

Blue Devil II

88th Regional Support Command
"The Right Place to Soldier"

Winter 1999
Vol. IV, No.1



CG's Corner

Last year we launched the development of the Blue Devils 2000 Course, a first-line leader's course designed to bridge the gap between the PLDC and BNCOC. The material for the course draws heavily on interviews with sergeants and staff sergeants throughout the RSC. These sergeants are the first-line leaders of our command and have the day-to-day contact with our newly enlisted and first-term soldiers.

These sergeants and staff sergeants were asked what tools they needed most to be successful leaders. We took their input and tapped the knowledge of the subject matter experts within the command. As a final checkpoint, the command sergeants major of the RSC reviewed and tested each element and gave it their stamp of approval. The result is a strong course giving our first-line leaders the tools they asked for.

A preview of the course offerings includes six tools.

The first tool is a videotaped presentation, which shows students the 'big picture' of the Army Reserves, and how it fits in today's military.

The second tool studies ten specific leadership techniques with particular emphasis placed on sponsorship and counseling. Students role-play with scenarios which are based on true-life incidents and then build shells for counseling their own soldiers.

Tool #3 opens with a discussion of situations in-

Continued on page 23



.....From the Top

By Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Bowden

FIRST SERGEANT! It has been my intention for some time to highlight what I consider to be the toughest, most important job

in the Army, that of first sergeant. The men and women who hold this prestigious position have the greatest influence, both positive and negative, on our soldiers. A good first sergeant will pull up a mediocre unit, and a mediocre one will pull the unit down.

AR 611-201 gives the duty description of a first sergeant. Words like *assist, coordinate, supervise, advise, counsel, assess, and evaluate* are used to describe the position. I prefer the description found on the NCO Web site:

"When you are talking about the first sergeant, you are talking about the life blood of the Army."

In the German Army, the first sergeant is referred

to as the "father of the company" -- the provider, the disciplinarian, the wise counselor, the tough unbending foe, the confidant, the sounding board -- everything that we need in a leader to guide us through our personal successes and failures.

The former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. John V. Vessey Jr., rose from private to first sergeant before receiving a battlefield commission. "The toughest position I ever held was first sergeant of a line unit," he once said.

As I reflect on my military career, the years I spent as first sergeant were some of the most challenging I have experienced. That's why, when counseling senior NCOs who are potential command sergeants major, I give the following advice: "Wear a diamond."

How can a CSM effectively counsel and assist a first sergeant if he or she has never been in that position? Those of you who wear or aspire to wear the diamond which identifies you as the senior sergeant in your unit, thank you. Your many hours of commitment make our Army the great organization that it is.

-- Blue Devils!

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Contents

Vol. IV, No. 1

Winter 1999

CG's Corner.....	2
From the Top.....	2
983rd Eng. install playground equipment.....	4
256th CSH vies for food service award.....	6
Reservist builds better hand wash.....	7
Saving lives: a matter of time for 99th FST.....	8
Reservists demonstrate skills to tomorrow's soldiers.....	10
The Mother of all Slides.....	12
Too old and too busy to go to school?.....	14
New building, new era for intell.....	15
Going for gold.....	16
Bits and pieces.....	17
Soldiers sponsor blood drive.....	18
338th Army Band has 23-year tradition.....	18
A tribute to John Glenn.....	19
88th DC promoted to Brig. Gen.....	20
New Retention NCOIC named.....	20
Promotion guides.....	21
If you can't bring Santa to the kids-.....	22

On the cover



See story on page 12

(Front cover) Spc. Jerry Healy accompanies August Horner down the Giant Snow Slide. Healy and other soldiers from the 367th Engineer Battalion built the slide for the St. Paul Winter Carnival. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bill Geddes)



Final preparations are made by members of Co. A, 983rd Engineers Heavy Construction Battalion, who have been installing playground equipment at Smiley Park the last three months. The play stations are scheduled to be open to the public before the end of the year.

If you build it, they will come

Co. A, 983rd Engineers install playground equipment at Smiley Park

**Story and Photos by Sgt. David Bennett
367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio**

Sue Heppeard watched as the Army Reservists in camouflaged fatigues distributed the gravel around with shovels, and a front-end loader arrived to dump another scoop of loose rock onto their worksite.

As some soldiers used shovels and post-hole diggers to widen the holes where the poles protruded from the ground, Heppeard stood by quietly with a stick in hand.

Though not in the Reserves herself, Heppeard does supervise the area where these heavy construction specialists were busy December 6, 1998, erecting equipment she needs the most: curved slides, tube-like slides, bars for climbing, bars for swinging, and bars for clinging.

As the park director for the city of Van Wert, Ohio, Heppeard has watched members of Company A, 983rd Engineers Battalion (Heavy Construction), based in Lima, Ohio, work the last three months installing playground equipment at Smiley Park.

As work on the playground draws to a close, Heppeard said the venture would not have been pos-



Spc. Duane R. Young tightens the last bolt on one of the play stations at Smiley Park.

sible without the effort and time the reservists dedicated to the project.

According to Heppeard, the essential element in the joint venture between the city and the Army was that the reservists volunteered their expertise for free. Though the total cost of the playground equipment (more than \$40,000) was funded through a state grant and a donation by the Van Wert Rotary Club, the park board's budget could not cover the costs of erecting the equipment.

"We really didn't have the funding to do the installation," Heppeard said. "I was talking to Jack Frysinger in July when we got the equipment. He thought it might be a job his reserve unit would want to tackle."

Jack Frysinger, a Van Wert native and the 983rd's unit administrator, said the unit is always searching for meaningful community projects.

"It's good exposure for people to see us out here," said Frysinger. "We were able to use our skills and training to benefit the community and probably saved the city at least \$15,000."

After ten consecutive weekends of



Spc. Scotty R. Fuqua uses a wooden plank to level a block underneath a tubular slide at Smiley Park.



digging and assembling the playground equipment, the final work on the playground was done by the end of 1998.

