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Blackhawk down

10 years later: Remembering the Battle of Mogadishu and how it changed the way the military trains

Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton
State Panco

“On Oct. 3, 1993, (exactly nine years after the reactivation of the 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment) Task Force Ranger conducted a raid into an enemy stronghold to seize several key members of Mohamed Aided’s militia in Mogadishu, Somalia.

“During TF Ranger’s mission, one of their extraction aircraft was shot down, killing and wounding several members of the Ranger Task Force, and trapping one of the pilots inside the aircraft.”

(From the U.S. Army Ranger Association Website)

What happened in Mogadishu over the next two days has changed the way the military conducts its training.



CWO Michael Durant’s helicopter heads out over Mogadishu on Oct. 3, 1993. Mike Goodale rode in this helicopter. Durant was captured after his Blackhawk went down and was later released by his captors. (File photo taken by a soldier serving in Mogadishu)

No longer is military training simply restricted to cover and concealment in a wooded, jungle-type environment. Now, soldiers must learn how to survive in an urban environment.

The Rangers and other U.S. military

personnel were in Somalia as part Operation Restore Hope, a multi-national effort to feed the starving people of the African country that was beleaguered by drought and an evil regime.

See **MOGADISHU** Page 4

Army announces mobilization of two National Guard brigades

The Secretary of Defense has approved the Army’s request to mobilize two U.S. Army National Guard brigades that on July 26 were alerted to participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 30th Infantry Brigade from North Carolina will mobilize effective Oct. 1, 2003, and the 39th Infantry Brigade from Arkansas will mobilize effective Oct. 12, 2003. There are 5,000 soldiers between the two brigades.

As previously announced on Sept. 9, these units can expect to be in the Iraqi theater for up to 12 months. The total length of mobilization is up to 18 months to allow time for equipping, training, mobilizing, leave, and demobilizing activities.

These mobilizations are part of the force rotation plan announced on July 23, 2003. The Army has made this announcement to provide predictability in the lives of soldiers and their families as they serve the nation fighting the global war on terrorism.

The Army also announced that the 5,000 soldier strong 81st Army National Guard Infantry Brigade from Washington State has been alerted in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The new alert for the 81st came on the heels of statements made by top U.S. officials that more National Guard and reserve troops would likely be called depending on international response to President George W. Bush’s appeal for troops from coalition forces. Additional troops are needed to aid in the stabilization of Iraq.

The two brigades called to duty will serve a total of 18 months on active duty. Three months will be spent training and equipping the soldiers, 12 months in Iraq and the final three months will be spent on demobilization.

The Washington State brigade, while alerted, does not expect to be called to active duty until sometime in November, giving it’s soldiers the opportunity to plan for their time away from families and civilian jobs.



MPs in Iraq

Sgt. Jesse Zettegren, of Wallingford, Sgt. George Magrey of Norwich and Sgt. Kevin Muravnick of Wallingford, all members of 4th Platoon, 143rd Military Police Company, show their pride in the United States. The three had just been “coined” for their participation in a mission that resulted in their finding an IED (improvised explosive device) and arresting the two persons who had it.

Up Front with the Adjutant General

Continue looking ahead-



Maj. Gen.
William A. Cugno
Adjutant General

October marks the beginning of our military's training year and our federal government's fiscal year. Looking ahead we must continue to be vigilant and focused with regard to executing the essential training required that ensures Connecticut soldiers and airmen continue to be ready to support future rotations for Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism.

Our nation is still at war, and as we've witnessed first hand over the last twelve months, the Guard is an equal and essential member of the Army and Air Force team. The Connecticut National Guard has more than 1,100 soldiers and airmen deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Noble Eagle. All are performing outstanding jobs and are receiving accolades at all levels.

We must continue to clearly understand the realities and implications we now face, and must do our part individually and collectively to ensure our nations readiness.

All of you should know that the Secretary of Defense has approved the Army's request to mobilize two Army National Guard Brigades to participate in Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 30th Infantry Brigade from North Carolina will mobilize effective Oct. 1, and the 39th Infantry Brigade from Arkansas will mobilize effective Oct. 12.

These mobilizations are part of the force

rotation plan that was first introduced in July and continues to be the focus of media scrutiny. These units can expect to be in the Iraqi theater for up to 12 months with a total length of mobilization of up to 18 months.

The Army announcement intended to provide predictability in the lives of soldiers and their families as they serve the nation fighting the Global War on Terrorism. Predictability for future rotations will be key to our success.

The new Army rotation order has upset and confused many guardsman and their families. Gen. Abizaid, the Commander of the United States forces in the Persian Gulf, has recently acknowledged that reservists had not yet been given a departure date from Iraq.

I want Connecticut soldiers home as soon as possible and will continue to fight for answers from the highest levels. Predictability for the future is the goal and one that the citizen soldier deserves.

As we speak, the rotation plan continues to evolve. Gen. Abizaid has also stated that he was no longer counting on foreign troops to relieve American soldiers in Iraq early next year. The lack of such troops will require additional active duty and National Guard soldiers to fill the gap.

Two additional "enhanced separate brigades" may be called upon. Many combat service and combat service support units

may be called upon in support of these brigades. Implications to Connecticut have yet to be determined but are sure to have an impact. We must continue the resolve.

Leaders at all levels must foresee the training requirements of our soldiers and airmen to best prepare them for future missions. This requires that we maintain an acute awareness of our current unit and individual readiness posture. It is essential to effectively target limited resources and to ensure we continue to provide our nation with a trained and ready force.

Looking ahead towards the next year, the Connecticut National Guard will continue to provide stark examples of service to country and state. The new fiscal year will continue to demand an even greater commitment for Guardsman and their families both in Connecticut and across America.

For us in uniform, it is times like now that define our existence and demands all we can give.

We will once again be called to step forward and answer the call.

Keep your head in the game, remain focused and remain vigilant.

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Perspectives

How did the battle of Mogadishu change the way the military trains?



SPEC. NICHOLAS H. O'DELL
STARC LEGAL TECHNICIAN

It has shown us that technology alone does not ensure victory.

SGT. RIVERA
CTARNG

We weren't doing urban training at that time. Training today includes MOUT training for the urban environment.



SGT. MAJ. LAURA DANA O
OFFICER PERSONNEL MANAGER

We are doing more urbanized warfare training versus jungle training.

CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 5 PAUL THERRIEN
CSSAMO

I am not convinced that the outcome at Mogadishu would have been different because it was a singular event and if we learned anything it would be that even the best trained soldiers don't always overcome lousy tactical circumstances.



Field Artillery folds colors: Becomes Chemical Battalion

SPEC. JEFFREY AUSTIN
65th PCH

More than thirty-three soldiers stood at parade rest while invited guests and visitors participated in a somber event that celebrated pride, tradition and dedication for one of the state's oldest and most distinguish battalions.

On Sept. 13 at the "Point" at Camp Rowland, Niantic the Inactivation Ceremony was held for the 2nd Battalion, 192nd Field Artillery.

The battalion was first retired in 1993 and reactivated in 1995. This is the second retirement for the battalion that has changed to the 192nd Chemical Battalion.

Throughout the ceremony, speakers reflected on the 2nd Battalion, 192nd Field Artillery's many decades of service to the state and to the country.

One such speaker summed up the feelings of the day's event.

"It's a sad day today," said Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, Adjutant General. "We have past the time for the field artillery."

The Field Artillery had a long history. The battalion was first formed in 1641 to secure the town of Stamford from the Dutch.

Later, during the Revolutionary War, the battalion protected the Stamford and New York area from advancing British troops. Other campaigns include Saratoga, Connecticut 1777 and Rhode Island 1778, Gettysburg, Champagne during World War I and Guadalcanal during World War II.

Also, recent world events such as providing security during the Winter Olympic games in Utah and providing the state with emergency assistance against floods are just some of the missions the battalion has performed.

Some soldiers were surprised by the long history of the battalion.

"Some of us are still with the 143rd Military Police and not part of the old unit but I was feeling heartfelt emotion while standing in formation. It just made me wish I was part of the old field artillery," said Pfc. Edwin Cay, 143rd Military Police, military police (MP).

On this day, Master Sgt. Gene Maurice, 2nd Battalion, 192 Field Artillery, section sergeant was ending 29 years of service to his country and state. Maurice began his career as a Marine in 1966. According to

Maurice, young people coming into the Guard should take care of their education and stay motivated to get ahead.

After the ceremony, a final cannon shot from a 105mm Howitzer was performed after the battalion's colors were retired.

Later, cannon crewmembers took some time and shared their feeling about this somber ceremony.

"This is an emotional moment because of a lot of history. In combat arms, we are always chewing dirt with the other guy. This is one of the few units that live fire. We train as we fight at annual training," said Sgt. 1st Class. Wes S. Cooper.

Wes S. Cooper.

"During annual training there are six to eight guys living together out of a humvee.

We also use the humvee to hook-up the cannon and move it to another location to

"This is an emotional moment because of a lot of history. In combat arms, we are always chewing dirt with the other guy."

Sgt. 1st Class. Wes S. Cooper



Command Sgt. Maj. Todd Smith places the casing over the colors of the 192nd Field Artillery for the last time during ceremonies held at Camp Rowland.

fire whenever we get our orders. I'm going to miss it," said Cooper.

Finally, another soldier retiring after the ceremony is Command Sgt. Maj. Todd R. Smith, 2nd Battalion, 192nd Field Artillery. He expressed his gratitude to all the soldiers he served with.

"I feel sad that the unit had to inactivate but I am especially proud of all the battalion's soldiers now serving in Southwest Asia and the Middle East. I'm proud to be the last CSM of the 2nd Battalion of the 192nd Field Artillery."



The colors of the Field Artillery are retired into the dissipating smoke from the unit's cannon that had been fired moments before.

Mogadishu changed the way the military trains for battle

From Page 1

Somali leader Mohammed Aidid had gone in to hiding. On Oct. 3, 1993, U.S. troops were told he and several of his top leaders had been found and that they, the elite members of the U.S. military, would be going in to get them. They were told the whole operation should take about one hour, in and out.

"It was crazy," said Staff Sgt. John Burns, an Army Ranger who was there. "We were just getting shot at from all over the place."

According to an interview he gave in 2001, Dr. Kenneth Allard, Col. (Ret.) US Army, was awed by the heroism brought in the young soldiers on the streets of Mogadishu. "What happened on the streets of Mogadishu is heroism, by any definition. It is one of the great feats of arms of the United States Army in modern times."

In 1993, Mogadishu was one of the most dangerous places in the world. Fourteen factions, each with its own warlord, were fighting for control of Somalia, and that fighting was taking place in Mogadishu.

By all accounts, it was total anarchy with mass killings and mass lootings.

And into this went the young men of the most elite fighting forces the United States had. Their mission - capture Aidid.

"We were told that there was a lot of clan fighting, and the ringleader was Aidid," said Spec. Mike Kurth, US Army Ranger from 1991 to 1996. "We were told if we apprehended him, everything would get better."

On Sunday, Oct. 3, 1991, 17 helicopters took off from their base, carrying the soldiers

who would be responsible for the mission.

The raid took the Rangers into the heart of Mogadishu where Aidid was meeting with several of his military leaders.

It was a mission that was projected to take 115 men 90 minutes, but it would be 17 hours

before what became a large-scale battle would be over.

Rangers roped down out of their helicopters to secure the perimeter of the area where Aidid was

believed to be. Shots started ringing out as heavily armed Somalis began shooting at the troops.

Soldiers were being shot, but they held their perimeter.

The Blackhawk super 6-1 that was flying overhead cover was hit by an RPG launched from a rooftop by one of the Somali gunmen. Sgt. Randy Ramaglia, a US Army Ranger from 1991 to 1995 saw it happen.

"It's like it never came out of the turn," he said during a PBS Frontline interview in 2001. "It just continued to go, go and go. And it was like slow motion. I just remember that bird just spinning out of control."

Then, across the radio, "Be advised you have a bird down. We've got a bird down."

"I woke up in the silence of my own grave. At least that's what I believe in that first moment, because in my last flash of consciousness I had clearly seen the clawing hand of the Grim Reaper."

Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant



An assault force from the 820th Security Forces Group prepares to storm a building at the Camp Blanding Military Operations for Urbanized terrain (MOU) training facility in Florida. (Photo by Senior Airman Stephen Hudson, USAF)

By the time the fighting was done, 18 American soldiers were dead, more than 80 were wounded and one was a prisoner.

Americans saw the bodies of their dead being dragged and carried through the streets of Mogadishu.

The pilot taken prisoner, Chief Warrant Officer Michael Durant, wrote a book about his experiences during the battle and

while a prisoner.

Durant was piloting Blackhawk Super 6-4, and in his book, 'In the Company of Heroes,' he describes the crash as being like Dorothy's house in the Wizard of Oz ... "spinning faster, falling even faster, and finally slamming its nine tons of steel into the hard-packed ground."

Durant starts the first chapter of his book quite simply.

"I woke up in the silence of my own grave. "At least that's what I believe in that first moment, because in my last flash of consciousness I had clearly seen the clawing hand of the Grim Reaper."

When he realized where he was and that he was, indeed, alive, he saw that the

chopper's windshield was almost completely gone and shards of metal had come to rest only inches from his face. As he reached up to try to push the wreckage away, he realized his back was broken.

At least two of the other crewmembers had survived the crash, but only one was able to move. He slipped out of the chopper to fight and get help and was never seen again by Durant.

With the battle growing closer to the downed Blackhawk, Durant knew he was about to battle for his life.

About that time, two Delta operators, Randy Shughart and Gary Gordon appeared at Durant's side. The two had requested permission to go to Durant's bird to try and secure the area from the hostiles about to overtake it.

From their vantage point overhead in Super 6-2, they knew how many Somalis were headed towards Durant's bird, and that he and the other crew members did not stand a chance without help. Knowing the odds were heavily against them, Shugart and Gordon repeatedly asked for permission to go in before they finally received the go ahead.

The Delta soldiers pulled Durant and the rest of the crew from the chopper and began to render aid.

In the ensuing firefight between the wounded crew and their rescuers and the Somali gunmen, all Americans but Durant would lose their lives. Durant was taken prisoner.

But what had this 17-hour battle in the



Fellow pilots carry CWO Michael Durant to a waiting airplane after his release as a prisoner in Mogadishu. (File photo by U.S. Army soldier in Somalia)



The crew of Super 64 a month before the battle. From left: Tommy Field, Bill Cleveland, Ray Frank and Mike Durant.



Dave Diemer of TF Ranger (in the foreground) and the other members of Chalk Four on the tarmac in Somalia. (File photo by U.S. Army soldier stationed in Somalia)

streets of a city like Mogadishu, littered with shanty villages, debris and vendors' tents, taught the United States military, whose last major battles had been in the jungles of Vietnam, not the jungles of an angry city?

