is really motivating to be chosen as NCO of the Year (of the 88th). I just do my job. It makes me feel I should get all the soldiers who work with me and under me up to the same level," Chann said. ♣

Story and photo by Spc. Alicia Medina, 367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio

Hometown news releases needed

When a soldier receives an award, is promoted, or deploys, fill out a hometown news release form (DD Form 2266) and send it to the 88th Regional Support Command Public Affairs Office, 506 Roeder Circle, Fort Snelling, MN 55111.

Hometown news releases give soldiers well-deserved recognition and

help educate the public as to what the military is all about. With less than 5 percent of those under 60 years of age having served in the military, this takes on ever-increasing importance. Educating the public is crucial to maintaining military readiness. A public uneducated about military affairs will not support the military. ♣

Condo deals at *Great Travel Deals* Web site

Service members and DoD civilians are eligible to rent condominiums in certain resorts around the world as part of a vacation club arrangement between the Army and a civilian corporation.

Army Morale, Welfare and Recreation arranged with Cendant Corp. and one of its subsidiaries, Resort Condominiums International, to offer the condos at reduced rates to active and reserve service members, military retirees, DoD civilians, and any other persons eligible to use military morale, welfare and recreation services.

The deal offers condominium unit rentals for \$234 per week at selected resorts. The normal rates are \$600 to \$1,500 per week in season, according to Verlin Abbott, Cendant national vice president for DoD and government marketing.

Access to club information is available by visiting the Army's "Great

Travel Deals" Web site at www.armymwr.com/portal/travel/traveldeals and clicking on the Armed Forces Vacation Club logo.

In navigating the club Web site, visitors will find a list of available units and dates among the thousands of participating resort for booking, all for \$234 for seven nights. Service members or civilians can reserve a condo using a major credit card. The MWR office receives \$22 for every reservation booked.

Some restrictions apply. Confirmed vacations are not transferable. The customer purchasing the space-available voucher must check in at the resort and be at least 21 years old. Pets are not allowed at any location.

Abbott said service members and civilians must be flexible with their requests. "You're not going to get Vail (Colorado) at Christmas," he said. "Generally, what's available is off-

season or on relatively short notice." In fact, most vacancies aren't posted until 14 to 21 days before the scheduled date of arrival, he said.

Participating resorts have different amenities. Typically, condos feature up to three bedrooms, a living room and fully equipped full or partial kitchens. Many units have laundry facilities or such amenities as whirlpool tubs or fireplaces. Guests have access to on-site or nearby facilities, such as beaches, golf courses, tennis courts, spas, ski slopes, fishing lakes, hiking paths, horseback riding, restaurants and shops. Many resorts also provide planned adult and children's activities.

RCI is a time-share exchange company, but service members and DoD civilians have no obligation to sit through sales pitches or other presentations, Yount said. ♦

American Forces Press Service

NCOs get new career development guidance

Army News Service reports that an updated Department of the Army pamphlet will soon provide noncommissioned officers more robust career development guidance on the path to sergeant major. Replacing a 15-year-old generic DA PAM 600-25, Non-commissioned Officer Professional Development Guide, the new guide will offer structured institutional and self-development career advice tailored to each military occupational specialty and skill level via the Web later this month. As an e-book, the guide also has hundreds of hyperlinks for more detailed coverage of specific Army subjects and programs. Users can check out the Army's Credentialing Opportunities Online Website at <http://www.armyeducation.army.mil/cool/>

to see how a MOS compares to a similar civilian profession and what is required to qualify for jobs in that career field. Another link takes users to the Army Education Website which details information on a myriad of academic degree-building programs and available tuition assistance. Specifically, the guide lays out the duties, prerequisites, required institutional training and recommended self-development of each MOS by career management field and skill level. ♦

Panel approves Reserve loan fee equity

The House Veterans' Affairs Committee has approved a measure that would authorize reservists using the veterans' home loan guarantee program the same fees as active-duty service members. Active-duty members

Military kids can win computers

Military kids worldwide have the chance to win one of 10 personal computers during an August commissary promotion. The essay contest theme is "Why I am Proud to Be an American." Submit essays online at <http://www.familymedia.com/dmi/index.lasso> or mail to Family Essay 2002, PO Box 399, Old Bethpage, NY 11804. Write essays 100 words or less and submit (postmarked) no later than Sept. 15. Winners must be legal dependents of authorized commissary shoppers. ♦

currently pay fees from 0.75 percent to 2 percent of the value of the loan, while reservists pay from 1.5 percent to 2.75 percent. The fee variation in either case depends on the down payment size and type of home. ♦

Transitional health care benefits

Family members of active duty sponsors involuntarily separated from military service under honorable conditions, or family members of Reserve Component members separated after serving on active duty for more than 30 days in support of contingency operations, are eligible to receive transitional health care benefits for 60 or 120 days under the new Department of Defense (DoD) Worldwide TRICARE Transitional Health Care Demonstration Project if their sponsor was on active duty Jan. 1, 2002, or later.

The new demonstration project provides medical benefits to certain eligible active duty and Reserve families when their sponsors depart from military service. Family members of sponsors with fewer than six years of active duty service are eligible for 60 days of transitional health care benefits; those with six years or more are eligible for 120 days.