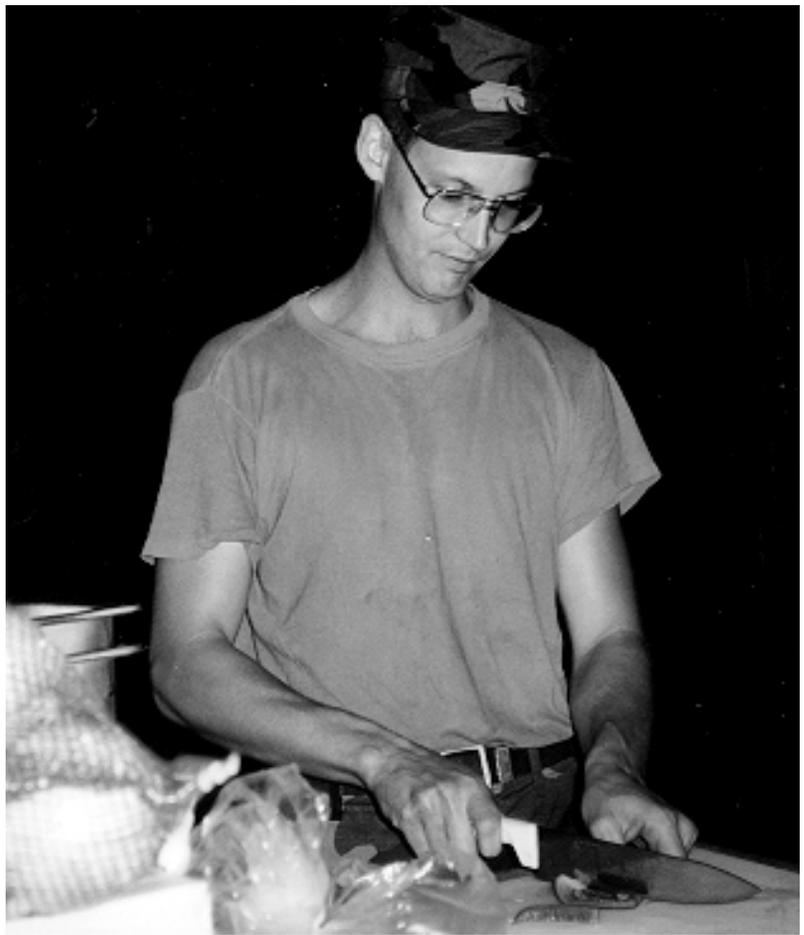
1st Sgt. Gregory A. Amstutz of the 983rd said the experience has been a departure from the normal jobs the unit participates in.

In addition, Amstutz said, the new playground will come in handy since he is a city resident himself.

"I have a 1-year-old granddaughter," he said. "We will probably get over here on the swings and the slide quite a bit."

Spc. Scotty R. Fuqua jacks up one side of a play station at Smiley Park. It was one of many pieces of playground equipment which members of Co. A, 983rd Eng. Bn. (HC) installed.

Sgt. James Rennicker, a shift leader for cooks in the 256th Combat Support Hospital, chops up green peppers. Rennicker was helping prepare the meal the unit was to be judged on for the Philip A. Connelly award competition.



Mmmm.....GOOD!!

256th CHS cooks vie for prestigious Philip A. Connelly award for good eats

**Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Bill Geddes
364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.**

The cooks of the 256th Combat Support Hospital (CHS) are in high gear. Steaks are sizzling, pots clanging and salad is flying as they slice and dice their way through the preparation of another meal for their fellow soldiers during annual training at Fort McCoy, Wis., last July.

It's a frenzy of activity, but that's nothing new. The kitchen is a 21-hour-a-day operation in the field, and the cooks have gotten used to the 12-hours-on, 12-hours-off routine. The only thing different about this meal is the cooks are competing today for the Reserve Field category of the Philip A. Connelly award, the highest food service award in the Army. There is no room for mistakes.

And at this level, they aren't likely to make

any. Just to be selected to compete in the Philip A. Connelly competition as the representative for the 88th Regional Support Command is an honor. Not that that's the reason for the hard work.

"I just put out the meal," said Sgt. James Rennicker, a shift leader for the cooks. "If they think I deserve an award, then I'll get one."

And judging by what the 256th cooks are able to do with the meals, they do deserve one.

"The Army has recipe files, but there are remarks on the sheets, so you can make changes for preferences within your unit," said Capt. Philip Good, the chief of nutrition care for the 256th CSH. "For instance, the bean soup is on the menu tonight, and we're going to make the necessary changes, like substituting for the ham or beef stock, to make it into a vegetarian soup for the vegetarians in our unit."

Altering the recipe to accommodate the vegetarians in the unit is just one example of the changes Good and the cooks are able to make.

“We have to follow the 14-day menu cycle for Fort McCoy,” said Good, a Baltimore resident who commutes to Cleveland to drill with the unit. “Now once you get in the field, even though the menu says you have pork chops or green beans or whatever, you can switch the days around. You can change or do other things with the substance once you have it, such as using some of the scallions from the salad to garnish the Swiss steaks.”

And details like garnishings can be important -- not just in the way the food is perceived by the soldiers, but in the way the cooks are judged in the competition. How the food tastes isn't the only criteria for the judges. Sanitation, how the food is presented, the service provided along with the food, having the nutritional information for the food posted, and even having the paperwork filled out properly are also part of the checklist.

Which isn't much of a change for Good. “Cooking in the Army is no different than cooking in the civilian sector,” he said. “I work for John Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, and we produce 10,000 meals a day. Here we make 320 to 340 meals, three times a day, so for me it's on a smaller scale. The difference is I don't have steam vacate kettles or fast convection ovens here. I have our field equipment and our M2 burners. We're also working in a

Keep it clean! Army Reservist builds a better hand wash

A hand wash built by a food service sergeant introduces a new use for the immersion heaters which the Army is replacing with the M2 burner units within the field sanitation center.

Sgt. 1st Class (retired) Ralph Munger of the 192nd's Quartermaster Company (Petroleum Supply) in Milan, Ohio, created the hand wash on his own time.

Munger, whose citation for a Meritorious Service Medal upon his retirement in June included mention of his invention, is a Viet Nam veteran who also had 22 years of service with the 192nd.

Munger made the hand wash by placing a spigot on the outside of an immersion heater can so that the heater can con-

field environment where you've got dust and flies, but you still have to maintain the same sanitation standards. Actually, in the field environment, we want to maintain higher sanitation standards to prevent an outbreak of food-borne illnesses.”

All of which is appreciated by the soldiers.

While they didn't win the Connelly award for 1998 — Headquarters, Headquarters Company, 372nd Engineer Group out of the 89th RSC did — they've already been chosen to compete in it again this year.