The battle, and the soldiers involved in it, taught the military, America and the world, that the U.S. fighting man would never give up. That they would never leave a fellow soldier behind. That they would fight and survive.

But it also pointed out, in a concrete and decisive way, that the U.S. military needed to be better prepared for urban warfare.

Hot spots around the world were getting ready to erupt, countries in Africa, places like Afghanistan, Iraq and Panama. Places where the battles would take place in heavily populated cities, where snipers and antagonists could hide in alleyways, doors, basements and on rooftops. Places that had not typically been known as battlegrounds before, were about to become the norm.

According to a Centers for Armt lessons Learned executive summary prepared by Lt. Col. John F. D'Agostino, "Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain (MOUT) is very complex."

He says that much of the doctrine and tactics, techniques and procedures used in MOUT are the same as in other offensive or defensive operations.

The problem, as he sees it, is that intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) during MOUT is difficult.

"When developing the IPB product, battle staffs have to take into account that the MOUT battle is three-dimensional in nature," he says in his summary. "Failure to realize this courts disaster. Key terrain in MOUT can be buildings whose control by either friendly or enemy forces will affect the outcome of the battle. Situation templates must detail the obstacles and enemy locations in the built-up area."

Much of what he talks about in his summary is dealt with at levels higher than the field soldier or operative, although the information is vital to the success of the mission and the preservation of lives on all sides.

D'Agostino says that certain aspects of MOUT are unique to maneuver. Objectives must be isolated in such a way to preclude enemy reinforcement. Use of heavy forces and



A street in Mogadishu as seen through the camera of a US soldier on his way into the city on Oct. 3, 1993.

aviation assets are critical to this type of warfare.

"Direct fire takes on a whole new meaning in in MOUT," he says. "Without a detailed direct fire plan, even the best of units will fail."

That is why MOUT training has become so important to all military units.

Connecticut Army National Guard units of all types have increased their level and amount of MOUT training exercises, according to Sgt. Maj. Joseph Sevigny, CTARNGG-3.

"Our training philosophy now has us working both our national and state missions in a MOUT environment supporting federal and state missions," said Sevigny. "So we now train at Fort Drum, Fort Pickett, Fort Dix, and soon, at our own Stone's Ranch Military Reservation MOUT facilities."

Connecticut is in the midst of a multi-year, 17-building MOUT facility project that will replicate a village with buildings of all types that have been damaged to varying degrees by war.

"Our own Infantry trains constantly in a MOUT environment and continues to train at many of the locations already mentioned.

"Our MPs in Bagdad deal with this every day they leave their fixed facility," said Sevigny. "Our engineers and our medics have trained throughout South America assisting the people within an urban environment."

The mistakes and the heroes of the Battle of Mogadishu have left the U.S. military a lasting legacy...that of MOUT training that will save lives on the urban battlefields of today.



Members of a support squad provide rear security for another squad as it enters a building looking opposing forces in an exercise at Camp Blanding, Florida. (Photo by Senior Airman Stephen Hudson, USAF)

U.S. involvement in Somalia: A timeline

- 1969 Mohammed Siad Barre, through a military coup, becomes leader of Somalia.
- January 1991 Overthrow of Dictator Mohamed Siad Barre by coalition of opposition forces, United Somalia Congress.
- 1991 Conflict between Somalia National Movement, Adid's party and other factions leads to clan infighting.
- March 3, 1992 Faction leaders sign ceasefire to allow United Nations monitoring mission into Somalia for humanitarian assistance.
- April 14, 1992 U.N. military observers sent to Somalia after U.N. Security Council approval of U.N. operation in accordance with ceasefire.
- July 1992 50 unarmed U.N. military observers deployed to Mogadishu to oversee ceasefire.
- August 15, 1992 U.N. humanitarian relief effort in Somalia (UNOSOM I), named Operation Provide relief, begins.
- December 4, 1992 Due to U.N. inability to deliver food and secure delivery routes into Somalia, President George Bush responds to U.N. requests for assistance by proposing U.S. combat troops lead security forces.
- December 5, 1992 U.N. accepts U.S. offer. Bush orders 25,000 troops to Somalia.
- December 9, 1992 First U.S. Marines land on beach.
- December 1992 U.S. names mission "Operation Restore Hope."
- March 15-28, 1993 Addis Ababa Accords - lead to agreement to end violence in Somalia.
- March 1993 UNOSOM II begins with various nations deploying troops to Somalia.
- May 9, 1993 U.S. officially turns over operation to U.N.
- June 1993 Only 1,200 U.S. troops remain in Somalia. U.N. and U.S. troops attack targets in Mogadishu related to Adid.
- June 19, 1993 Admiral Howe orders Adid's arrest and offered \$2,500 reward for information. Howe also requests counterterrorist hostage rescue force from Washington.
- July 29, 1993 Last sighting of Aidid.
- August 8, 1993 Four U.S. Military Police killed by remote-detonated land mine set off by Somalis.
- August 29, 1993 U.S. Army Task Force Ranger flies into Mogadishu, led by Maj. Gen. William Garrison.
- September 1993 Clinton administration begins clandestine initiative to negotiate with Aidid.
- September 1993 U.S. Defense Secretary Les Aspin denies request for armored reinforcements from Gen. Montgomery.
- October 3-4, 1993 Task Force Ranger's assault on Olympic Hotel to search for Aidid results in a 17-hour battle in which 18 U.S. soldiers are killed, 84 wounded. This later was named the Battle of Mogadishu.
- March 25, 1994 U.S. troops withdraw from Somalia.

Connecticut airmen join

JOURNALIST 3RD CLASS JASON TROSS
NAVAL STRIKE AND AIR WARFARE CENTER PUBLIC AFFAIRS

NAVAL AIR STATION FALLON, NEV. - Connecticut Air National Guard aircrew and maintenance personnel trained with other U.S. and international military members as part of Desert Rescue XI, an annual Combat Search and Rescue exercise, August 2 - 16. The exercise is a joint-service effort to enhance performance in the field finding downed airmen.

Sailors assigned to a survival school in Maine accompanied several aircrews into the desert to act as survivors. They were taught to do just that—survive. They are being taught how to survive on what the terrain has to offer long enough for a rescue party to find and extract the down pilots.

"I worked with UAV's [Unmanned Aerial Vehicles,] an A-10, an Army team and a

SEAL team," said Capt. Robert Feher, pilot, 118th Fighter Squadron, who attended desert rescue for the first time. "I had a chance to work with Navy and Air Force controllers and see the differences."

Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) aircrew from the United Kingdom brought Russian-made HIP and HIND helicopters to provide something new for U.S. CSAR aircrews from Marine, Army, and Air Force units around the country. According to those in the scenario, the helicopters make the situation more realistic. They help aircrews recognize when the real help is on the way and not just the sound of any approaching helicopter. The helicopters are used for extracting aircrew or others from hostile areas.

"We practiced an embassy evacuation with a 'gorilla' package of 11 helicopters," said Maj. Bryan Currier, operations plans officer,

103rd Operations Group. "Many of our maintenance folks got helicopter rides in the exercise and it was good for them to see what all their effort supports."

During the Gulf War U.S. forces had a difficult time recovering friendly troops. The need arose for a regimented joint training exercise where each service could step away from their own way of doing things and partake in a more unified, and realistic, scenario for recovery missions.

"We suddenly realized, after Operation Desert Storm, in the battlefield we're relying on people outside of our service to save us," said Lt. Cmdr. Mark Truluck, an operations training officer at NSAWC, and organizer of Desert Rescue XI. "The need for a training exercise using all services on a joint level was apparent, and Desert Rescue is the result."

Two Air Force pilots waited in the high desert for hours while learning survival tactics and their role in a successful recovery.

"It was huge chance to go verify that all the equipment works, its limitations and most important to see what is expected of you as a survivor," said Feher, who was one of the pilots. "If you can't help yourself, your chances of getting picked up [rescued] decrease exponentially."

Ensuring airmen understand their role in a rescue operation was precisely the goal of the exercise.

"The survivor is just as much of a player as the CSAR team," said Truluck. "We've learned that we have to teach them how to communicate and survive."

(Maj. George Worrall, 103 Fighter Wing Public Affairs, contributed to this story)



The Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev. flight line hosted Connecticut A-10s, crews and a variety of helicopters during Desert Rescue XI, a joint service Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) training exercise hosted by the Naval Strike and Warfare Center, August 2-16. The exercise simulates down aircrew behind enemy lines enabling other aircrew to perform CSAR related missions as well as experiment with new techniques in realistic scenarios. (U. S. Air Force photo by Technical Sgt. Scott Reed)



U.S. Navy SEALs secure a landing zone to extract a pilot, down behind enemy lines, during exercise Desert Rescue XI at Fallon Naval Air Station, Nev., August 6. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron D. Allmon)

in Desert Rescue XI



Senior Airman Bethany Hunt, crew chief, signals Major Kevin McManaman, pilot, to hold the aircraft position, as Senior Airman Erin Hurley, crew chief augmentee, pulls the chocks. All are from the 118th Fighter Squadron, Connecticut Air National Guard, participating in Desert Rescue XI, August 12. (U. S. Air Force photo by Technical Sgt. Scott Reed)



During Desert Rescue XI, a survivor uses a Combat Survivor Evader Locator to send a signal of their position back to the Joint Search and Rescue Center for a Navy SEAL extraction on August 6. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Reynaldo Ramon)



Lt. Chris Simpson, an A-10 Thunderbolt pilot, 118th Fighter Squadron, is briefed by Senior Airman Ray Frost, crew chief, 103rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, during Desert Rescue XI at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev., August 13. (U.S. Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron D. Allmon)

Multiple mission drives chemical battalion

RENITA FOSTER
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE
FORT MONMOUTH, N.J.

(Editors note: reprinted with permission of the Monmouth Message.)

Last June, Building 410 at Fort Monmouth became the official headquarters of the 192nd Chemical Battalion, also referred to as "Task Force 192."

Commanded by Lt. Col. Shawn Karvelis, the Connecticut based Army National Guard unit is continuing the Noble Eagle III mission of guarding Fort Monmouth as well as other selected installations in New Jersey, New York, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania.

What's distinctive about this command headquarters is that it's a unique mixture of combat arms converted to combat support and combat service support.

The transition began nearly two years ago when the Connecticut Army National Guard units were selected to convert as part of the Army's Transition program known in Connecticut as "Operation Bold Move."

"The 192nd Field Artillery Battalion was the base unit that converted and we took soldiers from other units into the battalion," explained Karvelis. "It's now a mixture of field artillery, infantry and chemical. We're also forming military police companies, even a press camp."

To ensure a smooth transition, service members attended formal Army schools to become qualified 54 Bravos or chemical soldiers. Afterwards, skill training in that area continues in their assigned units.

Karvelis said these units are performing in one of their dual missions by providing Force protection of Army installations as part of their Homeland Security mission.

In addition, all these soldiers and units have a critical mission as part of the nation's "Warfight" plans. While the units are performing their force protection mission, soldiers are rotated off from the mission to attend duty qualification and leadership schools.

"A field artillery battalion can do the same thing, but when a high demand specialty is added like chemical, that makes us even more valuable," Karvelis said.

"Another asset we're adding that puts us in the forefront are the military working dogs that perform both explosive and narcotics detection," added Karvelis. Three of the Pennsylvania unit's in the Task Force are also converting to form one of the Army's new "Stryker Brigades."

From his Fort Monmouth base, Karvelis commands almost 900 soldiers at 12 different sites throughout the New England area.

As a commander who believes it's important to be seen and see what's going

on, numerous road trips are mandatory. He also relies on today's superior communication technologies like cell phones and computer mail.

A "split command and control" whereby the unit is guided by the installation commander was also instituted. The post commander provides the force protection mission to let units know what they must provide in terms of security regarding gate procedures, the kinds of patrols needed or required procedures for quick reaction forces.

But the units' command and control remains with the 192nd Battalion Headquarters.

"For example, Capt. Jose Maldonado, 50th Combat Support Battalion here at Fort Monmouth complies with orders from Lt. Col. Anthony Reyes, Garrison Commander regarding the protection mission," said Karvelis, "but he comes to me concerning soldiers attending schools."

Karvelis concedes the 192nd is a challenging command in terms of distance and coordinating the continuing transition training, but one he finds honorable and worthy of soldiering.

"You spend so much time training and finally, here's the chance to actually apply to skills, to have the worthwhile mission of defending America. It doesn't get any better

than this," said Karvelis.

There are three priorities this commander says he intends to carry out. The first is taking care of soldiers and their families, as he firmly believes that's the best way to ensure soldiers are sharp and focused on their mission.

The second is communications since his units are so spread out and not in the conventional one place.

"With soldiers from five different National Guard states involved, maintaining good communication throughout the Chain of Command is vital," said Karvelis. "All units are fully informed of what's going on with their soldiers in all missions."

Karvelis is also insisting that in addition to the Noble Eagle mission, training continue such as weapons qualification in order for soldiers to sustain their "warfighter" and force protection skills. He's determined all 192nd service members will return to their units after active duty even more proficient than when they left.

"I also want to see both the noncommissioned officers and officers attend advanced leadership schools," said Karvelis.

Connection currently has about 45 percent of its National Guard forces mobilized in support of Operations Noble Eagle and Enduring Freedom.

Units stand up during organizational ceremony



MAJ. JOHN WHITFORD
STATE SENIOR PAO

The 134th Military Police Company (MP) of Norwich and the 103^d Chemical Company of Naugatuck formally stood up at an organizational ceremony conducted recently at West Point, NY.

During the ceremony both units unfurled their new colors.

Both units are currently involved in security operations at West Point in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

The formal stand up of both of these units is part of Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno's, the adjutant general, Bold Move vision.

The 134th MP Company is comprised of approximately 180 personnel with equipment consisting of up armored HMMWVs and M-4 weapons.

Their mission is to provide military combat support to an assigned area of operations.

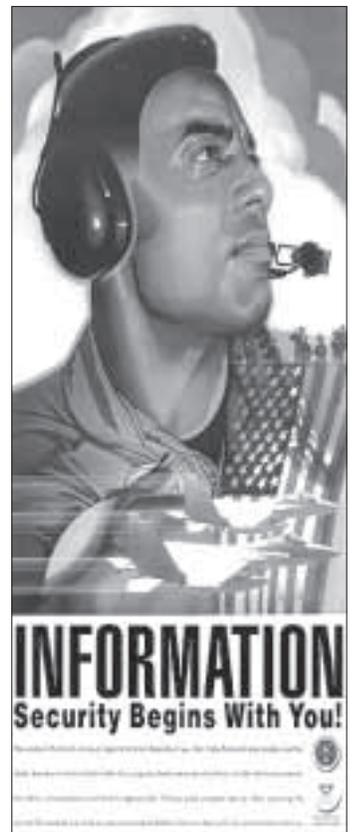
The 103^d Chemical Company is comprised approximately 70 personnel.

This is a reconnaissance/decontamination unit with specialized equipment that helps

in detecting and decontaminating chemical agents.