The transitional health care demonstration benefit is retroactive to Jan. 1, 2002, and remains in effect for two years, to allow DoD time to analyze the program and decide whether or not to make transitional health care a permanent TRICARE benefit for these family members.

Under the demonstration project family members may use TRICARE Standard, the fee-for-service option with deductibles and cost shares; TRICARE Extra, the network option with deductibles and negotiated fees; or TRICARE Prime, the network option that is least costly for most people.

Sponsors and family members who are enrolled in TRICARE Prime will be automatically disenrolled when the sponsor separates from active duty. To continue using the TRICARE Prime benefit during the transitional health care period, sponsors and family members must contact their TRICARE regional managed care support contractor, or their local TRICARE service center, and re-enroll in TRICARE Prime. There will be no break in TRICARE Prime coverage as long as the sponsor and family members re-enroll in TRICARE Prime.

Dental benefits are available to former active duty and Reserve Component members, but under this demonstration, family members of former active duty and Reserve Component members are not entitled to dental benefits. However, Reserve Component members and their family members who are eligible and enrolled in the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) would be eligible for dental benefits under the TDP.

To be eligible for transitional medical and dental benefits, the family member's sponsor must be: (1) a service member involuntarily separated from active duty;

(2) a member of the Reserves separated from active duty after serving more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation; (3) a service member separated from active duty after being involuntarily retained on active duty in support of a contingency operation; or (4) a service member separated from military service who voluntarily remained on active duty for one year or less in support of a contingency operation.

Transitional health care is not an automatic TRICARE benefit. Sponsors must ensure that they and their family members are enrolled in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS). Active duty sponsors may verify or update DEERS information for themselves or their family members by contacting or visiting their local military identification (ID) card issuing facility.

Claims for these family members will be processed using normal TRICARE claims processing procedures. Claims for family members with expired eligibility will be denied until eligibility is updated and verified in DEERS. If a member submits a claim and it is denied because of eligibility, the member should contact the Defense Manpower Data Center Support Office toll-free at 1-800-538-9552.

Sponsors and family members who have paid for health care expenses out of pocket, may submit a claim form (DD Form 2642) to TRICARE with a copy of their itemized bill to receive payment for these services. Family members who are eligible for care under the demonstration project and who have other health insurance (OHI), must submit all claims to their OHI provider first before submitting them for payment to TRICARE.

Claim forms are available on the TRICARE Web site at www.tricare.osd.mil/claims or from the local beneficiary counseling and assistance coordinator (BCAC), TRICARE service center representative, or TRICARE managed care support contractor.

Eligible sponsors or family members who require additional information on TRICARE may contact the Worldwide TRICARE Information Center toll-free at 1-888-DOD-CARE (1-888-363-2273). Additional information on TRICARE medical and dental benefits is available on the TRICARE Web site at <http://www.tricare.osd.mil> or by visiting the TRICARE service center or BCAC at the local military treatment facility.

For questions or assistance regarding claims, contact the managed care support contractor in their region, the nearest TRICARE service center or a BCAC at the nearest military treatment facility. ♦

Flameless ration heaters prohibited on commercial

In an effort to improve security and safety on commercial aircraft the federal aviation administration has asked the Department of Defense to stress to DoD personnel the necessity of keeping flameless ration heaters (FRHS) intact in their sealed meal, ready-to-eat (MRE) menu bags throughout flights on commercial aircraft.

FRHS separated from sealed MRE menu bags are prohibited and are not to be carried onto commercial aircraft nor are they to be packed in checked baggage.

It is acceptable practice to carry MREs on aircraft and checked baggage if FRHS are sealed in their original, intact, sealed, MRE menu bags.

If field stripping MREs prior to commercial flight, heaters are to be separated and disposed of in accordance with unit policy, not packed in rucksacks or elsewhere in baggage.

Commercial airlines will strictly enforce this prohibition of FRHS separated from their menu bags with the intensity and seriousness of any prohibited item (individuals carrying or concealing prohibited items may be subject to fine and/or imprisonment).

Contact Ms. Sandy Gorba or Mr. Bill Craze, DSN 795-6622/7070 or 570-895-6622/7070 for more information. ♣

Bill aids veteran's job search

According to the American Forces Press Service, legislation passed by the House of Representatives and pending in the Senate is designed to improve the Department of Labor's role in helping veterans find jobs.

The Jobs for Veterans Act, H.R. 4015, redesigns a Labor Department program called the Veterans Employment and Training Service.

Darryl Kehrer, staff director for the benefits subcommittee of the House Veterans Affairs Committee, noted that seven out of 10 veterans who use the current DoL program do not get jobs through it.

The current system doesn't work because there are no rewards for success or penalties for failure, Kehrer explained.

Enactment of the Jobs for Veterans bill also would give former service members first priority in all DoL-funded employment-training programs, and it would create the president's national Hire Veterans Committee, he noted.

For more help on career guidance and a job board, visit <http://www.military.com/Careers/Home/1,13373,,00.html> ♣

Servicemembers may already have college credit

Many colleges and universities are recognizing the value of having students with military experience, and are designing flexible programs to enable active duty personnel and veterans with full time jobs to earn their degrees.