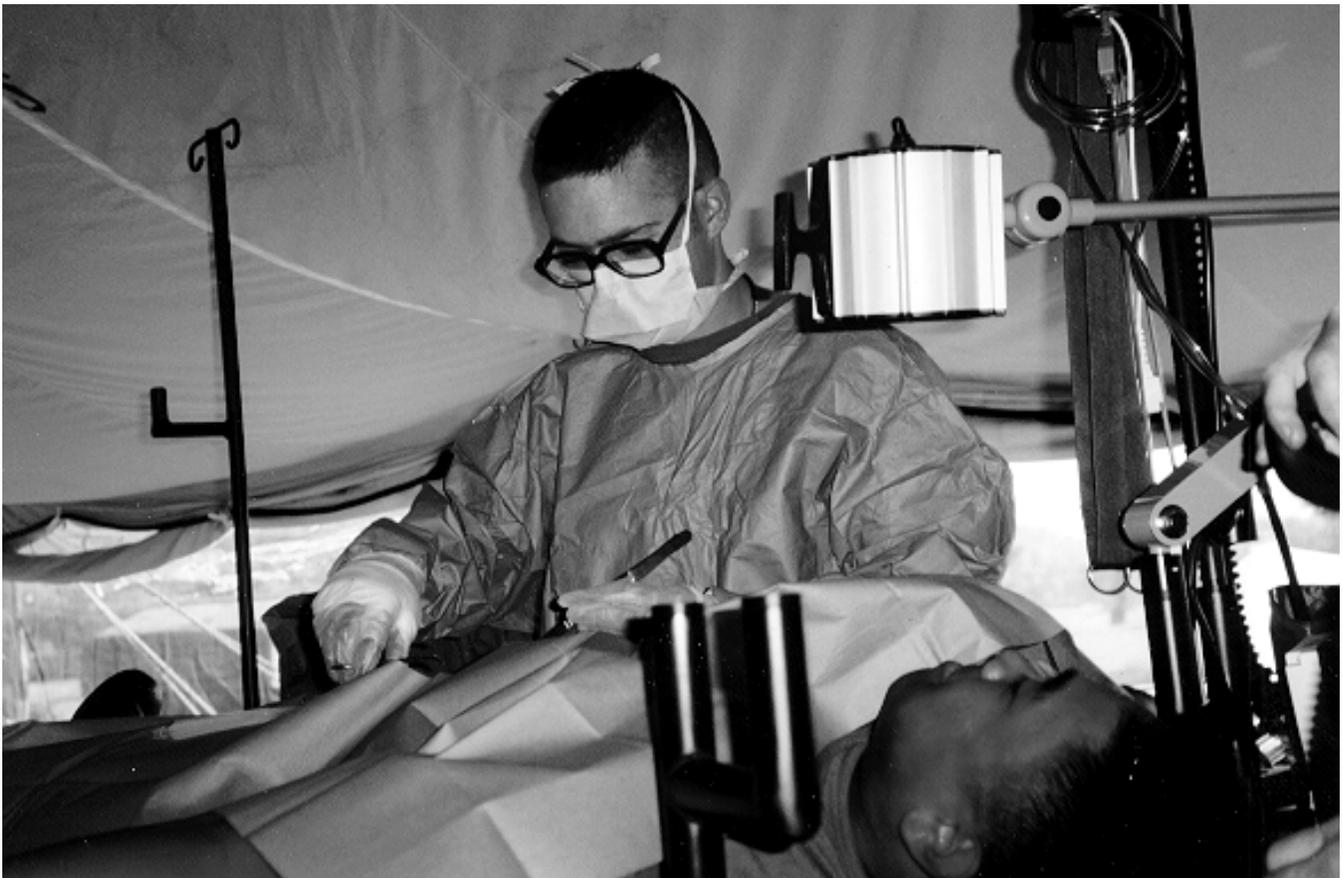
But again, being in the Connelly competition isn't the reason these cooks work so hard -- it's the soldiers.

“It makes us feel good when soldiers come back and say thanks for the good meal,” said Good. “It's challenging at times when things don't go right, like you don't have a refrigerator and you don't have

enough ice or storage capabilities for perishable food, or when you're doing the best you can to forecast for 320 troops and then at the last person you run out and the person gets irate -- that gets discouraging. For the most part though, the cooks in this section are really proud of the section, and they have not forgotten that service is part of it even in the field environment, and I think that's part of the reason we're in the Connelly competition.”

tinually warm the water. A wooden box hanging from the can contains paper towels. A pump bottle to the left of the hand wash contains soap. The hand wash sits atop a table which opens and stores the soap and towels.

(From The Quartermaster General's UPDATE, Jan. 1999)



Spc. John C. Scott, trauma triage noncommissioned officer in charge for the 99th Forward Surgical Team, practices surgical techniques while on annual training at Fort McCoy, Wis., in July of 1998. This was the first annual training for the 99th FST, the only unit of its kind in the 88th Regional Support Command.

Saving lives: a matter of time

**Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Bill Geddes
364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.**

The *Golden Hour*. Defined by emergency medical personnel as one hour of intensive care during which it is possible to save the life of a critically injured or traumatized person. It's largely because of this hour that a new type of unit has been formed: the forward surgical team.

The 99th Forward Surgical Team (FST), the only unit of its type in the 88th Regional Support Command, was formed in March 1998. "The mission of the forward surgical team is to go forward in the battle area to the division or brigade rear, set up rapidly to perform resuscitative and lifesaving surgical procedures, and stabilize the injured soldiers for further transport to the rear," explained Lt. Col.

John Dirk Wassner, commander of the 99th FST.

"We know that death from trauma occurs in what we call a trimodal distribution," said Wassner. "A certain percentage of deaths are immediate – those are usually from massive head injuries or massive uncontrollable bleeding. Those patients are dead at the scene."

The third distribution of casualty deaths includes those who die despite surgical intervention because of trauma or from other complications. But it's the second distribution that concerns the 99th FST.

"The second distribution is within an hour," said Wassner. "Those are the patients who typically have injuries that are lifethreatening if they are not corrected. And they are usually corrected in very simple ways, things like opening the airway, con-

trolling the ventilation, putting in a chest tube, or controlling hemorrhage from a ruptured abdominal organ. These are the sorts of injuries that will kill a patient within the first hour if he or she is not cared for by a surgeon or a surgical team who is knowledgeable in that sort of immediate resuscitative intervention.”

And that is the main focus of a forward surgical team.

“We can stabilize these patients long enough that they can get to a place like the combat support hospital or some other fixed facility where they can receive definitive surgical care,” said Wassner. “The FST doesn’t plan on giving definitive or elective surgical care; it plans on resuscitating the soldiers so that they can be evacuated out. They try to preserve the motto of the Army medic, which is ‘*Conserve the fighting strength.*’”

Successor to MASH units

The FSTs were designed as the successor to the MASH units, which had become heavy and cumbersome.

“What was needed with today’s fluid battlefield was a unit which was highly mobile,” Wassner explained. “We’re 100 percent mobile — sling-loadable, and air-droppable. The unit can be transported on a C-130, we have our own vehicles and we can go pretty much anywhere and set up in a short period of time. We are self-sustainable for 72 hours or 30 major operations before we have to re-deploy or be resupplied by preloaded pallets of equipment and supplies.”