Capt. John Leake of Westbrook serves as the commander of the 103^d Chemical Company and Capt. Stefan Adamcik of Torrington serves as the commander of the 134th MP Company.

"This is an important step in realizing the Bold Move initiative, to transform the Connecticut Army National Guard into a more versatile force to meet today's federal and state requirements," said Cugno.



History repeats itself as blood brothers deploy



Pfc. Daniel Quinn

MAJ. JOHN WHITFORD
STATE PAO

Pfc. Daniel Quinn of Hartford and Pfc. Sebastian Miano, also of Hartford, are friends but consider each other blood brothers.

“We lived next door to one another, grew up together, went to school together, enlisted in the Connecticut National Guard together, got promoted together and now we’re providing security at West Point together,” said Quinn.

Quinn and Miano are part of the 400 Connecticut Army National Guard soldiers providing security in support of Operation Noble Eagle. They both enlisted in the Connecticut Guard in January 2002 for the tuition assistance but mainly because their families have served in the military.

Quinn’s grandfather was a WWII veteran and Miano’s grandfather was also a WWII veteran, his father served in the Navy and his uncle served with the Marines.

Both soldiers like the Guard and are proud to serve and both have plans after they complete their current duty.

Quinn plans on going to Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven to continue his education and play football and Miano plans on continuing his education at Central Connecticut State University in New Britain.

Before going back to their post each had a message for back home, “I’ll be home soon,” said Quinn.

“Thank you for all of your support,” said Miano.



Pfc. Sebastian Miano

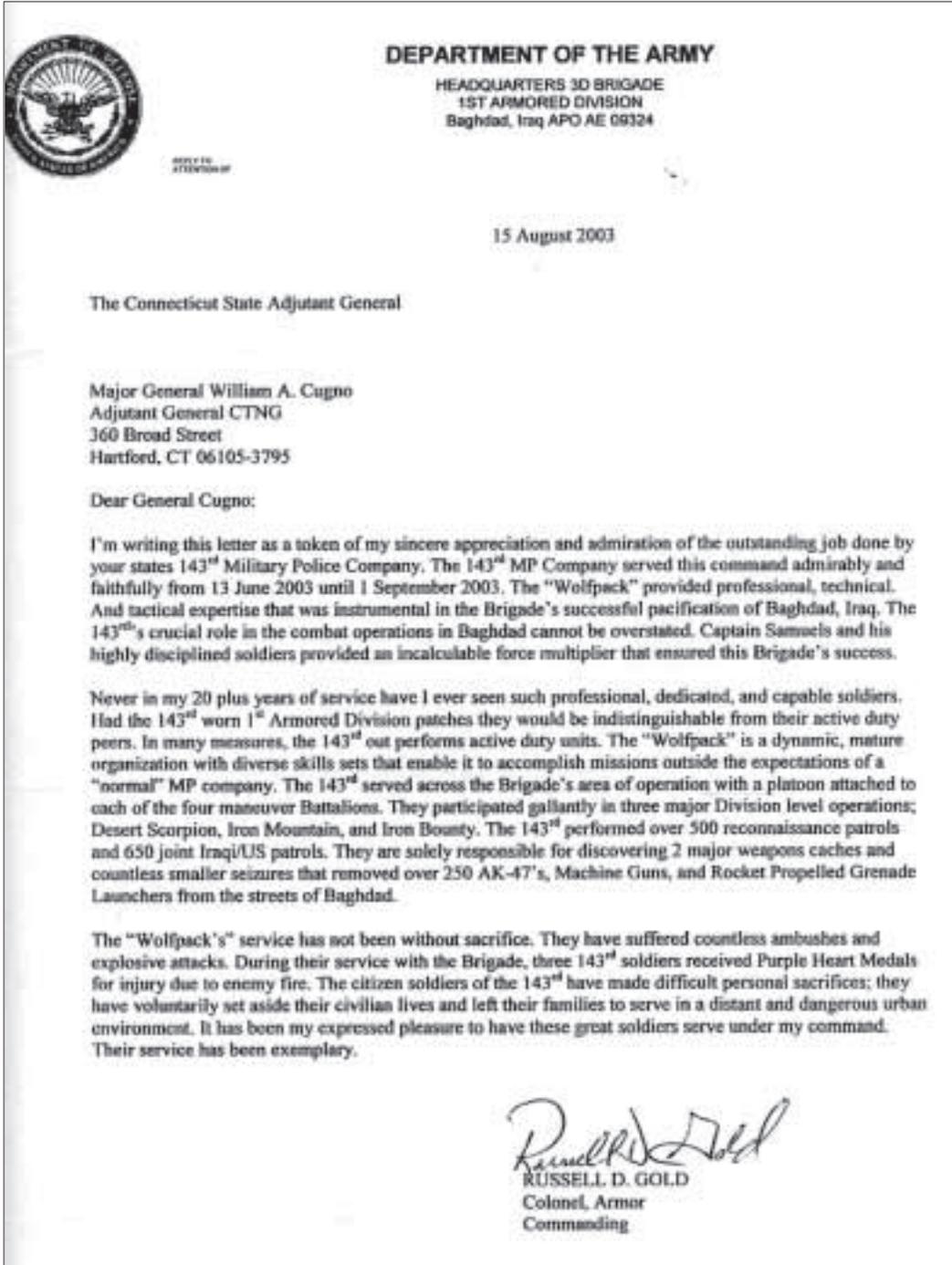


(Photos top and left) Soldiers of the Connecticut Army National Guard pull duty at Fort Drum checkpoints in support of Operation Noble Eagle. (Photos by Spec. Rachael Tolliver, Fort Drum Public Affairs)

On duty at Fort Drum



Members of the Connecticut Army National Guard deployed to Fort Drum as part of Task Force 192 were honored during a ceremony recognizing the performance in stopping illegal aliens traveling with false identification from gaining access to Fort Drum. The individuals were found in the back of a Ryder truck. The Co. C, 242nd Engineer Battalion soldiers received coins from various senior leaders at Fort Drum.



VA and Operation Hope Sign cooperation agreement

Leaders of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Operation Hope Inc. recently signed an agreement that will provide veterans the needed tools in financial planning, both for individuals and small business owners.

"Today's collaboration stands to provide veterans an understanding of money management that will advance their financial education on both a personal and professional level," said Dr. Leo S. Mackay Jr., Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

"I am truly heartened that one of my last official acts in government is to help launch a program that will heighten veterans' understanding of financial management."

The memorandum of understanding, signed Sept. 24 in VA's central office, builds on the achievements of the department's Center for Veterans Enterprise (CVE). CVE helps promote business ownership and expansion for veterans.

It provides assistance for veterans, including service-disabled veterans, who are considering starting or expanding a business.

The agreement will also assist VA in its many programs for homeless veterans by helping those veterans to develop the financial skills necessary for self-sufficiency.

"Homeless veterans need financial literacy as a survival skill," said Mackay, who steps down from his VA post Sept. 30 after 29 months in office.

Operation Hope Inc. is a national non-profit organization that seeks to bring economic self-sufficiency to America's inner city and underserved communities.

Founder and Chairman John Bryant has been cited by four U.S. presidents for his work to empower low-wealth communities across America.

"This alliance will be an educational investment in the future of America's veterans and in the future of this great nation," said Mackay.

"It will nourish homeless veterans as they move to independence and help the CVE provide entrepreneurial veterans the training, outreach and counseling they will need to succeed professionally."



Connecticut snipers on target

SPEC. JEFFREY AUSTIN
65TH PCH

Military movies may be cool to watch but they often do not show all the hard work that is put into training infantry and support staff soldiers.

Infantry soldiers endure all the elements of the weather along with thirst, aches and pains, exhaustion and boredom.

However, always striving to be the best, two infantrymen attended the Wilson Marksmanship Competition at Camp Robinson, Arkansas in October of 2002.

Moreover, the soldiers won firsthand third place as representatives from Connecticut.

The Connecticut team was included Staff Sgt. Jason J. Pedro, 102nd Infantry, squad leader and Staff Sgt. Collin D. Foster, 102nd Infantry, squad leader.

They received expert sniper training by attending Phase One and Phase Two of the Army's Sniper School and graduated in April 2002.

However, once the date for the competition was announced, the two soldiers had only two weeks to prepare and practice.

"We didn't know what to expect at the competition so we relied on our earlier training," according to Pedro. "In the two weeks leading up to the competition, we only had time to zero the weapon at a local police range in Glastonbury. Also, our weapon was the M24 Bolt Action Rifle with a 10-power scope."

When the competition began Pedro and Foster were up against sniper teams from the other 50 states.

The first day of the competition began with the unknown distance. The unknown distance consisted of engaging many stationary, 19-by-40-inch targets from a distance that had to be calculated by both sniper and spotter. The competition cadre would call out a target by letter or number and the teams could take as long as they needed to engage, but they had only two shots. If they hit the target with the first shot it would count as 100 points. If they hit with the second shot it was scored as 50 points.

The competition continued the following day with the known distance. This part

consisted of cardboard stationary and moving targets.

The teams only had a few seconds to engage four different targets at distances of 300 to and including 600 meters.

Later, on the third day of the competition, the teams began the field exercise.

Range estimation, a nine-mile road march, land navigation and concealment tactics were just some of the skills applied in this section of the competition.

According to Foster, this part of the competition remained vivid in his mind because it simulated a wartime situation.

"Beginning at dusk, we had to use our night land navigation skills to find a target. We had to deal with the lack of sleep and the rationing of our food," said Foster.

The final section of competition was the final shot. During this part of the course, the teams shot at a target anywhere between 500 and 700 meters. Using all their skills

to determining wind speed, temperature and distance, 100 points was awarded for the first shot made and 50 points for a hit with the second shot made, but only one

shot would be scored. The competition constantly made teams hone their sniper skills.

According to Pedro, a bullet traveling 800 foot with a 10 mile an hour wind, will cause the bullet to move approximately five feet in either direction. He said the effect of temperature on a bullet is also significant.

Any 40-degree rise in temperature will cause a bullet to rise 12 inches higher and humidity will cause drag on a bullet.

All these factors and more were taken in consideration throughout the competition.

The competition ended with Pedro and Foster at the top of all other competitors.

Pedro won first place for individual sniper and Foster won third place for novice sniper since he never shot in this kind of competition before.

Despite the adverse conditions, Foster stayed excited throughout the entire competition.

"It just made me more motivated to overcome the task," said Foster.



Staff Sgt. Paul Gay, a U.S. Army Peacekeeper assigned to Camp Able Sentry, hones up on his sniper skills. (Photo by Master Sgt. Michael J. Haggerty, U.S. Air Force)

United States Navy celebrates birthday

SPEC. JOSEPH WALLER
65TH PCH

The Revolutionary War and the Civil War

The Navy celebrates its birthday in October as well as its role in the building and sustaining our great nation. To truly celebrate you must appreciate the Navy's role in early America, in sustaining our union, and its place in the seas in our time.

The United States Navy traces its lineage back to the Revolutionary War when the United States won its independence, beginning at first as unified colonies. These colonies, dependent as they were on the seas for transportation, trade, and as a food source began to rely on it as a medium in which to fight the British.

The British Royal Navy was the strongest organizations of its time and their domination over the seas and its support to their army operations against the colonies forced them to develop a way to counteract the Royal Navy.

They did this by outfitting private vessels with cannons. At first these ships were used by private citizens pitching in on the war for independence disrupting British communications, supplies, and troop movements.

The first state navy was created by Rhode Island in June of 1775 beginning by fitting and arming two vessels. This state navy was ordered to protect the trade of the colony and to seize ships and provisions from enemies of the American Colonies.

Over the next month, the congress of representatives from each of the colonies resolved, "each colony at their own expense, make such provision by armed vessels or otherwise...for the protection of their harbors and navigation on their sea, coasts, against unlawful invasions, attacks, and depredations, from cutters and ships of war," (United States Naval Power In a Changing World by Hooper).

Finally, in October 1775 brought about the birth of the Continental Navy, four vessels in all armed with cannons and then in December of that year the first American naval construction program was enacted.

The war was decided in 1781 and the final peace treaty signed on September 1783. Soon after, in 1798 the Department of the Navy was created.

The roles of the Navy were to be explored and tested again just as the ability for the United States to retain its integrity as a nation was to be tested.

The conflict between the North and the South showed the importance of naval operations. The Union had a far more capable navy when compared to the South and its tactics included blockading southern bays, ports, and inlets. This blockade was very effective in stalling the southern economy, which was dependent on foreign goods through trade.

The Confederate Navy was largely dependant on British donations of ships and private crafts to protect its supply lines in support of its troops. Despite their efforts the Union Navy was successful in using its fleet to counteract the Confederate Navy, blockade the South, and provide crucial support to army operations.

As our country healed and adapted to the changes both internally and externally, the Navy adapted with it. Whereas the naval interests were to protect the economy and stall the economy of an opponent during wartime in the brief history of the department, this goal was changing to a mission of security for the nation and its interests as well as an arm to build and enforce foreign policy.

World War I, World War II

On the heels of the industrial revolution, the Navy found itself protecting and keeping open markets in the east which was being threatened by European powers. Keeping the door open for commercial interest of the United States coupled with dramatic "shrinking" of the seas due to advancements of technology allowed the U.S. to expand its foreign policy and maintain its economic development.

Along with this, the Navy became the nation's leading edge in defense, protecting its coastlines against foreign intrusion and insuring safe passage for trade. It was not long until the U.S. Navy would have to defend America's right and ability to use the seas.

The outbreak of World War I saw the expanded use of submarines to attack commercial shipping, supply routes, and blockade ports and shipping routes. The United States tried to remain neutral but was drawn in after the sinking of a US ship on March 12, 1917.

With the declaration of war passed the Navy Department responded by increasing production of boats designed to curb the power of the U-Boats that were drastically curbing British naval capabilities. With the help of the US Navy, the Allies were able to counter the U-Boats and morally attack the German Navy. By blockading against German interests, their war effort was jeopardized.

Its effectiveness led to dozens of mutinies on German ships and submarines, munitions factories, and unrest among the general population.

World War II followed not too much longer, beckoned by Japan's renunciation of the treaties that brought peace after World War I, in 1934. The United States first naval role was based on neutrality. President Roosevelt mandated naval patrols to protect American interests at sea.

The role of the United States changed drastically when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. With this, the Navy lost two of its older battleships and many others had to undergo extensive repairs.

This weakened greatly the capabilities of the Navy but they responded by administering the repairs quicker than the world expected and they were improved by adding anti-aircraft guns.

Destroyers were outfitted with better technology to detect and destroy submarines, countering, again, the threat posed by German U-Boats.

With the significant assistance offered by the US Navy, the Allies were able to decrease the effectiveness of the German naval campaign and regain superiority in the sea. At the end of World War II, the United States found itself the most powerful naval force in the

world.