Servicemembers may already have college credit from their military experience.

For more information about degree programs from schools that value military experience, servicemembers can request information at Military.com. Visit <http://www.military.com/Education/Lead1?ESRC=mr.nl> or contact the 88th Regional Support Command Education Office at 1-800-THE ARMY ext. 3432. ♣

Scholarships contain sizable bonus

Commissary industry donations that fund the 2002 Scholarships for Military Children were up in 2002 and as a result, scholarship recipients will find an extra \$400 in their checks.

The scholarship program, in its second year, has already distributed over \$1.5 million to 920 military children worldwide. The program is supported by donations from commissary business partners.

For more Information visit, starting Nov. 1, www.commissaries.com or www.fisherhouse.org or your local commissary.

Army testing automated selection system

The Army's sergeant-major board that meets this fall will test a new Automated Selection Board System that replaces hardcopy files with electronic records.

Only master sergeants in the zone for promotion in the medical field (Career Management Field 91) will be in the test population, said personnel officials.

Board members will review individual CMF 91 files (official military personnel file, photo, enlisted record brief, and letter to the board president,

if submitted) on the ASBS as electronic files.

The first officer board that will test the automated selection process will be the Colonel Army Medical Command selection board which takes place from Jan. 21-31, officials said.

The U.S. Army Reserve Personnel Command in St. Louis began automated boards in February for Active-Guard-Reserve entrance boards, along with AGR company and battalion command selection boards, an AR-PERSCOM official said.

Summer and sexual harassment

With the summer months upon us, once again the potential comes into play for an increase in sexual harassment complaints. It goes without saying, when the air heats up, the cloths come off, whether it be down to a swimsuit while relaxing in some body of water, or participating in a detail during drill or AT.

Historically, there will always be folks who just don't get it.

Verbal or non-verbal communication that is sexual in nature, requests for sexual favors, physical contact of a sexual nature and unwelcome sexual advances all fit the definition of sexual

harassment. Complaints of sexual harassment are down for the 88th overall by 40 percent.

The reduction, as I see it, can be attributed to several things:

(1) An increased awareness by most soldiers and civilians concerning the impact of sexual harassment on the individual, unit, and mission. When an investigation into allegations of sexual harassment is being conducted, productivity stops, tasks fail to get accomplished and unit cohesion suffers.

(2) An increase in commanders taking action against those personnel that sexually harass others.

(3) On the spot corrections are not things of the past. Recognizing and pointing out behaviors in others that are/or can be seen as sexist in nature create a major impact toward eliminating sexual harassment.

When that big orange fireball begins to heat up your environment, watch and listen for behaviors that detract from good order and discipline. Please don't allow yourself or others to let your mouth write a check your career can't cash. With a bit of common sense and professionalism, sexual harassment can be eliminated.

Richard (Rich) Cox, Equal Opportunity Specialist, 88th RSC

Chaplain's corner

Donations from the Blue Devil Association have given chaplains from the 88th Reserve Support Command the ability to assist soldiers and civilians in financial need.

"The Blue Devil Association was started about six years ago by members of the 88th to establish communication between past and present members and to raise funds to use for soldier care," said Command Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Larry Edlund, the membership chairman of the association.

This year the Blue Devil Association donated \$1,800 for use by the assistant staff chaplain at RSC headquarters, Chap. (Maj.) Kenneth Beale. Beale receives recommendations from 88th RSC soldiers and chaplains when someone has a small financial emergency or specific need. The need is then verified and Beale distributes the money accordingly.

This year, 13 reserve soldiers and civilians received assistance from this program, said Maj. Gen. (Ret.) George Steiner, the president of the association.

Last winter the program helped families buy Christmas presents and pay their heating bills. Assistance was also given to those with serious illness in the family, credit card debt, unemployment, new children, and a victim of an apartment fire.

The chaplain still has funds available. Any soldier or civilian working for the 88th is eligible. All recommendations or requests must go through a chaplain who can then refer them to Beale, said Steiner.

The Blue Devil Association funds the donations through membership dues and the sale of the "Blue Devil Commemorative Coin", said Steiner. The association has been selling the coin at 88th functions such as the commander's conference and the military expo, Steiner added. The Blue Devil Commemorative Coin costs members of the Blue Devil Association \$5 and nonmembers \$7, said Edlund.

The association, which is based out of Fort Snelling, Minn., is looking to expand its membership to include

members from all of the six states in the RSC, said Steiner.

Currently the association has 118 members, said Steiner.

Members may be of any age or rank, active, retired or civilian. Spouses are also eligible to become members, said Edlund.

"We can do more as we get more members outside of our base area," said Steiner.

To become a member of the Blue Devil Association, contact:

Larry Edlund
6528 Girard Ave. S.
Richfield, Minn., 55423.

The membership fee is \$15, said Steiner. Outside donations are also accepted and can be sent to Edlund at the above address.

"We would like to encourage more to participate because the money goes back to the soldiers and families of the 88th," said Edlund. ♦

Pfc. Blair Larson, 364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.



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