It’s a special type of unit, and because of that, a special type of soldier belongs in it. In addition to being MOS-qualified, knowledgeable in basic soldier skills, and physically fit, Wassner said the soldiers in the unit are expected to be cross-trained so that any one of them, from the commander down to the medics and nurses, can take care of all the equipment.

For the 99th FST, that wasn’t a problem. “There’s the cachet, the allure if you will, of a unit that has this type of mission,” said Wassner. “We had a big response. A lot of the soldiers who are more aggressive and interested in their soldier skills stood in line to join the unit.”

Soldiers like Spc. John C. Scott, trauma triage noncommissioned officer in charge for the 99th FST. “I was attracted to this unit because of my medical experience while I was active duty in a medical unit with the artillery Battalion, 3rd Armored Cav. Regiment,” said Scott. “I’ve been to combat, I’ve treated combat casualties, and I know what it’s like. A part of me enjoyed it and kind of missed it.”

The units first annual training at Fort McCoy, Wis., in July 1998, indicated it will be successful. The unit performed well despite several challenges which popped up, such as smaller tents than they should have had as well as a personnel shortage.

“We still accomplished the mission and received all positive feedback from the evaluators,” said Scott. “We hit the ground running – there was no walking or crawling. We were down and set up while the 801st Combat Support Hospital was still being staked.”



All soldiers in the 99th Forward Surgical Team must be proficient in tasks such as inserting IVs.

Scouts and Soldiers Day --

Reservists demonstrate skills to tomorrow's soldiers

Story and photo by Pfc. Jennifer S. Trautwein,
367th MPAD/ Team A, Whitehall, Ohio

In the shadow of an enormous Army crane, a young boy sat in a metal folding chair, the controls on his lap. Suspense filled the air as he operated the controls of the heavy-expanded mobility/tactical truck wrecker in the delicate task of moving a small pail of water from one spot on the ground to another without spilling a drop.

This is just one of the many experiences that members of Boy Scouts of America and Girl Scouts of America from the area had during the second *Scouts and Soldiers Day* held Sept. 19, 1998, at the 83rd Infantry Division Reserve Center, Whitehall, Ohio.

Maj. Thomas C. Cunningham, a mobilization/training officer with the Command Assistance and Assessment Team 3, under the U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Command, was in charge of the event.

Scouts and Soldiers Day brought in about 240 people from Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. The success of the event can be credited to the 50 to 60 volunteers from several different reserve units who stood by their stations and talked to the Scouts and other participants throughout the day. The United Service Organization, Veterans of Foreign Wars and Kroger also made cash donations to help cover the costs the day's events.

Develop young people's interest

"We want to help young people from these kinds of organizations develop an interest in the Army Reserve," Cunningham said.

Brian E. Thompson, a Boy Scout with Troop 22 of Salem, went through all of the 19 stations and



As Scouts went to each station, they were given a short class on 19 different military careers with the Army Reserve. After completion of all 19 stations, the Scouts were awarded this patch which was designed by Brian Joseph Alber of the 367th MPAD. It represented the unity of scouts and soldiers on that day.

talked about his day.

"I actually went through the recruiting booth and swore in and everything," said Thompson. "I've been thinking about joining the Army since third grade."

While Thompson enjoyed the recruiting station, other Scouts talked about their favorite stations.

Kody Hamm, with Troop 168 of Flatwoods, Ky., said the night-vision goggles station was the best. The Scouts were taken into a separate room and asked to put on the night-vision goggles as the room was darkened. They were instructed to look around the room for a parakeet and a ferret using the devices in complete darkness. Many of the

scouts commented on their amazement of being able to see those images without any light in the room.

Austin Johnson, with Troop 861 of Columbus, said his favorite station was the HEMTT wrecker.

There were 19 stations attended by Army Reserve volunteers from all different military careers. Scouts could talk to Army nurses, lawyers, cooks, military police, photographers, mechanics and others.

Patch awarded for competing all stations

As the Scouts went to each station, they were given a short class. A volunteer would then sign their initials on a sheet to verify completion of the station. When all 19 stations were signed off as being completed, the Scouts were awarded a special patch. Brian Joseph Albers, with the 367th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, designed the patch to represent the unity of the Scouts and soldiers on that day.

The Scouts were not the only ones who enjoyed the day. Parents and Scout leaders had a great time, too.

“It was a great learning experience,” said Gail M. Egle, the mother of Jillian M. Egle, a member of Troop 2582 of Pickerington. “We adults even asked a lot of questions. I enjoyed learning all the different occupations.”

Bobbi A. Bauer, assistant scoutmaster with Troop 26 of Pickerington, said she thought the events of the day could be beneficial to her Scouts.

“It was very well put together and very informative,” said Bauer. “It gives them the opportunity to see how things they learn in Scouting are used outside of Scouting as they grow older.”

Cunningham said the plans for the Scouts and Soldiers Day began when his son’s troop showed an interest in seeing the Reserve Center. Everything grew from there.

Some Scouts said they were there to learn more about the different careers and others said they were there for different reasons. Whatever the reasons were for coming, the smiles on some of the faces of the volunteers, Scouts, Scout leaders and parents showed that it was definitely a fun as well as informative day.



Staff Sgt. Randal J. Rogers, with 758th Maintenance Company of Whitehall, helps Aaron Woith maneuver the powerful crane while Austin Johnson (left) and Michael Muetzel (right) intently watch and wait for their turn. The crane, attached to an M984A1 heavy expanded mobility tactical truck wrecker, was just one of the experiences for Scouts to encounter as part of the Scouts and Soldiers Day held September 19 at the Army Reserve Center in Whitehall, Ohio.

The Mother of all

Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Bill Geddes
364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.

The children's eyes glistened with anticipation as the soldiers helped them get settled on the sleds. Their smiles quickly spread to the soldiers, who gave each sled a push down the track and watched the children squeal as they hurtled down the slide to the hay bales at the bottom of the run.

An unusual day for the soldiers. An unusual slide for the kids. An opportunity to release some pressure for both.

The slide, dubbed the Giant Snow Slide, was the result of a domestic action project the soldiers — all members of the 367th Engineer Battalion from



Sgt. 1st Class Tim O'Connell, 367th Engineer Battalion, adjusts some boards while helping to build the Giant Snow Slide.

St. Cloud, Minn. — took on to get some “stick time” on their equipment, raise the visibility of the Army Reserve, help make the St. Paul Winter Carnival a success and, well, to help kids like these have the time of their lives.

“The slide is the focus of the St. Paul Winter Carnival this year,” said Capt. David Skavnak, project officer for Headquarters, Company, 367th Eng. Bn. “They don't have an ice castle this year, so this is the cornerstone event.”

And as if being the featured project of the annual winter event wasn't pressure enough, the local television stations piled on.