Modern Day

In January of 1991, the United States took the fight to Saddam when it went ahead with Desert Storm, moving on from its shielding operations.

The Navy, with their ability to provide active and accurate fire on enemy lines, was able, along with the rest of the Armed Forces to push Saddam out of Kuwait.

The Navy was also there when our troops withdrew, aiding in the sanctions against Iraq and policing the dictator.

The Navy was there again when Iraqi Dictator was ousted by US forces earlier this year, playing a similar role as it had in Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

It remains to be seen what role the US Navy will be on the war on terror, but it is clear that it will be a large one, as the United States have always relied on its Navy since its conception in 1775; and the Navy has never let its nation down.

All of this (and there is more) is why we celebrate the Navy's birthday, for while celebrate our fine Navy's traditions, accomplishments, and readiness we celebrate a tradition that is as integral to the United States as our democracy.



An Aviation Boatswain's Mate aboard USS Carl Vinson (CVN 70) signals to the catapult officer (the "Shooter") that the catapult steam is at its prescribed pressure for launching an aircraft. The carrier is scheduled to pull into Naval Air Station North Island, San Diego, Calif., before returning to its homeport in Bremerton, Wash. The Carl Vinson Carrier Strike Group (CSG) is returning home following an eight-month deployment to the western Pacific in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Upon arrival in Bremerton, the ship will have logged a 250-day deployment. (U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Martin S. Fuentes.)



Troubleshooters assigned to the "Black Lions" of Fighter Squadron Two One Three (VF-213) give their final approval for a safe launch aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71). The nuclear powered aircraft carrier is conducting training in the Atlantic Ocean. (U.S. Navy photo by Photographer's Mate 2nd Class Floyd Grimm)

Connecticut Military Department News

First Company Governor's Foot Guard celebrates 232nd anniversary

STAFF SGT. MICHAEL CONDON
1st Co. GOVERNOR'S FOOT GUARD PUBLIC RELATIONS

On Saturday, September 20, 2003, the First Company Governor's Foot Guard celebrated Rochambeau Day and the 232nd anniversary of the founding of the command in 1771.

This annual event commemorates the meeting between Gen. George Washington and French Count de Rochambeau that took place in 1780 in Hartford. At this meeting, the plans were laid that led to the defeat of British General Cornwallis at Yorktown.

The event started with a parade from the Foot Guard Armory on High Street to the First Church of Christ Cathedral where a memorial service for members who passed away during the year was held.

After the memorial service, the parade proceeded to the Old State House. The Old State House, the first Capital of the State of Connecticut joined the Foot Guard in this year's celebrations. During the day and leading up to the finale with the Foot Guard, the Old State House opened a new exhibit of the American Revolutionary War art by David Wagner and a diorama of Connecticut in the War from the Huntington Museum in Scotland, Conn.

Just prior to the arrival of the Foot Guard, an Old State House historic interpreter portrayed the renowned Franco-American hero, le Marquis de Lafayette, and recounted the meeting between General Washington and Rochambeau that took place in Hartford under the watchful eye of the First Company.

Upon arrival, the Foot Guard, under the command of Maj. Commandant Dennis Conroy formed for the evening parade on the Old State House lawn to award Connecticut long service medals, the GFG soldier of the year award to 1st Sgt. Edward Connors and to lay a wreath at the Rochambeau boulder.

Immediately following sound off, the Old State House canon, silent since 9/11/01, was fired and the National Anthem was played by the Foot Guard band under the direction of Capt. Laura O'Connell.

Conroy, assisted by Col. Dominique Trinquand, Military Advisor to the French Ambassador to the Permanent French Mission at the United Nations in New York, laid the wreath which was followed by the playing of the French and US National Anthems.

The parade then proceeded to the Ancient Burial Ground on Gold Street where a second wreath of honor was placed at the Foot Guard Boulder.



Maj. Commandant Dennis Conroy of the 1st Company Governor's Foot Guard and Col. Dominique Trinquand, Military Advisor to the French Ambassador at the U.N. lay a wreath in honor of Rochambeau Day.

After the day's events, there was a formal military reception and dinner. Attending this year's ceremony and dinner in addition to Trinquand, were the colonel's wife Madame

Trinquand and the Commandants from the Second Company Governor's Foot Guard and the First and Second Company Governor's Horse Guards.

1st Co. Governor's Foot Guard participates in Governors' Conference



The First Company Governor's Foot Guard participated in the 28th Annual Conference of the New England Governor's and Eastern Canadian Premiers that took place on Monday, Sept. 8 in Mystic. Bandmaster Capt. Laura O'Connell conducted the 1st Company Governor's Foot Guard Band during a social event. In the photo above, Maj. Commandant Dennis Conroy (r) along with Lt. Col. Rocco Laria discussed plans for the event with John Wiltse (c) from the Governor's Communications Staff. Brad Davis, the emcee for the event, reviews his notes in the background. (Photo courtesy of Lt. Col. John O'Connell, 1st Company Governor's Foot Guard)

1ST OCS BN, 169TH LEADERSHIP REGIMENT

Officer Candidate School
Information Briefs:



Phase 0 Dates		Phase 1 Dates
24-25 April 2004	15 November 2003	17-31 July 2004
22-23 May 2004	13 December 2003	
26-27 June 2004	24 January 2004	
	28 February 2004	
	20 March 2004	
	24 April 2004	

Location:
BLDG 32 Community Room
Camp Rowland
Mantic, CT

REC:
3LT Bruce O'Dea
(860) 411-4238
www.169thlbrg.com

Bring a friend, Spouse or Significant other
Information Brief will be in Building 3 Community Room,
beginning at 1000 hours.
Uniform is BDU on duty, Civilian all others

247th Engineer Detachment completes hum

Village has public water supply



Spec. Michael Robinson guides a 100 GPM submersible pump into the Bezgirtan well. (Photo by Spec. Joshua Murray, 247th Eng.)

Sgt. 1st Class JOHN W. LANE
COMMANDER, 247th ENGINEER COMPANY

With the flick of a switch and a slight hum, water shot from a fire hose at more than 100 gallons per minute to the delight of children and elders gathered around a newly completed well in the small village of Bezgirtan in northern Iraq.

For a few moments the smell of chlorine hung in the air as disinfecting chemicals poured into the well the day before were removed. After a few hours of pumping and the collection of several water samples for testing, the latest drilling project conducted by the 247th Engineer Detachment was finished.

For the first time in 18 years, the village of Bezgirtan once again had a public water supply.

"It was a quite an experience," said Spec. Stephen Zarger of Middletown, Conn. "People began yelling 'Thank you Mister! Thank you Mister!' when the water began shooting out of the well."

"It made me feel great," said Staff Sgt. Jabbar Fatah of New London, Conn. "It felt like we really did something good."

"It was a lot of fun to see the children smiling and giving us the 'thumbs up' as they played in the water," said Sgt. William Maloney of Ansonia, Conn.

The Bezgirtan well is the fourth project completed by the 247th Engineer Detachment, a 10-member engineer unit from New London, Conn. that specializes in well drilling.

The unit was activated on Feb. 10 and has been operating in

the 101st Airborne Division area of Iraq since late May.

The unit began the Bezgirtan project completed drilling 12 days later.

The maximum planned depth for the 300 feet because the unit wanted to rock layers containing sulfur, salts and exist in the area.

However, after drilling only 90 feet of fractured limestone and large cavity was already producing several hundred minute. When rocks from the cavities bit, drilling was halted and the unit decided at that depth.

"It was already a successful well," said of Manchester, Conn. "We felt it was 'call it a hole' rather than to risk losing

Development of local water resource engineer operations in the 101st Airborne their arrival, unit members have been conducting engineer assessments of the area bounded by the Syrian, Turkish

"Water well drilling is one of the most jobs we can do," said Spec. Michael Robinson, Conn. "What could be better than bring

According to Sgt. Ronald Smith of



Sgt. William Maloney and Sgt. 1st Class John Lane enjoy the moment as compressed air pumps water

Humanitarian well project in Northern Iraq

Supply for first time in 18 years

area of operations (AO) in northern Iraq. The well project on the 25th of August and after several days of drilling.

Depth for the well was a little more than 100 feet. To avoid penetrating deeper into the earth, salts and hydrocarbons known to be present in the area.

After only 90 feet the drill bit entered a zone with large cavities. After 140 feet the well produced several hundred gallons of water per hour. As the cavities began to collapse on the well, the unit decided to complete the well.

"A successful well," said Spec. Joshua Murray. "The unit felt it was better to stop there and not risk losing the well."

Water resources is a cornerstone of the 101st Airborne Division AO. Since the unit has been drilling wells and providing water to the villages in the area, Turkish and Iranian borders.

One of the most important humanitarian projects in the area. Michael Robinson of New London, Conn., said "It's more than bringing water to the desert?" Spec. Danielson, Conn., one of the

best aspects of the Bezgirtan project was "its expansion to include renovation of the local school."

When the unit first arrived at Bezgirtan, the school was a shambles. Most of the windows were broken, there was no running water and the dingy classrooms were full of dirt and broken glass.

The unit invited their higher command for a tour of the school to convince them to fund the school renovation.

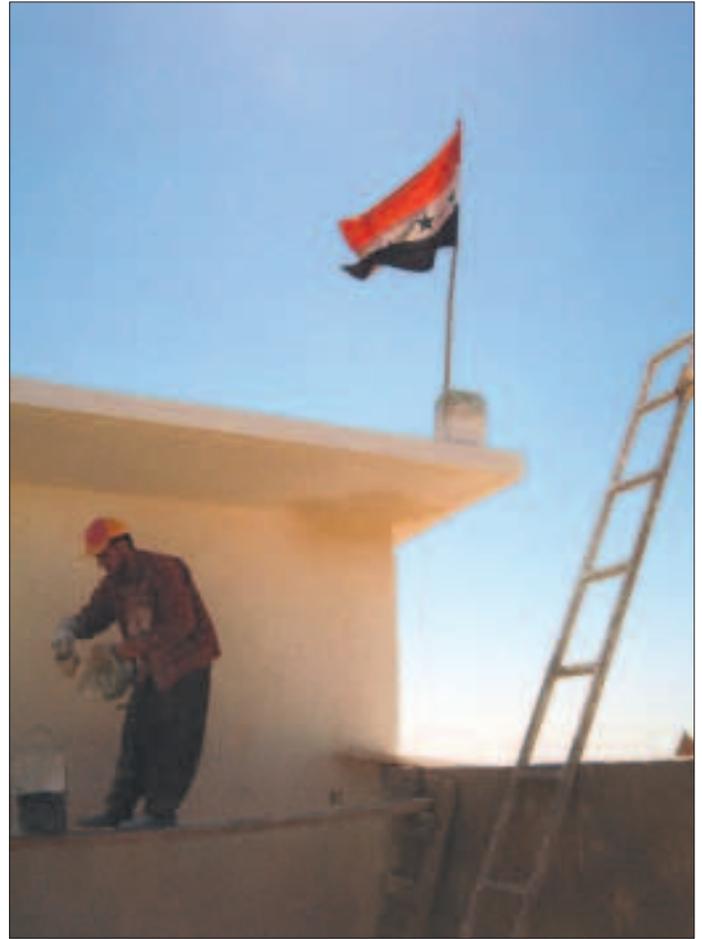
"By linking the water project to the school renovation we have provided a better atmosphere for the children and their education," said Smith.

"For this operation to succeed and to get democracy to work (in Iraq) we have to reach out to the children because they are willing to change," said Maloney. "The children will remember the good works we did here."

After the renovation, the primary school at Bezgirtan, used by more than 200 students in grades 1-6, will have a complete facelift to include new doors, windows and electrical wiring, and the school will have running water and functioning bathrooms for the first time since the public well that supplied the school ceased to function 18 years ago.

According to Mr. Kadhim, a local resident who befriended the unit upon their arrival in Bezgirtan, the 1,500 residents of Bezgirtan are Shabbaks, a tribe that opposed the regime of Saddam Hussein.

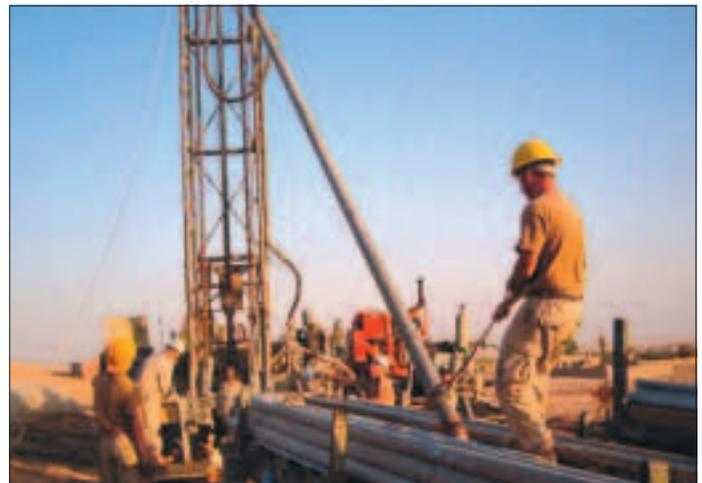
"Because we did not support Saddam our village has been neglected," said Mr. Kadhim. "We very much thank the American Army for helping us."



A contractor applies a new coat of plaster to the exterior walls of the Bezgirtan primary school. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class John Lane, 247th Eng.)



Spec. Danielson pumps water from the Bezgirtan well. (Photo by Spec. Joshua Murray, 247th Eng.)



Sgt. William Maloney operates the drill rig as Staff Sgt. Stephen Pearson guides the drill rod to rig. Spec. Michael Robinson and Spec. Joshua Murray watch overhead to ensure the drill rod doesn't snag drill tower hoses. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class John Lane, 247th Eng.)

OEM participates in Westport School exercise

On Friday, August 22, the Connecticut Office of Emergency Management and the Town of Westport conducted a school emergency preparedness exercise.

The fictional scenario involved the crash of a tanker truck on I-95 and a plume of toxic vapor, and was designed to test the actions of the school crisis teams in response to a hazardous materials incident affecting much of the Westport area.

While the accident and hazardous materials were simulated, the actions of the eight crisis teams were real, as they worked out sensible responses to the problems that could arise from a catastrophic hazardous materials incident on a typical day back at school.

Although OEM has designed and conducted many exercises, including three previously in Westport, this exercise was unique: the entire scenario (including all problem messages) was assembled in a video production.

This new format allowed separate crisis teams to respond simultaneously to the simulated problems in the messages. Eight school crisis teams took part on location in eight different schools, while board of education team members and police, fire, EMS, and emergency management officials framed a coordinated response in the town's Emergency Operations Center.



The exercise was a vigorous test of Westport's emergency planning, and was followed by a debriefing. Next, the town will conduct a critique of the day's event, and look into ways the emergency plan for each school can be updated and improved.

Officers Club of Connecticut

October Events

Friday, Oct. 3

NGACT Breakfast
7 a.m.

Saturday, Oct. 4

A Nite at the Busnell
Hairspray
Roast Sirloin of Beef or Grilled Swordfish
Theater, 8 p.m.

Monday, Oct. 13

Columbus Day - Club Closed

Tuesday, Oct. 14

House Committee Meeting, 5:30 p.m.

Friday, Oct. 17

Octoberfest
German Food and German Music by The Vagabonds
Reservation required

Bar and Lounge open daily at lunch and from 4 p.m. to . . .

Club open for lunch daily from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Welcome our new chef, Saul Brown.

To book a party or event, call (860) 249-3624



November 6, 2003

Aqua Turf Club
Southington, Connecticut
\$49 per person

For more information,
contact MAJ Phil Mawaka
(860) 386-4071 x159

Hosted by the Connecticut 1st Battalion 169th Aviation Regiment

Renovated Officers Club reopens for lunch and social events

**SGT. GREG HARRISON
65th PCH**

Officers' Clubs have a hallowed place in a military environment. They are the areas on a military base that have been specifically designated as a social gathering area for commissioned officers and their families.

They are not only found on military bases but also in some National Guard armories such as the Hartford Armory, home of STARC (State Area Command).

The "O" Club in the Hartford Armory recently underwent a four-week renovation and maintenance period to bring the facility up to modern safety standards, to increase the attractiveness of the dining facility and create an welcoming ambience for officer members, associate members and invited guests.

Among the renovations undertaken was the replacement of the wooden floor and the refurbishing of the ceiling.

"The original floor dated from 1908 when the Armory was constructed and over time it had become unstable," said Lt. Col. Gerald J. Lukowski, Construction and Facilities Management Officer. Lukowski's office oversaw the renovation of the club, which took four weeks to complete.

The cost of the renovations was approximately \$34,000, and the main body of work was completed by Mattern Construction of Bozrah, Conn.

"The original wood floor was replaced with a four-inch flat level concrete deck that required the use of a concrete pump truck to pour in about nine cubic yards worth of concrete.

The next step was to redo the ceilings. These were spray-painted with a special paint that allowed the club to retain its acoustical atmosphere," said Lukowski.

Lukowski also said that the staff members did the repainting of the walls of the club.

The Officers' Club of Connecticut was established in 1947 by a small group of dedicated officers, and consisted of a lunch counter, a lounge and a small bar.

It has expanded to an area that can hold up to 120 people for a variety of functions including wedding receptions, fundraisers, bar mitzvahs, baby and bridal showers, class reunions, and retirement parties.

According to co-club manager Command Sgt. Maj. (Ret) Robert C. Moeller, the "O" Club has also invested in other improvements such as an expanded menu and can also provide outside catering for its members and associate members.

A major part of the upgraded catering and expanded menu for the Officers' Club is the quality of the food.

As part of the improvements implemented at the Club, a new chef with an extensive background in the culinary arts was hired: Chef Saul Brown. Brown has more than 35 years of cooking experience and comes to the "O" Club from the prestigious Wampanoag Country Club in West Hartford, where he was executive chef for 10 years.

"I prefer working in a club environment instead of a restaurant because I like to personalize. I like to get to know the individual preferences of my customers. It gives me immediate gratification when my customers are satisfied," said Brown.

Among the specialties presented by Brown are Gorgonzola Crusted Steak, New York

Sirloin, stuffed trout, baked scrod with lemon butter sauce, grilled swordfish with French herb sauce, and what Brown likes to deem "comfort food" such as meatloaf and roast beef sirloin.

"I insist on the fresh food concept of kitchen management. I don't work out of the freezer. Everything that comes out of my kitchen must be fresh."

He said. Brown is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America and is a member of the Connecticut Chefs Association.

The dining room, bar and lounge are open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

"The original floor dated from 1908 when the Armory was constructed and over time it had become unstable."

Lt. Col. Gerald J. Lukowski

with the dining area serving lunch specials such as beef barley soup followed by an entrée of pasta Bolognese with hearty red meat sauce accompanied by semolina ziti, garlic bread and house salad.

Also on the lunch menu can be found cream of broccoli or chicken noodle soup, open face tenderloin sandwiches with garlic herb butter served with fries or onion rings, and pumpkin pie with rum sauce and whipped topping.

Prices can range from \$5.25 to \$7.95 depending on the meal served.

The bar reopens at 4:00 p.m. and serves a wide variety of beverages including imported beers such as Bass Pale Ale, Spaten Munich, and Stella Artois.

The bartender, Jack Meikel, has been tending bar at the Officers' Club for more

than 25 years and "can make pretty much any beverage you can think of," said Moeller.

The "O" Club is also offering a chance to see a Broadway play in Hartford:

"We have what's known as the Bushnell Broadway series which includes dinner at the club, round trip bus transportation, and a ticket to a Broadway show playing at the Bushnell Theatre," said Moeller.

Next up in the series is the popular musical by Rogers and Hammerstein, "The Sound of Music." Cost is \$90.00 and the date is Saturday, Nov 1 with dinner starting at 6:00 p.m. and transportation to the theatre leaving at 7:30 p.m.

Membership in the Officers' Club, contrary to what one might expect, is not limited strictly to commissioned officers.

There are two categories of members in the club: Officer Members and Associate Members. Officer Members consist of current or former members of the U.S. Armed Forces, Regular, Guard, Reserve, or Connecticut Militia, who have held the Enlisted Rank of E-7 or above, Warrant Officer Ranks, or Commissioned Officer Ranks.

Associate Membership is open to members of the U.S. Military or militia who have held the Enlisted Ranks of E-3 through E-6, and to civilian men and women who espouse the ideals and philosophy of a strong military.

The only other requirement for military members is a valid DD 214 or military ID, and the membership fee is \$60.00 annually.

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During the O'Club's annual summer shut-down, the facility received a face lift including replacing the floor, installing new carpeting, refurbishing the ceiling and painting the walls. (Photos by Maj. John Whitford, State Senior Public Affairs Officer)

Military Matters



VA seeks former POWs for possible benefits

WASHINGTON (Sept. 19, 2003) - The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is asking former prisoners of war not currently using VA benefits to contact VA to find out if they may be eligible for disability compensation and other services.

More than 23,000 former prisoners of war (POWs) already receive compensation from VA. This year, the department mailed information about benefits to another 4,700 known ex-POWs not on its rolls. However, VA estimates there could be as many as 11,000 more POWs for whom it does not have an address.

Today, on National POW-MIA Recognition Day, VA is asking former POWs not receiving benefits who did not receive a VA letter recently to call the department at 1-800-827-1000.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Anthony J. Principi said VA has expanded policies to cover increasing numbers of former POWs as new illnesses have been found related to captivity. The administration currently is pressing to get even more compensation and medical care benefits for former POWs.

"These veterans sacrificed for their country in time of war, and it's the nation's turn to serve them, to help them determine if they are entitled to compensation, health care or other services," Principi said.

Nine out of ten former POWs are veterans

of World War II, and their service predates the use of Social Security numbers as a military "service number." That, coupled with the decades that have elapsed since their service, makes it difficult for VA to track down those who have not opened a file with VA in recent years.

"On this POW-MIA Recognition Day, VA is asking veterans and all Americans who know of a former POW to help spread the word that benefits and services may be just a phone call away," Principi said.

The most recent expansion of VA benefits for former POWs was a July regulation that added cirrhosis of the liver to the list of diseases to which entitlement to disability compensation is presumed in former POWs.

Similar policies making it easier for former POWs to obtain compensation have been enacted for POWs detained for 30 days or more who develop specific illnesses.

Former POWs have a special eligibility for enrollment in VA medical care and are exempt from making copayments for inpatient and outpatient medical care.

They have the same copay rules as other veterans for medications and for extended care. Free dental treatment for any dental condition is available to former POWs held for more than 90 days.

More information about VA services for former POWs is available at www.vba.va.gov

New Army PT regimen heading your way

SGT. TRINACE JOHNSON
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

A team from the U.S. Army Physical Fitness School is visiting Army installations to teach a new exercise regimen that includes pull-ups, the shuttle sprint, squat bender, rower and forward lunge.

The school's commandant began by visiting Fort Bliss last week to teach physical training instructors the exercises designed to improve muscle strength, endurance and mobility, while focusing on fitness for everyday life.

There are no immediate plans to change the Army's physical fitness test, officials said, just how soldiers prepare for it.

The 6th Air Defense Artillery Brigade sponsored the training last week that involved more than 60 soldiers from various units on Bliss, including National Guard soldiers and German Air Force members. Fort Bliss was the first Army installation to be introduced to the new program that was just approved for trial less than three weeks ago.

Lt. Col. William Rieger, U.S. Army Physical Fitness School commandant, and deputy commandant Frank Palkoska, both said that the new PT would be standardized, disciplined and have a more military appearance.

They also said that the program would be more designed toward the individual soldier's needs and ability and not just a "mass one" level of participation.

Some of the key points in the program will be to:

- Improve physical fitness while controlling injuries
- Progressively condition and toughen soldiers
- Develop soldiers' self-confidence and discipline

"We're going to be training as we fight," said Sgt. Jeffrey J. Hernandez, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 6th ADA Brigade.

"We had a lot of injuries in the past," Hernandez said. He said that the USAPFS is set to teach this PT to basic trainees and anticipates saving money on hospital costs.

"With these exercises we will be able to better control injuries," said Staff Sgt. Emerson Hazzard, 6th Brigade operations noncommissioned officer and student of the new PT demonstration class. "We'll

never be able to get rid of injuries. The Army had to come up with a plan to get the max amount out of a soldier without breaking him," Hazzard said.

Rieger said that this program is not a drastic change from what the Army has always been doing, it's just doing it better. "There's no bad exercise, only exercises that are done incorrectly or with the improper intensity, order, volume and amount of repetitions," Rieger said.

Palkoska said that when he teaches soldiers in the field, he wants to make sure they understand why they are being taught the particular way of doing the exercises and why they could endure longer if they use the USAPFS program.

In addition, both Rieger and Palkoska said that this program would improve soldier performance that is related to their jobs. For instance, if a soldier has a job that requires him or her to move fast in a moment's notice, the shuttle sprint or start, stop and change direction run that was taught should help with that.

"An active or dynamic exercise like the forward lunge is better for stretching," Rieger said. He said the USAPFS wanted soldiers to do exercises that applied to the functional strength of what they're doing. For instance, he said the high jumper works with soldiers who are airborne.

Rieger said that part of the program was designed to train the muscles to respond anaerobically, using less oxygen, as well as aerobically, using more oxygen.

"You have to stress the body in different ways with a combination of activities to improve," Rieger said. He suggested doing one minute of push-ups with no rest to assess strength.

"We're educating soldiers so they know they can do it and believe they can do it, because they've practiced it on a regular basis," Palkoska said. Fort Jackson, S.C., is the next installation on Rieger and Palkoska's list.

"We're going to every single installation in the Army," Rieger said, adding that it may take a couple of years.

Staff Sgt. Steven Saenz, an instructor at the fitness school, said that a new Army Field Manual 21-20, (Physical Fitness) is currently in the works, but will not be out for a few years.

Education Essentials:

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1st LT. PAUL DRAPER
EDUCATION SERVICES OFFICER

Check out the following links for free, online courses for Guardsmen

Education Links

www.voled.doded.mil (DOD Voluntary Ed Programs)

www.soc.aascu.org (SOCGUARD)

www.gibill.va.gov (Veterans Administration)

www.virtualarmory.com (ARNG Virtual Armory)

aartstranscript.leavenworth.army.mil/ (AARTS)

www.wsmr.army.mil/education/links.htm (Great links)

www.military.com/Careers/Education (Military.com Education Info)

ARNG Education Vision: "To provide quality programs, services and support that will enable soldiers to achieve their educational objectives and further enhance the strength and relevance of the Army National Guard."

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Staff Sgt. Chance Finely, with the 1-204th Air Defense Artillery, National Guard, practices the squat bender during the PT course. (Photo by Sgt. Trinace Johnson)



COMMAND SGT. MAJ.
RAYMOND P. ZASTAURAY

Enlisted Update

I attended the 1st Army Soldier of the Year Board with Spec. Gregory R. Gustavson from the 141st Medical Company at the end of July. Gustavson represented our

state in an outstanding manner at the 1st Army Soldier of the Year competition.

Gustavson is an individual that reminds me of our young soldiers' desire to be an integral part of our organization. We as leaders need to take advantage of our younger soldiers and give them the opportunity to become more involved in the training process.

Leaders, I encourage you to utilize your young soldiers by having them give classes in your units. They have the latest training and I know we all can learn a great deal from many of them. This is an excellent means to mentor our soldiers. This way they will gain the experience to prepare them to take on the role of the future leaders of our organization.

As we begin Fiscal Year 2004, Connecticut Army National Guard members have to concentrate on getting back to basics. Every soldier, regardless of their MOS, needs to be proficient in basic soldiering skills. Proficient performance in marksmanship, physical fitness and land navigation are essential skills our soldiers require in order to survive on the battlefield.

Soldiers are confident when their training is meaningful. Fear is overcome by confidence in leadership. We must train as we fight. It is up to our NCO Corp to train our soldiers in these skills so they stay alert and focused.

Also this year, the Connecticut Army National Guard's end strength mission for FY 04 is 4,011 soldiers. We need to focus on retaining our soldiers. First Term and ETS Counseling is an effective tool to use for increasing the Retention Rate at a unit.

The Recruiting & Retention Command had a Mobile Training Team from the Professional Education Center facilitate the Unit Attrition Management Course in August for all the Unit Retention NCOs. All of the Unit Retention NCOs I spoke to said that the training they received was outstanding.

Counseling is one-on-one communication with a subordinate soldier that is intended to help that soldier develop. Good counseling fights attrition. AWOL soldiers require attention. A unit's success depends on recovering AWOL soldiers. Left unattended, AWOL can snowball, lowering morale, deflating your unit's mission readiness and increasing attrition.

The key to staying mission-ready is preventing soldiers from going AWOL. By implementing and maintaining a strong sponsorship program, facilitating productive counseling sessions and

communicating with our soldiers, the number of soldiers who go AWOL can be reduced.

Remember, our mission is to maintain trained soldiers. A great deal of time and money is invested in them, so we need to try everything to keep our soldiers in boots. The goal of a positive approach to AWOL recovery procedures is to figure out what issues are causing soldiers to be AWOL and help them manage or resolve these issues. That is why it is very important for leaders to know their soldiers. The Unit Retention NCOs now have the tools to aid Company Commanders and First Sergeants in combating attrition. Every Soldier Counts!

As NCOs we are responsible for many things. One of the most important responsibilities is shaping our soldiers' views. We do this in a subtle but direct way with our reactions.

As an NCO, reacting to certain things as either an obstacle or an opportunity is noticed by our soldiers. Our reactions are seen by our soldiers and are used in their appraisal of us and our work ethic. Gripping and complaining are considered to be inalienable rights of soldiers.