“On the 10 o'clock news the other night, one of the local stations said the engineers were building the ‘*mother of all slides*,’” said Sgt. 1st Class Tim O'Connell, a platoon sergeant for Company C, 367th Eng. Bn. “It worried me a bit — we had better do a good job so we can keep our reputation and not have to put duct tape over our name tags!”

With all the preparation and hard work the unit put in, O'Connell need not have worried. The unit first learned they would be taking on the project three months ago. They immediately started planning how to build such an unusual structure.

“We begged, borrowed and scrounged up what little information is available on ice structures,” said Skavnak. “After that, you really have to go back to what you know. Combat engineers have a woodchuck manual, FM 5-34. You can calculate using nonstandard bridge calculations what kind of strengths you're working with, what kind of loads you can bear on almost any structure. That's almost what we were looking at -- a nonstandard bridge with a deck on it.”

Once the slide was designed, construction started Monday, January 18. The grand opening was held about two weeks later on the 29th.

“What we have here is a façade,” said Skavnak. “Scaffolding is inside the structure, and



Slides

that's actually supporting the upper deck."

Getting the scaffolding built and leveled took a lot of time, according to O'Connell. "It's built on a slope," he said. "We framed it all in with 3/4-inch plywood, then used a loader to fill it with snow."

Finding the snow presented a challenge. They couldn't gather snow from the immediate area, according to O'Connell, because they would have torn up the hill. "We've been hauling it from Midway Stadium in St. Paul," he said. "It's approximately 200 cubic yards of snow."

Once they had the snow at the site, they'd fill it into the frame in five-foot sections and use a water truck to ice it down. "We put 1,000 gallons of water on each five-foot section," O'Connell said. "It's going to be a huge ice block when we're done."

All that work required a team effort. "Everybody's pitching in, from the privates to the captains," O'Connell said. "Everybody's working — they'll grab a nail, they'll hand you a hammer, they'll lift a board."

The team effort also helped them overcome the tasks that always seem to pop up when you take on bizarre projects like this one. Weather wasn't much of a factor — the soldiers were from the area and so were already climatized — but other things, like the snow, were.

"Snow doesn't move like dirt," Skavnak said. "It can be quite slippery and unstable from the aspect of traction, so that's been quite a challenge. A lot of the challenges have to do with the fact that it's such a different project than what we're used to dealing with. We've had to battle-staff a lot of different ideas and courses of action when it comes down to technique."

The techniques — and the uniforms — helped draw attention to their efforts. Traffic slowed as it went by the area, creating mini-traffic jams, and children gathered to watch the soldiers work. "I like doing a community-type project like this,"

O'Connell said. "I like giving things back to the community so they get to interact with us and see what we actually do. People seem pretty impressed."

The community was very impressed with the final result. Several kids from the Transition to Independence program, a program the St. Paul Public School system offers for special needs students, were the first ones down the slide, a reward for volunteer work they did for the carnival. "It was great," said Mary Dresen, a teacher in the program. "The kids loved it."

"I went real fast," said Mary Beth Saumweber, a student in the program. She nodded when asked if it made all the volunteer work worthwhile.

Which means that O'Connell and the rest of the engineers won't have to worry about putting duct tape over their nametags. Not that they were. "We will make it happen," O'Connell said. "The engineers always make it happen."



Sgt. 1st Class Tim Schraut, 367th Engineer Battalion, shovels snow to help fill the scaffolding of the Giant Snow Slide at the St. Paul Winter Carnival.

Think you're too old and too busy to go to school?!

Think again!!

By **Bob Rorke, Education Office, Fort Snelling**

A soldier passed by the education office here at Fort Snelling recently and told us that all of the education benefits are focused on the young college students who don't have to drive their kids to piano lessons, hockey, soccer, or baseball practice. She told us that she wanted to go to college, but she has kids, a husband, and a house to take care of.

We asked her if she would be interested in earning a degree if she never had to show up in class. We assured her that all of the course work is completed through the mail, e-mail, computer, or other methods. There are many degree programs that students can complete without ever even stepping foot on campus. Students can complete all of the work at night after the kids go to bed so they don't need a babysitter.

“Can I use the GI Bill if I complete the courses by mail or if I only take one class?”

You can use the GI Bill or you can use the DANTEs 75 percent Tuition Assistance for Distance Learning. If you use the GI Bill, then you receive a monthly check. If you use the DANTEs Tuition Assistance Program, then you receive a check for 75 percent of the tuition sent to your home about three weeks after you receive the passing grade for the course.

“What if I need help on an assignment?”

You are given e-mail addresses and phone numbers to call for assistance. The DANTEs External Degree catalog lists the e-mail address and the 800 number for information on the schools with associate, bachelor and master's degree programs. You can also ask each school what they have set up for tutors to help with assignments.

“What does DANTEs stand for?”

DANTEs stands for Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support. Their web site is: <http://www.voled.doded.mil>. They are based in

Pensacola, Florida. All of the colleges on the DANTEs web site that offer degrees through distance learning accept credits recommended for military experiences. The colleges also accept credits for CLEP and other tests. The DANTEs web site has sample tests for the DANTEs Subject Standardized Tests (DSST). We have sample tests for all of the CLEP tests and DSST.

“How do I get my military experiences evaluated for college credits? How long will it take?”

The quickest, easiest way is to complete a DA5454-R for an AARTS transcript. The forms are in the 88th RSC education office or you can pull up the form on the Internet at <http://www-leav.army.mil/aarts>. You can fax or send the form to AARTS at Fort Leavenworth. You do not need copies of any diplomas or certificates. You are the only person who needs to sign it. Less than a week after AARTS receives your form, your college will receive the transcript.

“How many credits will the college give me?”

That depends on the military schools you have attended, your MOS, and your rank. Each college has its own policy about how many credits it will grant students. But all of the colleges listed in the DANTEs External Degree Catalog will usually follow the AARTS recommendation. AARTS will send the college an official copy of the transcript and AARTS will send you an unofficial copy of your transcript.

“How long will it take for me to complete the degree this way?”

When you find a program and a school you are interested in, an advisor from that school can tell you how many courses you will need to take to earn a degree.

For more information, call the Education Office at (612) 713-3082 or look on the Internet at <http://www.voled.doded/dantes/dl>.

New building, new era for intel

By Sgt. Daniel W. Schiff
318th PAD, Forest Park, Ill.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence, Arthur L. Money, joined the commanding general of the U.S. Army Reserve, Maj. Gen. Thomas J. Plewes, in dedicating a new addition to the North Central Army Reserve Intelligence Support Center (JOINT), (NCARISC (J)). The ribbon-cutting ceremony took place Dec. 12, 1998, and was attended by members of all the armed forces.