Once you become an NCO you waive your right to vent in the presence of your subordinates. We owe it to our soldiers and they deserve to receive the most positive leadership possible.

As the State Command Sergeant Major, I look forward to going out and visiting soldiers on weekend drills. I always maintain a positive mental attitude when talking to soldiers at the units.

I cannot condone NCOs who project a negative attitude. It is very important for NCOs to build and strengthen the relationship between themselves and their soldiers, to set high standards and give their soldiers every tool and opportunity to achieve them. A good leader must care for, praise, encourage and value his subordinates.

I have been receiving emails from the top NCOs of our deployed units. 1st Sgt. Desjardins of the 248th Engr Co, 1st Sgt. Jones of the 143d MP Co, Sgt. 1st Class Lane of the 247th Well Drilling Detachment, 1st Sgt. Dell of Co G 104th Avn and Sgt. Maj. Donnee of the AVCRAD all provided me with Situation Reports on their units in August and September.

They informed me that their soldiers are performing their duties in an outstanding manner despite the horrible conditions they face in theater.

I told them all how proud I am of them for keeping their soldiers safe. I promised them that their soldiers will all receive a heroes' welcome home when their units return to Connecticut. We owe it to them all for all they have done and continue to do for our state and country.

Please remember to keep our fellow deployed soldiers and airmen and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

Guard Voices Patriotism

COMMAND SGT. MAJ. DANIEL NORKUN, JR.
TASK FORCE 192, FORT MONMOUTH, N.J.

Have you seen the patriotism in this country? It's unbelievable! I have served the United States Army and Connecticut Army National Guard for more than 35 years. I have seen the patriotism go full cycle over this period.

I joined the Connecticut Army National Guard many years ago and grew up in a family and among friends that were always highly patriotic and believed in the American way.

I can remember when I first joined the Connecticut Army National Guard during the Viet Nam era. People cursed at you when in uniform and never said a kind word. I was also on the streets of New Haven during the riots and remember my buddy getting hit in the leg with a thrown brick. I sure didn't see any patriotism then.

I remember my wife and I on our first visit to Hawaii nearly eight years ago. A parade was occurring on Ala Moana Boulevard and we stopped to watch. Every time the National Colors passed, people stood and placed their right hand over their heart. It was wonderful to see and made me feel very proud to be an American. We discussed this and agree that people in Hawaii were much more patriotic than people back on the mainland.

Then, around the middle of April this year, I was selected as the Command Sergeant Major for Task Force 192, part of Nobel Eagle III. I felt very proud and fortunate to have this opportunity to finally serve my country during these troubled times. We went to our mobilization station, Fort Drum, New York, got "validated" and then along with 31 other fine soldiers, we became headquartered at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey.

The Task Force Commander, Lt. Col. Shawn Karvelis, and I have begun our travels along the East Coast, from South Carolina, to Fort Drum, to Massachusetts, through the mountains of Pennsylvania and back to New

Jersey. Many hours of driving, sleeping and eating in hotels, but most importantly, getting to see soldiers of our Task Force.

But what has really caught my attention is the rebirth of patriotism in this country. My whole tour has been made. If I ended my tour today, I would be so happy and proud to be an American. You just have to experience the thrill of patriotism that I am feeling.

I mentioned the soldiers of the Task Force. Now I know soldiers are supposed to be patriotic, but you have to see for yourself the pride and spirit these young soldiers display. They approach their work in such a professional manner that it really makes me proud to be a Senior Noncommissioned Officer.

From their appearance, to their attitude, to their pride, it is such a pleasure to see these fine soldiers hard at work, protecting the sites they are assigned.

But the most wonderful thing is the way civilians display their feelings of patriotism. From gas station attendants, hotel clerks, waitresses, people on elevators to people at rest areas, stopping and saying "Thank You", is just amazing.

I'm not talking one here another there, but I'm talking constantly. It is absolutely wonderful and it has brought tears to my eyes many times. It's so rewarding to feel this gratitude after 35 years of not seeing it.

I highly encourage everyone that if the time ever comes to serve your country on active duty - do it! No one should miss the patriotic beat that is going on in this country.

It makes me proud to serve my country and it really is amazing when they say what goes around, comes around. Patriotism is back in America.

I'm a witness to it!

"Protect the Force"

Soldiers show state pride at West Point during UConn, Army football game

1st SGT. JOHN CARRAGHER
TASK FORCE 192, WEST POINT, NY

Something strange happened at the United States Military Academy yesterday that has probably never happened before.

The 1st Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment was conducting their monthly Battalion Run. For those of you not familiar with the Army, a Battalion run is designed to motivate soldiers and stimulate Esprit de Corps within the unit.

On this particular day, the eve of the home opener for Army football, the Battalion ran thru the Corps of Cadets area. The United States Corps of Cadets was forming up for their morning formation. One would think that on this historic ground, where Army football is close to religion, the cadence sung by the formation would be reflective of the general mood of the installation, GO ARMY, BEAT

UCONN.

However, as the formation passed, several of the units broke into a serious UCONN cadence. The cadence continued, and grew louder as the formation passed the Corps of Cadets. You see, three of the units assigned to the 1st Battalion, 1st Infantry are the 134th Military Police Company, the 103d Chemical Company, and A Company, 1st Battalion, 102d Infantry, all Connecticut National Guard units mobilized in support of Operation Noble Eagle III, providing security and force protection support to the United States Military Academy.

Our soldiers are proud to be soldiers in the United States Army. We are also proud citizens of the great State of Connecticut. GOUCONN!

Homefront

In defense of Connecticut's children: Bike101 reaches out to keep kids drug-free

SPEC. JENNIFER ZANARDI
DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION

The Connecticut National Guard Drug Demand Reduction Program is a great service to the state of Connecticut. However, many people do not know what exactly the Drug Demand Reduction Program is and why it is a part of the Connecticut National Guard.

The Connecticut National Guard is committed to family, youth and education within Connecticut's communities. The Drug Demand Reduction Program was designed to reach out to the children of Connecticut with anti-drug messages. The program does this through youth programs, such as overnight camps or weekend retreats, and weeklong camps during the summer.

The most recent program added to the Drug Demand Reduction curriculum was Bike 101. The Connecticut National Guard Drug Demand Reduction Program, in partnership with New Britain Weed and Seed, New Britain Police Department and the New Britain Bike Club, coordinated this program.

The youth were picked to attend the camp by the New Britain Bike Club. All members of the bike club brought their own bikes,

which were donated from the New Britain Bike Club. However, before receiving their bike, each youth had to commit to so many required hours of service to the bike club, which could include helping with races, helping to fix the bikes, or simply showing up for bike club meetings. Once a youth contributes so many hours, the New Britain Police Department purchases him or her a bike, which they then use to compete.

This week-long overnight camp was designed to provide drug education lessons as well as providing skills and mentoring in leadership, physical fitness, team building

and land navigation.

Along with these classes the campers biked to and from Stone's Ranch Military Reservation each day where they used their skills they learned on the land navigation course. On the second day of camp, the youth



participated in a modified Army Physical Fitness Test, where they did one minute of push-ups, sit-ups and a one-mile run. It was not a surprise how in shape these campers were.

The campers used their leadership skills on the Leaders Reaction Course, where they learned how to work together on obstacles

other than their bike courses. The campers also biked to McCooks Point where they enjoyed a full day at the beach, as well as launching rockets they had built earlier in the week.

At the end of the camp, the total miles biked by every student and staff was more than one hundred miles. Therefore the new camp was appropriately named Bike 101.

The Connecticut National Guard Drug Demand Reduction Program conducts several Drug-Free Leadership events throughout the school year and summer months. All of our programs are conducted in partnership with educational institutions and community organizations. If your school or group would like to get involved, contact Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia at 860-493-2724.



280th participates in joint training exercise

LT. COL. CHARLES MCKELLAR
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER HQ CTANG
1st LT. KEVIN MCCARTHY
CO. C, 280th SIGNAL BN.

During this year's Aug. 16-31 annual training period, Company C, 280th Signal Battalion conducted a joint Army and Air Force communications exercise with the 103rd Air Control Squadron (103 ACS), an Air National Guard unit located at Orange, Ct., and the 103rd Communications Flight, an Air Guard unit located at Bradley Air Field.

Lt. Col. Russ A. Styles, director of the Joint Army and Air Computer and Communications Command (J6) and Maj. Jim Wiggs, deputy J6 director, directed the mission. The mission was to validate communications links between strategic locations throughout the state that would be critical in the event of a state emergency. The network has the ability to include secure tactical telephones and data network connectivity.

"The J6 goal is to initialize and foster a rapid communications system capable of providing voice and data systems to Connecticut citizens," said Styles. He added that, "By providing joint resources we garner vast expertise from numerous professionals and the ability to provide a means to communicate using state-of-the-

art Equipment." Wiggs added to Styles comments by saying, "Our goal is to be able to respond to any tasking under Military Support for Civilian Authorities Plans (MSCA), whether it be via the Army Guard, Air Guard or a joint operation." He said, "Getting the units to know each other's equipment, personnel and capabilities are key to our success in the future." "We are impressed by the professionalism and can-do attitude of all the participants."

The 280th and the 103 ACS personnel have worked together for many years, and members of both units spoke highly of each other. This is because having worked together in the past; they had earned each other's respect, trust, and work well together as a team.

The 103rd Communications Flight was tasked to provide commercial and military network access and network configuration expertise. "This exercise gives us the opportunity to configure and test our equipment to determine if we can link to various areas in the state, which could be an asset during an emergency," said Capt. John M. Warren, commander of the 103rd Communications Flight. The 103rd ACS provided a Troposcatter Radio System, for long-range communications, while the 280th provided communications links, and was the operations center for the exercise.

The men and women were very pleased to

be tasked for the mission because it gives them another opportunity to train on equipment, make mistakes in a non critical atmosphere, learn from their experiences and interface in a joint environment, which is a high priority for the top leadership at the Department of Defense (DoD). Airman 1st Class Ryan Weiss, satellite wideband technician at the 103 ACS said, "This exercise is another opportunity for us to test our equipment and employ our skills with a hands-on approach." Spc. Shelia Genovese, of the 280th said, "The training we are receiving is an excellent opportunity for Spc. James A. Mitchell, Jr. and me to train in a situation that would not normally be available to us."

The mission of the 280th is to provide secure tactical voice and data communications at echelon above corps (EAC) and theater levels. In addition, provide communications to support state disasters and civil emergencies. This was the 280th's first annual training where the primary focus was on the state mission.

1st Lt. Ryan K Miller said, "I have always enjoyed our excellent partnership with the Air Guard. This exercise will serve to strengthen that relationship and serve as a model as the Army and Air guard transition to a joint headquarters."



103 ACS supports 133rd Test Squadron at C4ISR Summit

LT. COL. CHARLES MCKELLAR
PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER HQ CTANG
LT. COL. DAVID CLARKE
C4ISR DIRECTOR, HQ IOWA ANG

The second annual Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance (C4ISR) Summit was held at the Sheraton-Ferncroft during August 18-21, at Danvers, Mass. This summit brought together leaders of the Air Force community and exhibitors representing a variety of high technology and defense contractor companies.

The 2003 C4ISR Summit continues the progress made during the 2002 Summit and expands on earlier integration issues addressing the joint service environment.

This second Summit was held at a time when senior Air Force leadership continued to stress the importance of new technologies and of transforming the Air Force into a 21st Century organization where warfighting capabilities are developed, enhanced, and acquired in a joint environment.

The technologies on display and being demonstrated at the Summit are in-line with Gen. Richard B. Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, vision to improve joint warfighting capabilities. In his Joint Force Quarterly (JFQ) Autumn/Winter 2001-2002 statement, Myers said, "During my tenure

as Chairman, I intend to use these pages in each issue of JFQ to explain my vision, the actions we need to take to improve jointness, and our progress in preparing the force to meet the challenges of the future.

With that in mind, I want to begin by addressing my priorities: winning the global war on terrorism, enhancing joint warfighting capabilities, and transforming the Armed Forces. Achieving these goals demands that we challenge and redefine the intellectual foundations of existing operational concepts."

The 103rd Air Control Squadron (ACS) personnel and equipment deployed to this summit to support the on-going command and control capabilities being demonstrated by the 133rd Test Squadron (TS) from Fort Dodge, Iowa.

With guardsman from the 133 TS taking the lead, members of 103 ACS and active duty personnel from Hanscom Air Force Base had an experimental command and control system up and operational in less than 24-hours.

"We are here too provide the electrical power in support of the 133rd Test Squadron's command and control center, air conditioners, and other equipment they may be using during this Summit," said Master Sgt. Frank Albert, 103 ACS Age Section. Adding to Albert's comments, Master Sgt. John Cucurello, 103 ACS Age Section said, "The reliability of our generators will meet any power requirement

the 133rd Test Squadron may have for us. If they need additional power, we are here to meet their needs."

Approximately 1000 miles west of Massachusetts, F-16s from Des Moines' 132nd Fighter Wing were checked into the airspace by controllers of the 133 TS as Air Force leadership, defense contractors, and Air Force Association (AFA) members visited the first public demonstration of this experimental command and control center know as the Battle Control Center – Experimental (BCC-X). The controllers – referred to as Air Battle Managers – directed fighter aircraft in Iowa airspace in a high speed "dog fight" using the latest command and control tools.

While the mission crewmembers were positioned behind state-of-the-art PC-based workstations with flat panel monitors, a wide screen wall-mounted plasma TV in the Tactical Operations Center displayed an "air picture" of the airspace over Iowa, Puerto Rico, and Baghdad. Using a combination of military and civilian ground-based radars and digital data links, those attending the C4ISR Summit were able to witness a mobile command and system capable of providing this air picture from literally anywhere in the world. Air Force leadership viewed an air picture piped in from Southwest Asia as well as a display of air traffic in and around the

Midwest region of the United States. As a demonstration of its capability, operators used a BCC-X secure radio to communicate with a tanker conducting air-refueling operations just south of Baghdad International Airport.

The 133 TS personnel were very thankful for the support provided by the 103 ACS. The power generated by the 103 ACS enabled the 133 TS to demonstrate their systems with the confidence that the power source had the reliability to sustain any BCC-X operational needs.

This is just one example of the technology being tested and on display at the Summit. As the exhibitors displayed, demonstrated, and showcased their technologies, Air Force members witnessing the events left with an enhanced knowledge that future C4ISR systems will create both opportunities and challenges that have never been witnessed before.

These technologies, however, reinforces Myers' statement concerning the war on terrorism, "The capabilities of the Joint Force form the foundation of operational agility and thus are key to victory in this war and in future conflicts. It is therefore imperative to improve joint warfighting capabilities. ...Jointness brings the core competencies of the services together in a way that makes the whole greater than the sum of its parts."



103rd Air Control Squadron members work side-by-side with members of the 133rd Test Squadron during a Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Intelligence Summit.