The building dedication at Fort Sheridan, Ill., ushers in the beginning of a new era in intelligence operations and training with its opening and operation.

“This new state-of-the-art facility represents a giant step toward the future of intelligence operations for our armed forces throughout the department of defense,” said Money at the ceremony. “A major change in the way we use citizen soldiers within the intelligence community is occurring.”

The full-time AGR commander of the NCARISC (J), Lt. Col. Carol J. Rogers, was pleased and excited at the dedication of the new facility.

“The addition of this wing increases our center’s space to 46,170 square feet. This is essential for accomplishing our mission to provide an environment that makes ‘*training through operations*’ a reality.”

The Joint Reserve Intelligence Connectivity Program came to fruition with a study done in 1994 by the Defense Intelligence Agency.

The program will put 28 Joint Reserve Intelligence Centers (JRICs) into operation nationwide for all branches.

Each JRIC will be built with state-of-



Mr. Arthur L. Money, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Command, Control, Communications and Intelligence), speaks about the importance of the future of intelligence operations for all of the armed forces, at the NCARISC (J) building dedication at Fort Sheridan, Ill. (U.S. Army Reserve photo by Staff Sgt. Brandi Garza)

the-art equipment to facilitate the processing, handling and packaging of intelligence for commanders in the field worldwide. The 28 centers will support an estimated 8,000 military intelligence Reservists. The reservists supporting each JRIC will be essential personnel in the support of real-world missions, providing unified commands direct support for current and future operations.

“The additional JRICs will be modeled on the testbed example the NCARISC (J) has established,” said Plewes. “In the end, the Army Reserve will provide the core staff and building for five of the JRICs and reserve manpower support at all the others. This is not just a building, but a concept and idea that will lead us, the Reserves, into a future of joint activities.”

Capt. James Benning and National Guard Capt. Tim Derrick hurry through the obstacle course portion of the pentathlon. (Photo by Darren Carroll, courtesy of Sports Illustrated)

Picture 16-1

Going for gold

**Spc. Patrick O'Shaughnessy
364th MPAD, Fort Snelling,
Minn.**

For Capt. James Benning “being all you can be” just isn’t good enough. He wants to be all he can be — times five.

Benning, a training officer in the 88th Regional Support Command, is aiming for no less than a gold medal in the Military Pentathlon, in Athens, Greece, this August.

Benning, and up to 40 other officers from all branches of the U.S. military, will gather in June for two weeks of intensive physical training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, in an attempt to earn a spot in the prestigious annual competition.

Going for the gold, however, is a team effort. Training with Benning is an eight-year veteran, National Guard Capt. Tim Derrick, former Olympic biathlon coach for the United States who is

from Ann Arbor, Mich.. Joining the duo is a new teammate, Capt. Jim Tanner, an Army Reserve medvac pilot from Idaho. Benning, a civil engineer for the city of Duluth, Minn., said that while there is the chance that some of all of the team might not be selected for the competition, he is confident they will make the grade.

“We are all showing up ready to fight, ready to go,” said Benning.

Benning and his teammates will be looking to improve on his team’s fourth place finish from last year’s competition in Brighton, England.

The Military Pentathlon, as the name implies, concentrates on skills used by soldiers worldwide, as opposed to its civilian counterpart, the Modern Pentathlon. Participants compete in five categories: pistol marksmanship, rifle marksmanship, obstacle course, swimming and military land navi-

gation. Up to 20 NATO countries participate in the annual, three-day competition. Each year, a different country sponsors the event.

Benning said the competition is a culmination of months of training that starts at one’s home, then continues at Fort Sam Houston, where all U.S. participants gather to train together and vie for a spot on a three-member team.

The training Benning and his teammates will go through requires participants to be both physically and mentally tough, said Maj. Bob Thompson, coach of the U.S. teams. “In 1993, we turned this into a leadership development program as well as an athletic one,” he said. Thompson, whose civilian job is management consulting in Florida, has prepared a classroom curriculum that includes time management, personal leadership and nutrition.

The goal of the training camp will be to select the final roster that will go on to represent the United

States later this summer. But in order to get there, candidates will have to tackle the five categories of the military pentathlon. After completing this grueling training camp, the top 18 soldiers selected — divided into six teams — will head to the competition in Athens.

Though competing and winning against the NATO's best is

important to these athletes, their main goal is not to win medals, but to bring back expertise.

"When I won the gold medal in 1995 in Rome, it put more responsibility on my shoulders," said Benning. "I had more obligation to the program, to teach and mentor the other competitors."

Benning said that while win-

ning another Gold Medal would be great, the main reason for sending a team to the competition is to become more proficient in military leadership and to share that knowledge.

"In that way," said Benning, "we're building a stronger military, a few soldiers, airmen, Marines, and sailors at a time."

Bits & Pieces....

4202nd USAH offering Combat Lifesaver Course

If you have mastered self-aid and buddy care, it's time to enhance your skills to your unit by taking the Combat Lifesaver Course (CLC).

Courses are offered the first MUTA-5 weekend of each month. Course size is limited to 15 participants and is available for presentation at your unit.

Soldiers receive eight promotional points and Reserve components receive 13 retirement points for successful completion of the course.

For more information please call Cpt. Daymond Cox of the 4202nd USAH, Det. 1. He can be reached at (513) 569-6279.

Red Cross looking for blood

This time of year, blood and plasma products are in high demand. The cold, flu and holiday season takes regular donors away from giving because of illness and travel, but the need for these blood products still remains.

There is currently a critical need for platelets. These are smaller, shorter-lived and very difficult to store than other cells, but are essential to life because they stop bleeding. Yet, without a readily available supply of them, many cancer patients would not survive the treatment for their disease.

Call the Red Cross at (800) 835-9802 and volunteer to give the gift of life; the gift of hope.

The ministry of presence

By Col. Howard A. Krienke,
88th RSC Chaplain, Fort Snelling, Minn.

Unit Ministry Teams (UMTs), do many and varied tasks on a weekend drill. They perform MOSQ training, worship services, and other duties of the unit mission. But one of their most important duties is also one of the least recognized, that is the "*ministry of presence*."

There is nothing more troublesome to a child than to be alone and fearful. There is nothing more problematic for any of us than to face a crisis without someone being there! While many of a chaplain's activities may be public, often the most notable are the ones not seen. The ministry of presence makes the UMT available when persons have a need or face a crisis.

As a chaplain, one of my goals is to bring a soldier to God and God to a soldier. A great comfort and a caring message like the following brings confidence and peace to a troubled situation. Let these words bless you now and be a constant reminder in times of stress and hardship, that God truly does love you and care for you.

For God has said, "Never will I leave you or forsake you." Therefore we can say, "The Lord is my helper, I will not be afraid!"

Blessings to you as you face a new year. God will always be there for you.

Army Reserve's gift for children

By Diane Litzinger
88th RSC PAO

The Army Reserve participated in a campaign this holiday season to provide help and hope to children in need -- "A Gift for Children." The 88th RSC, Childrens Home Society of Minnesota, and WCCO radio and WCCO TV partnered to inform the Twin Cities Community of the needs of children, not only during the holidays, but throughout the year.

"A Gift for Children" is a \$1.5 million campaign to raise money for the services of the Children's Home Society of Minnesota. The kick-off event of the campaign was held Nov. 28 at the Mall of America. Brig. Gen. John Schuster, the deputy

chief of staff for the 88th, represented the Army Reserve at the event.

In lieu of purchasing a toy this holiday season, donations were raised through on-air auctions held on WCCO-AM, a celebrity holiday party at the Mall of America, and at 200 collection points promoted by WCCO TV in businesses throughout the Twin Cities.

The role of the Army Reserve during this campaign was

to maintain the 200 collection points with bi-weekly donation pick-ups along with recruiters, for deposit at the bank.

The Childrens Home Society of Minnesota was established in 1889 to provide homes for children who had none. It has been serving children and families for 110 years. Today, this nonprofit organization is a leader in adoption, child care and crisis nursery services.



Brig. Gen. John Schuster was part of the festivities at the Mall of America.

338th Army Band continues its 23-year holiday music-making tradition with concert for reservists, families

Story and photos by Master Sgt.

Val Minor, 367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio

During the hustle and bustle of morning activities at the Whitehall, 83rd Infantry Memorial Reserve Center, the 338th Army Band played Christmas music in the lobby for training reservists and visiting family members.

Spc. Martin Maggart, a trumpet player with the band since 1994 said, "We get compliments from

drilling reservists. They say the music gets them in the holiday spirit."

After lunch, the band members moved their instruments and equipment to the drill hall to perform for family and friends.

Nancy Colburn, wife of David L. Colburn, first sergeant of the band said, "Playing a concert in December has been an annual tradition for 23 years."

Good people can still make a difference --

Thousands pay tribute to John Glenn

Stories and photo by Master Sgt. Val Minor,
367th MPAD, Whitehall, Ohio

The Earth, the Moon, the Sun and our Star," was the hero's parade theme on Nov. 15, in Columbus, Ohio.

Tens of thousands of delighted supporters of John Glenn, astronaut and senator, paid tribute to him following his second return from space.

Bands from several Ohio schools played patriotic songs and elementary students marched down High Street carrying stars and suns made from colorful construction paper. Teenagers, dressed in astronaut and star costumes, walked ahead of tap-dancing girls wearing red sweatshirts and black leggings.

Four F-16 fighters flew overhead as spectators

young and old lined the street waving their hands and American flags as parade participants passed them.

Soldiers from the 8801st Headquarter Brigade in Whitehall, clad in battle dress uniforms, proudly carried the colors of the Blue Devils in the parade.

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Jacobs, active guard/reserve training noncommissioned for the 325th Finance Battalion in Whitehall, was part of this platoon.

Jacobs was excited to see Glenn. "It's always thrilling to see a national hero up close and personal," Jacobs said.

"Here is a man who could have rested on his laurels of past accomplishments, but would rather strive to be the best he could be," Jacobs added. "He was active in politics and became a U.S. Senator. Quite a feat in its own right, yet he still had the character and passion for this nation to go back to space in the name of science."

Jacobs said he wanted to be in the parade to show Glenn that he appreciates it when someone puts so much on the line for his country.

Col. Glenn C. Breitling, commander of the 8801st Headquarters Brigade, said it was a memorable event. "December 16 will be a part of my life forever because I participated in the parade, saw Senator/Astronaut Glenn and heard one of America's heroes (Glenn) speak."

Brietling said the parade was a state and community celebration honoring the distinguished service and career of one of America's great citizens.

The parade began at noon on North High Street at Nationwide Boulevard and moved south to the Statehouse where Glenn thanked the people and asked them to use the holiday season to "rededicate ourselves to the temple of service."

"Good people can still make a difference," Glenn said. "It is our obligation to try."



John Glenn waves to the crowd while riding the float through his welcome-home parade. (U.S. Army Reserve photo)

88th RSC deputy commander promoted to brigadier general

Very few soldiers in the U.S. Army Reserve ever reach the rank of brigadier general in their military careers. Col. John M. Schuster, deputy commander of the 88th Regional Support Command (RSC), was one of the few selected this year. He was promoted recently in ceremonies at the Fort Snelling Army Reserve Center.

Schuster has an extensive military career which began when he enlisted in the Wisconsin Army National Guard in 1965. He was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. in 1968 and held several assignments in the Wisconsin and Minnesota Army National Guard, including infantry platoon leader, signal platoon leader and company commander.

In 1973 Schuster transferred to the U.S. Army Reserve. His assignments have included the following: 1982 - commander of the 961st Eng. Bn., Milwaukee, Wis.; 1985 - plans and operations officer, 416th Eng. Command, Chicago, Ill.; 1988 - group commander of the 385th Eng. Group, Fort Snelling; and 1991 - deputy chief of staff for resource management in the 88th Army Reserve Command

(ARCOM). An assignment followed in 1992 as the chief of staff for the ARCOM at Fort Snelling.

Schuster assumed his current position as deputy commanding general of the reorganized 88th RSC in February 1996.

Schuster has numerous decorations which include: Meritorious Service Medal with Two Oak Leaf Clusters; Army Commendation Medal with Four Oak Leaf Clusters; Army Achievement Medal; Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal with one Silver and two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters; National Defense Service Medal; and Armed Forces Reserve Medal with the Thirty-Year Device.



Indianapolis reservist is the new Retention Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year

***Congratulations
Sgt. 1st Class
Barbra Jean Foster,
Retention
Non-Commissioned
Officer of the Year!***

Sgt. 1st Class Barbra Jean Foster, a member of the 88th Regional Support Command (RSC), with geographic duty in Indianapolis, Ind., has been named the Secretary of the Army U.S. Army Reserve Retention Non-Commissioned Officer (NCO) of the Year.

Foster was one of 12 nominees competing in this event. She won an all expense paid trip for herself and her family to Washington, D.C., where she will receive official recognition.

Foster has been in the Army Reserve since August 1985. She works for the 88th RSC in Indianapolis as the Retention NCO. As a civilian, she is the unit pay administrator for the Army Reserve Technician Program.