Guarding Your Rights

Legal Affairs:

Indebtedness of military personnel

CAPT. TIMOTHY TOMCHO
JAG OFFICE

Army Regulation (AR) 600-15, "Indebtedness of Military Personnel," prescribes Department of the Army (DA) policy, responsibilities, and procedures in handling debt claims against soldiers.

Soldiers are required to manage their personal affairs satisfactorily and pay their debts promptly. Failure to do so damages their credit reputation and affects the Army's public image.

The Army, however, has no legal authority to force soldiers to pay their debts. Even if a civil court decrees payment of a debt (a judgment), the Army cannot divert any part of a soldier's pay. Only civil authorities can enforce payment of private debts through wage execution (garnishment), whereby a soldier's earnings may be subject to involuntary allotment.

Commanders are charged to ensure special emphasis is placed upon indebtedness issues in command information programs. Commanders must inform soldiers of their individual responsibility to manage their personal affairs satisfactorily and to pay their debts promptly. Commanders must also ensure that soldiers are aware of the possible consequences of failure to pay lawful debts. The Army does not tolerate irresponsibility, neglect, dishonesty or evasiveness. Failure to pay debts promptly and honorably may require disciplinary or administrative action.

If a soldier is not trying to resolve unpaid lawful debts promptly or complaints of repeated failure to pay debts are received, commanders have options to address the soldier's misconduct.

The commander may make the soldier's conduct a matter of permanent record (IAW AR 600-37). The commander may initiate a

denial of reenlistment (IAW AR 601-280). The commander could initiate an administrative separation from the Service (AR 635-100 or 135-178). If in an active-duty status, punishment under the UCMJ (charged under article 92, 123, 133, or 134) is also permissible. The key to avoiding adverse personnel action is to pay lawful debts promptly.

The Fair Debt Collection Practices Act (section 1692, title 15, United States Code (15 USC 1692), often referred to as the "FDCPA," was enacted in response to abusive conduct by collection agencies. The purpose of the Act is to provide guidelines for collection agencies seeking to collect legitimate debts, while providing protections and remedies for consumers who are subjected to harassment.

The FDCPA applies to personal, family, and household debts, including debts associated with the purchase of a car, for medical care, for retail financing, for first and second mortgages, and for money owed on credit card accounts. Among other improper debt-collection practices, a debt collector may not contact any person other than the soldier, his or her lawyer or legal counsel, or the creditor about any debt collection.

The debt collector, however, may contact the employer if he or she has a written and signed consent from the soldier, or a court order permitting contact. The Army only processes debt claims from debt collectors who have obtained the needed written consent or court order and who have followed proper procedures.

This column is not intended as and does not constitute legal advice. Specific legal questions are unique to each person and factual situation. Persons with legal issues are encouraged to consult confidentially with an attorney.

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9:00 - 5:00
SATURDAY: 9:00 - 3:00
SUNDAY: Closed
Phone: (860) 444-8488

CAMP ROWLAND POST

EXCHANGE
MONDAY: Closed
TUESDAY - SATURDAY:
10:00 - 5:00
SUNDAY: 10:00 - 4:00
Phone: (860) 739-9672

COAST GUARD STATION

120 Woodward Avenue
New Haven, CT
MONDAY - FRIDAY:
9:00 - 4:30
SATURDAY: 9:00 - 2:00
SUNDAY: Closed
Phone: (203) 468-2712

WEST POINT, NEW YORK

Exchange Hours:
SATURDAY - WEDNESDAY:
10:00 - 6:00
THURSDAY & FRIDAY:
10:00 - 7:00
Phone: (914) 446-5406
Commissary Hours:
MONDAY: Closed
TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY:
10:00 - 6:00
THURSDAY: 10:00 - 7:00
FRIDAY: 10:00 - 6:00
SATURDAY: 9:00 - 5:00
SUNDAY: 11:00 - 5:00
Phone: (914) 446-5406

SUB BASE, NEW LONDON

Exchange Hours:
MON., TUES., WED.,
FRI.: 9:00 - 6:00
THURSDAY: 9:00 - 7:00
SATURDAY & SUNDAY:
9:00 - 5:00
HOLIDAYS: 9:00 - 4:00
Phone: (860) 694-3811
Commissary Hours:
MONDAY: Closed
TUE., WED. & FRI.: 9:00 - 6:00
THURSDAY: 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.
SATURDAY: 8:00 - 5:00
SUNDAY: 10:00 - 5:00
Phone: (860) 694-2244

WESTOVER AIR FORCE BASE

Chicopee, Mass.
MONDAY - FRIDAY: 10:00 - 5:00
SATURDAY: 10:00 - 5:00
SUNDAY: 11:00 - 5:00
Phone: (413) 593-5583

ARMY RESERVE CENTER

700 South Quaker Lane
West Hartford, CT
MONDAY - FRIDAY:
10:00 - 1:00
MONDAY - FRIDAY:
1:45 - 4:00
SATURDAY & SUNDAY: Closed
Phone: (860) 236-3393

Inside OCS

Honor leads the way for Officer Candidate School soldier

OC ANDREW HAFFNER
OCS CLASS 49

The first sign I received that Officer Candidate School (OCS) was different was the framed picture on the wall of our barracks. Under the caption of "Move Out and Draw Fire!" was a group of doughboys climbing out of their trenches into no mans land.

OCS requires decision-making; a leader must be able to make a smart and timely decision and revise their orders when necessary. Before Officer Candidate School, my only military experience was a year of ROTC and Basic Training at Fort Sill.

Basic Training and OCS are similar. They both involve large amounts of information and learning, require precision and discipline, and the TAC officers are similar to Drill Sergeants.

During Basic Training, we did not have much exposure to the officers. Our Battery Commander led our major marches and was around the company area, but he usually remained unobtrusive while observing us. All I knew of officers before I joined OCS was from the phrase the Drill Sergeants used to delight in yelling when someone mistakenly saluted or called them sir, "Sir, I'm not an officer! I work for my living."

From my interest in military history and

my observations of the Army, I knew that officers worked hard and were responsible for both their soldiers and the mission.

My recruiter told me what to expect during Basic Training, and then he told me his observation of OCS.

"OCS is Basic for officers, except now, you are expected to know everything and make decisions." So far his observation has been accurate.

While basic recruits know little to nothing and are not required to excel or make choices, Officer Candidates are expected to do so daily. Just like the Drill Sergeants, our TAC officers are the best and hold themselves up as an example.

They were my first introduction to officers and they are our class's first example of the attributes, skills and actions, which we are studying. They epitomize the ethic of our Army leaders, "Be, Know, Do." They provide stress and constantly challenge our class, to observe our reactions.

The TAC's are especially aware of our attention to detail, teamwork, and most importantly discipline. Discipline is absolute; you either are disciplined or you are not. This is easy to read or say in passing, but harder to put to the test especially under the TAC's watchful eyes. They are using their

experience and knowledge to prepare our class for our future. In a short time, we will all be platoon leaders with all the responsibility and demands of the position. They are preparing us to be the best.

We spend much of Officer Candidate School observing leaders and different types of leadership styles. A vital quality of a leader is their ability to build and mold together their team. A team is only as strong as the laziest, most unmotivated and undisciplined member.

Everyone has played on a close team or been in a group that bonded. During phase I, our squad of nine strangers bonded. We all supported each other, as leaders and followers. We used our strengths and covered each other's weaknesses to make our squad stronger and also more fun.

As a teammate, you must try and use your strengths to teach and improve everyone else to bring out his or her higher potentials. As a future platoon leader, this is my major goal. New second lieutenants must become part of the team, learn from the experienced non-commissioned officers and use their advice, but in the end, they hold the responsibility. The leadership must set the standard.

As a leader, I will lead by example and raise

the bar of success to the highest possible level. In order to lead, you have to be a model of Being, Knowing and Doing. OCS has already shown that to me. It continues to teach me the benefits of preparedness and having backup plans.

As each drill ends, I feel more confident and ready for the next month. Part of Officer Candidate School is devising a plan and then revising it when it fails. I believe that a true leader displays their character and potential best during and after a failure.

You must pull yourself together, realize what happened, evaluate the conditions, pick an alternative method or plan, and continue on with the mission. The vital question is how a leader deals with negative results or failures. More importantly a leader must never to quit.

"The credit belongs to those who are actually in the arena, who strive valiantly, who know the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spend themselves in a worthy cause; who, at the best, know the triumph of high achievement and who, at the worst, if they fail, fail while daring greatly so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat."

Theodore Roosevelt

The Connecticut National Guard & United States Postal Service
Proudly Present The

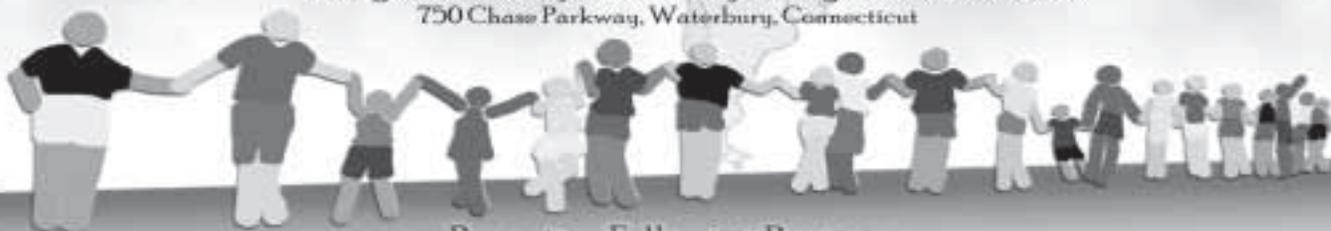
2003 Hispanic Heritage celebration

"One Culture. Many Races"

October 10th, 10am - 12pm

<p><i>Keynote Presentation</i> Rafael Toro <small>Director of Public Relations, Geaga Foods, Inc.</small></p>	<p><i>Special Performance</i> Val Ramos <small>Raincoo Gastronit</small></p>	<p><i>Unveiling of the "Cesar Chavez" Stamp</i> <small>The United States Postal Service</small></p>
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Naugatuck Valley Community College Fine Arts Center
750 Chase Parkway, Waterbury, Connecticut



Reception Following Program
will include a light buffet of authentic Hispanic foods

RSVP: TSGT Claire Potier at (860) 878-6713 by October 7th, 2003

Health & Fitness

Your Health Matters: *What is a stem cell?*

CAPT. KATHLEEN L KING
NURSE PRACTITIONER

Excerpts from the National Marrow Donor Program, University of Wisconsin, National Institutes of Health, and Stem Cell Institute.

It sounds too good to be true! It is amazing to think that maybe one day, people with diabetes will not have to inject themselves with insulin throughout the day.

They can be injected, only once, with a marvelous substance which will allow their pancreas to again produce insulin, like it used to years ago.

Or a person with a damaged heart, liver, or kidney would not have to receive an organ transplant to live. These people could be injected with a marvelous substance which would essentially cure them. Is this Sci-Fi? Or does it exist today? Some scientists believe that stem cells could be this marvelous substance.

Stem cells are any of the cells in the body that can grow into other kinds of cells. They are remarkable, and serve as sort of a repair system for the body.

All stem cells have three important characteristics in common: they all divide and renew themselves for long periods of time, they are unspecialized (all the same, with no particular function), and they have the potential to become any other type of cell (such as heart muscle cells, blood cells, or nerve cells). Specialized cells, such as blood and muscle cells, are unable to divide or produce copies of themselves. But stem cells are different.

Where do stem cells come from? There are two basic sources: adult stem cells and embryonic stem cells.

Where do adult stem cells come from? The

cells used in adult stem cell transplants come from three main sources: bone marrow, peripheral (or circulating) blood, and the umbilical cord of newborn babies. In the case of bone marrow and peripheral blood stem cells, an adult donor donates the cells. Umbilical cord blood stem cells are collected when a baby is born and are stored for future use.

Blood stem cells are one of several types of stem cell. Healthy blood stem cells are vital because they replace our supply of red blood cells, white blood cells, and platelets. Red blood cells carry oxygen throughout the body, white blood cells fight infecting, and platelets clot blood (control bleeding) when the skin or other tissue is cut.

If a person's blood cells have become diseased or cancerous, it is a life-threatening situation. Often, the only hope for cure is a blood stem cell transplant, which replaces the diseased cells with health new cells. For the transplant to be a success, these cells must match the patient's own cells as closely as possible.

Since its first use more than 30 years ago, bone marrow transplantation has been a curative treatment for leukemia and other blood disorders. Bone marrow is a spongy tissue found inside larger bones and is a rich source of bone stem cells.

Approximately one liter of bone marrow is needed for a blood stem cell transplant, but the exact amount needed depends on the size of the patient.

Bone marrow transplantation is a potential treatment for many different kinds of diseases including blood disorders such as leukemia and aplastic anemia, as well as certain immune system and genetic

disorders. Excellent outcomes can be achieved for many diseases through unrelated donor bone marrow transplants.

The bloodstream is another source of stem cells, although not as rich a source as bone marrow. When enough stem cells are present in the bloodstream, the donor undergoes a process called aphaeresis, which is a special type of blood donation. The first successful transplant using peripheral blood stem cells took place in 1986.

Umbilical cord blood is another rich source of stem cells. At birth, the cord blood is collected and taken to a cord blood bank, where it is stored frozen until needed for a transplant. The first successful transplant from umbilical stem cells was in 1988.

The type of stem cell most often discussed in the news is an embryonic stem cell. Once a sperm cell unites with an egg cell, it begins to reproduce by dividing into more and more cells. Researchers have discovered that these stem cells can be made to develop into many (but not all) types of specialized cells in the body. Human embryonic stem cells have only been studied since 1998.

There are many issues revolving around stem cell research and use. The President of the United States has the final responsibility and authority to set Federal government policy for funding human embryonic stem cell research. Congress has appropriation authority and can possibly override the President's decision. Individual States have the authority to pass a law to permit human embryonic stem cell research using state funds, and currently

are able to fund projects not funded by the Federal government. Stem cells remain the property of the individual stem cell providers.

The Human Fertilization and Embryology Act of 1990, which was amended by the Congress in 2001, strictly regulates the isolation of stem cells from a human embryo. The use of embryonic stem cells for research purposes raises many ethical issues. Currently only adult stem cells, such as cells from bone marrow, blood or the umbilical cord, are currently the only type of stem cell commonly used to treat human diseases (leukemia, lymphoma, and several inherited blood disorders).

Why are stem cells so important? Stem cells can be programmed into becoming cells with special functions, such as the beating cells of the heart muscle, or the insulin-producing cells of the pancreas. They can replace damaged cells in the body that would not otherwise be replaced. It is widely thought that stem cells may, at some point in the future, become the basis for treating disease such as Parkinson's disease, diabetes, and heart disease.