Guides for promotion to sergeant 1st class, master sergeant and sergeant major



To qualify for promotion, soldiers must:

- Submit SFC-SGM Promotion/NCOES Course Selection Packet
- Meet:
 - Time in service for sergeant 1st class: 11 years-waiverable to 9 years
 - Time in service for master sergeant: 15 years-waiverable to 11 years
 - Time in service for sergeant major: 18 years-waiverable to 13 years
 - Time in grade for sergeant 1st class: 21 months-nonwaiverable
 - Time in grade for master sergeant: 24 months-nonwaiverable
 - Time in grade for sergeant major: 28 months as Master Sgt. or 1st Sgt.-nonwaiverable
- Have PEBD less than 25 years from start date of senior promotion board (sergeant 1st class)
- Have PEBD less than 27 years from start date of senior promotion board (master sergeant)
- Have PEBD less than 29 years from start date of senior promotion board (sergeant major)
- Be MOS Qualified for position available on current vacancy list
- Pass APFT (can submit packet if flagged - can be placed on recommended list but not promoted until flag is lifted)
- Have the appropriate security clearance or favorable security investigation required by the MOS in which being considered - may be based on an appropriate interim clearance, per AR 611-201
- Be selected by senior promotion board
- If conditionally promoted, must enroll in ANCOC within 12 months and be qualified within 24 months of assignment to new position (sergeant 1st class)
- Return notification letter from 88th RSC indicating choice of attending sergeants major course (sergeant major only)
- If conditionally promoted, must successfully complete either the SMC corresponding studies within 36 months, or the SMC resident course within 18 months of promotion to the new position (sergeant major only)

Guides to selection for NCOES courses only, must:

- Submit SFC-SGM Promotion/NCOES course selection packet
- Pass APFT (can submit packet if flagged and commander recommends; can be placed on promotion list, but not promoted until flag is lifted)
- Be selected to attend ANCOC or SMC by the senior promotion board



If you can't bring Santa to the kids - bring the kids to Santa!

**Story and photos by Sgt. David Boe
364th MPAD, Fort Snelling, Minn.**

If you can't bring Santa to the kids, bring the kids to Santa -- sort of.

That was the idea behind a joint effort by active and retired employees of Ameritech, a volunteer group, and members of the 397th Eng. Bn., Eau Claire, Wis., and the 934th Air Wing, Minneapolis.

The plan: On Dec. 5, 1998, "fly" children to the North Pole to visit Santa and get early Christmas presents.

The goal: Provide children, many of them physically and mentally handicapped, with a fun and unique Christmas experience.

Overall, it was a mission easier said than done. The arctic isolation of Christmas Town is well known, but that didn't stop the Pioneers, a group of Ameritech employees involved in community volunteerism in the Eau Claire area.

"We've been pursuing this idea for some time," said Mike Ehr, director of community relationships for Ameritech. "It took a while to get all of the partners lined up with the Army and Air Force."

Ehr said that while the Pioneers took the lead in setting up the event, they knew it couldn't be accomplished without major support from military elements. Enter the Reserves.

"About six years ago I had coordinated to have some helicopters displayed at some Catholic schools in Chippewa Falls," said Jim Lowe, supervisory staff administrator for the 397th Eng. Bn. "So one of the ladies from Ameritech asked last May if I could get a cargo plane for this event they had planned. I said I'd see what I could do."

What Lowe did was to get the 934th Air wing to commit a C-130 to fly the children to the "North Pole." The 397th would assist the Ameritech employees and provide static displays.

Meanwhile, the Pioneers worked with local and county social services to get leads on families with physically and mentally disabled children. The families were then invited to participate in the event, held December 5, at the Eau Claire Airport.

After flocking around two Army Reserve Humvees in front of the airport, over 30 parents and children crowded into the C-130 for the flight to the North Pole.

The trip lasted only 20 minutes. Unknown to the children inside, the cargo plane merely taxied around the runway, then “landed” at the North Pole. The fact that they were getting off at the same building and there was a lot of tarmac didn’t seem to shake the children’s belief in where they were. The sign *did* say “Welcome to the North Pole.”

Santa himself arrived later riding a Harley-Davidson motorcycle and, aided by some elves, handed out gifts to the children in his throne room...or elven suite... or Christmas chamber. Actually it was a conference room, but the children didn’t seem to care.

“I think it’s a kid’s dream,” said Pam Smith, whose two children, Kelsey, 3, and Carley, 6, both received several gifts. “I just don’t know what to say. I think it’s wonderful that they did this. It means so much to the kids.”

Lowe agreed. “It’s really neat to see the kids get in one of those planes, then get off and think they’re in the North Pole,” he said. “I think it’s just overwhelming for them.”

For both services, the mission provided good training, but to the soldiers and airmen who participated, it went beyond that.

“The flight here was no different than any other mission,” said Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Tom Foss. “But this has been one of the more enjoyable ones. To see the smiles on those little kids’ faces made it worth it.

Foss and his Army counterparts both agreed that it

CG’s Col prom page 2

volving value choices. It is followed by a look at the Inspectors General — what they do, when to see them, and how to prepare to see them.

The Unit Status Report (USR) is scrutinized with the fourth tool. Students learn to identify key readiness factors which affect their unit’s USR and understand what must be managed to ensure their readiness levels meet their goals. They are given a list of “rules” that will help their unit meet its readiness objectives.

The fifth tool is a detailed lecture on how to get promoted, how to earn awards and how to give awards. The student will walk away from this video with a better understanding of the promotion system.

Finally, Tool #6, *Training and Getting Trained*, looks at the challenges facing the Reserve compo-

was great for the two services and the Ameritech employees to work together on a mission that went off without a hitch.

“It was a nice partnership among all of us -- the Army, Air Force, and the Pioneers,” said Lt. Col. Tom Roemer, commander of the 397th, who had two of his own children at the event. “The 6-year-old still believes in Santa, but the 9-year-old doesn’t. They still had a wonderful time.”

According to Ehr, that’s all that matters.

“When you have a room full of families enjoying the holidays and able to participate in a Christmas celebration that they may not otherwise have seen, I think it is great,” he said.



nents as compared to the Active Duty environment. It reviews the basic principles of training taught in all NCOES courses and the different kinds of training plans. Emphasis is placed on training meetings and unit training schedules. Students learn how to build their own training plans from the unit training schedule and how to use the METL and long-, short-, and near-term training plans.

The course began its deployment throughout the 88th in February with seven train-the-trainer sessions planned. This course will prove to be extremely important and beneficial to our first-line leaders. Please join me in giving them our full support for this training.

-- *Blue Devils!*



Pvt. 2 David Cherro, an interior electrician with the 367th Engineer Battalion, gives a couple “Klondike Kates” a push down the Giant Snow Slide. Cherro and other soldiers from the 367th Eng. Bn., headquartered in St. Cloud, Minn., built the slide for the St. Paul Winter Carnival, an annual winter celebration. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Bill Geddes)

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