For more information on stem cells or stem cell research, check out the following web sites:

National Marrow Donor Program - www.marrow.org
University of Wisconsin-Madison - www.news.wisc.edu
National Institutes of Health (NIH) - www.stemcells.nih.gov
Department of Health and Human Services - www.dhhs.gov
Stem Cell Institute - www.icr.edu
American Cancer Society - www.cancer.org

Fit for Life: *October is here!!! Make a 'New Military Year' resolution!*

MAJ. JAMES FINN
MASTER FITNESS TRAINER

During December, everyone seems to make some form of New Year's resolution(s). The problem is, we seldom manage to keep resolutions made while "under the influence" of: holiday "spirits", holiday feasting, or holiday bloat. Let's try something new for the "new military year" by making a resolution, with members of your unit. Use a buddy system or challenge each other.

The "new military year's" weather is going to get sloppy soon. If we don't have something or someone to motivate us, we have a hard time keeping our resolve. Even finishing "another article about fitness" can be difficult. If you have ideas about winter fitness answer the following:

What is the best way you have kept in shape between Thanksgiving and Easter? Three Guidelines:

1. **Low Cost** (so any soldier on a limited

budget can "do it?")

2. **Least equipment** - (You don't have to join a gym to get in **g r e a t** shape.)

3. **Least Technical** - (You shouldn't need an instructor to participate.)

Please email your ideas for Winter Fitness to
james.finn@ct.ngb.army.mil

This Winter my goal is to acquire a pair of snowshoes. Connecticut's last Winter provided very poor conditions for running. I want to be ready for whatever the weathermen give us for 2004.

While attending Winter Warfare School, snowshoe training was part of the course. The problem was, we had no snow until the last two days we were in Wisconsin. Training

with snowshoes feels strange on grass.

Online, several companies sell pretty good snowshoes for under \$30.00.

Cheaper than most pairs of running shoes.

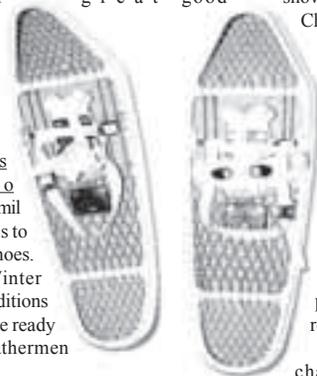
Used (high quality) and new (not as high quality) snowshoes are available near my price range. I have been watching tag sales and checking local used sporting goods stores but have not found the pair for me. An on-line purchase will be my "last resort".

Winter fitness is a challenge for military personnel, particularly diet and exercise. Exercise improves the body's immune system. Too many sugary holiday treats, alcohol and tobacco products and

sedentary winter activities reduces our ability to fight colds and flu. Even tea and coffee depletes Vitamin C and calcium in our bodies.

Transitions from cold outdoors to hot vehicles or buildings can make us susceptible to chilling, overheating, or dehydration. Plan your winter clothing with multiple layers that are easy to remove or replace. Remove layers before you start sweating. Replace layers as you start to chill or begin to shiver.

Connecticut's winter can be very dry. Drinking two to three quarts of water a day is just as important in January as in July. Remember caffeinated and alcoholic beverages drain water from our system. They are diuretics. Drinking alcoholic beverages during out doors activities can result in dehydration or hypothermia. Save the "toddlies" for by the fireplace while drying your ECWCS. [Extreme Cold Weather Clothing System] or swapping "deployment stories."



248th Engineers help repair Iraq

1st Sgt. ROBERT DESJARDIN
248th ENGINEERS

The 248th Engineer Company (Combat Heavy) continues to support the rebuilding of the infrastructure at FOB Webster (Al Asad) as well as at Rifles Base West (Aramadi). Over the past few weeks the men and women of this unit have completed amazing tasks, many of which they have never attempted before. They have been challenged in their respective MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) and are becoming more proficient as time goes on.

The Horizontal Platoon, under the direction of 1st Lt. Robert Dollack and Sgt. 1st Class Steven Downs has been tasked out with numerous earthmoving / excavation missions. They are currently working at Rifles Base West in Aramadi, which is approximately 60 miles west of Baghdad. Some of their recent missions include: Force Protection Berming around the base, Site Preparation for the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, Building Demolition, Dust control, Force Protection Issues, Route Clearing and other related tasks.

The Maintenance Platoon, under the direction of 1st Lt. Dawn Works and Sgt. 1st Class Norman Therrien has been busy maintaining the units wheeled vehicles and engineering equipment. They are currently working out of both FOB Webster and Rifles Base West. The extreme heat here (140 degrees-plus) and the sand present special challenges for the mechanics; tools to hot

to handle, equipment to hot to touch. As usual, they have overcome and adapted to the environment in which they find themselves. Between the roads and the debris, vehicle tires continue to be a big maintenance issue here (lots of flats).

The General Construction Platoon One, under the direction of 1st Lt. Nowakowski and Sgt. 1st Class Marien has been working at FOB Webster and Rifles Base West. The plumbers and electricians have been especially busy establishing the basic plumbing and electrical requirements for many of the buildings on the base. The carpenters have also been hard at work framing windows and doors throughout the base in support of the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment.

The General Construction Platoon Two, under the direction of 1st Lt. Cassandra Webb and Sgt. 1st Class Marco has been working diligently at Rifles Base West. Prior to moving, Gen Con 2 had the important mission of repairing the main water lines to FOB Webster. In addition to missions, they have provided security for convoys, conducted assessments of buildings and worked with the local Iraqi population. Soldiers have also assisted with clearing main supply routes.

The Headquarters Platoon, under the direction of Sgt. 1st Class Burke has maintained/manned the TOC (Tactical Operations Center) 24 hours a day since arrival in Iraq. The TOC monitors/supports/

tracks all of the platoon missions, coordinates rations, maintains accountability of equipment and personnel. The communications personnel have worked closely with the other platoons to ensure constant communication is maintained.

The force protection issue here in Iraq remains about the same. Unfortunately, there are some Baath Party loyalist and other outside groups that are trying to prevent Iraq from becoming a stable country. These small groups continue to harass and conduct operations against Coalition Forces. Our biggest threat is during convoy operations, in which we always send extra security personnel, send multiple crew-served weapons as well as other steps to ensure the safety of our soldiers.

Many of you are asking the question, "When are they coming home?" Unfortunately, no date has been published yet. Once a date is known, it will be forwarded to the troops as well as the Family Support Group for the widest dissemination.

The Troops here have been doing an outstanding job at all tasks/missions they are given despite the extreme conditions here (heat, sandstorms, etc). We have been getting nothing but praises from the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment on our projects. The men and women of the 248th Engineer Company (Cbt) (Hvy) are playing an important role here and are making a big difference in the quality of life for our fellow soldiers.

Life here at Rifles Base West is looking up.



248th Engineers roll through the sand in Iraq.

There is talk of phones being set up within 30-60 days and possibly internet service for the troops. Everyday we engineers are here working, the quality of life improves for us all. The other day, we constructed a softball field, soccer field, football field and horse shoe pits for the Sports Competition Day (1 Sep 2003). The troops all participated in the events and had a chance to relax a little.

The Company Commander, Guy D. Joseph has been appointed as the Facility Engineer for Rifles Base West here in Iraq. He has been a driving force in improving the quality of life here, not only for his unit, but the entire base camp. He has been working closely with local Iraqi contractors and engineers. He has taken the lead on Force Protection issues, ensuring the safety his soldiers.

In addition to engineer missions, we are providing security for the medevac flights departing from Rifles Base West. The medevac helicopters are on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and the call is answered by members of the 248th who volunteered to assist with these important life savings missions. Another example of the type of soldiers in the Connecticut Army National Guard.

As most of you are aware, on 12 Aug 2003 a six-vehicle convoy en-route to FOB Webster was ambushed. An improvised explosive device (IED) was command detonated against the convoy, which caused only minor damage to two vehicles. The unit received small arms fire from both sides of the roadway and the soldiers of the 248th all reacted instinctively (as trained) and returned fire. The enemy was engaged with multiple crew-served weapons systems as well as individual weapons (M16A2). The convoy fought through the ambush site and successfully made it to FOB Webster without any casualties.

The realistic, stressful, hard training that this unit conducted at MOB station and in Kuwait contributed to the unit's success while under enemy fire. The leadership of this unit has done a great job preparing for and executing all missions while ensuring the safety of their soldiers.

In closing, I would like to thank the Family Support Group and family members for all of their support. The large banner was a big hit with the troops. Especially important has been the mail and packages that have been sent to the troops. As you can imagine, everyone looks forward to mail call.



Members of the 248th Engineers have volunteered their extra time to assist with Medevac operations in Iraq.

Retirees' Voice

Annual Retirees' Picnic brings out food, friends, laughs and memories

SGT. 1st CLASS (RET.) JOHN BEDNARZ

On the twentieth of August the National Guard Association (NGACT) sponsored Retiree's Picnic was held at 'The Point' at Camp Rowland, Niantic. It was a beautiful day and a large number of retirees and some active folks attended.

This is a day that I look forward to every year. It provides a chance to renew old acquaintances and to see how old friends are doing. In fact, I attended these retiree get-togethers long before I actually retired, for just that reason.

The food, catered by the local Lexington Caterers was good and plentiful and the beer and soda flowed. In the old days the beer flowed more than the soda, but I think the trend has reversed and now the soda outdoes the beer.

I got a chance to see some of my friends from the signal company, the Nike Site, AVCRAD, and a lot of folks I met while working with the adjunct staff at the Military Academy, and teaching at the NBC School.

We told the old war stories and exchanged information about where to go and who to see about retiree concerns. Then we policed up the brass. The band assembled under the gazebo and provided the great background music.

One of the highlights of the day was a chili cook-off between Maj. Gen. William

Cugno and the recruiting force. Both of the chilis were excellent, and I personally went back to resample both. I never got the official results, but I believe the general's chili won.

Gen. Jim Throwe was the Master of Ceremonies for the official program and as usual did a great job. The raffle was held and a large number of cash prizes were won. The National Guard provided a color detail and the band played a rousing rendition of our National Anthem. The general then read the necrology of members who passed away since our last meeting. A moment of silence was held to remember those who passed away and those that are too ill to attend.

This year a tribute was held and a birthday cake was presented to the 'founder' of the retiree's picnic and the man who almost single-handedly ran the picnic for many years, Retired Col. Paul Desio, who was celebrating his 90th birthday.

Retired Col. Robert Kelly, who is also doing a marvelous job, is now running the picnic. If you are retired and did not attend the picnic make sure you're there next year. We want to see you. If you're not retired but know or have worked with some of these retirees, you're invited too. We have a lot of questions about how things are going now, and what's going on in the office or shop.

Calling all (former) Marines: Second Annual USMC Birthday Celebration - 228 Years of Pride

COL. FRED MICLON, MAINTENANCE GROUP COMMANDER

We are looking for a few good men and women to help celebrate and enjoy the pride, prestige and heritage associated with being a United States Marine. On Sunday Nov. 2 at 4:30 p.m. following the Unit Training Assembly, Former Marines of the 103rd Fighter Wing will host the Second Annual Marine Corps Birthday Celebration in the base Dining Facility.

This year we are proud to announce a very distinguished former Marine as our speaker and Guest of Honor, Attorney General for the State of Connecticut the Honorable Mr. Richard Blumenthal.

Last year's event was a rousing success with more than 50 people in attendance. Former Marines as well as Flying Yankees' past and present came together and joined in to celebrate the 227th anniversary of the founding of the Corps. As is customary at all Marine Corps birthday celebrations, the youngest and oldest Marines in attendance - Sr. Airman Charles Foley and Mr. Joseph Zaranka - cut the traditional cake.

Also a hit at last year's event was the display tables where former Marines showed off photos and other memorabilia from their period of service in the Corps; we encourage all to bring in any memorabilia you wish to display this year as well.

Perhaps the most enjoyable part of the event was swapping war stories of days gone by, hearing from former Marines that had served in the South Pacific during WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and the common bond shared when two or more Marines come together.

If you are interested in a simple yet fun way to help celebrate the Marine Corps birthday, just curious about what former Marines do to celebrate their Corps, or just looking to have a little fun after a hard drill, we want you! Come enjoy some food and drink as well as great company.

We are also continuing to build our listing of all Flying Yankees, past or present that also hold the title "Former Marine". If you are or know someone that holds both of these prestigious titles please contact me by phone or e-mail at 292-2301 or Frederick.Miclon@ctbrad.ang.af.mil

Semper Fi!

ATTENTION SHOOTERS!

Announcing The CNGB Indoor Combat Pistol and Rifle Matches

Open to ALL members of the
Connecticut Army & Air National Guard
(Limited to the first 120 registrants per event)

Two events: M16 A2 Rifle and M9 Pistol
(Using .22 caliber conversion kits at 50 feet)

Location: US Coast Guard Academy - New London, CT

Dates: Saturday XX November 2003 or Sunday XX December 2003 (Pistol)

Sunday XX November 2003 or Saturday XX December 2003 (Rifle)

You will be assigned your relay consisting of a one-hour slot. Weapons and ammunition will be provided. One-hour relays begin at 0900 through 1400 each day.

Register: By e-mail indicating which event you wish to compete in and include your name, rank, unit and phone number. Also, state what time you prefer to compete. We will contact you once registered.

Send: Registration to william.dicristofaro@us.army.mil



RUN IN HONOR

Join the Team

Help support the families of over 1200 Airmen and Soldiers that have been deployed over the past year.



OCTOBER 11, 2003
TENTH
ANNIVERSARY

Run for one of our deployed units

Events:	Register by: 30 Sep	11 Oct:
Full Marathon	\$85.00	\$95.00
Half-Marathon	\$60.00	\$65.00
5K race	\$45.00	\$50.00
Team Relay	\$55.00	\$60.00
Kids K (under 12)	\$33.00	\$33.00

OR

Sponsor one of our deployed units for a \$25.00 donation to the CTNG Foundation Inc.

\$25.00 of each participant's entry fees are donated to the CTNG Foundation Inc.

For additional information please contact CMSgt. Kris Shaw at 860-548-3221

Attention Soldiers, Airmen and Families

The Connecticut Guardian wants your photos!

If you have photos you wish to share with the rest of our Guard family, we would like to publish them in the Guardian.

We are looking for photos of soldiers and airmen who are deployed either relaxing or working. We are looking for photos of family members at home or at play. We are looking for photos of families packing care packages to send to their loved ones.

We will print them in the Guardian as space allows so they can be seen and shared by Connecticut Soldiers, Airmen and families around the world.

Please e-mail your photos to ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil

Coming Events

October

Oct. 2

Senior NCO Dining In

Oct. 3

Air Guard 80th Anniversary Ball

Oct. 10

Hispanic Heritage Celebration

Oct. 13

Columbus Day

Oct. 19

Breast Cancer Walk in memory of Master Sgt. Sharon Stroman

November

Nov. 4

Election Day

Nov. 6

Officer Dining In

Nov. 8

Veteran's Day Parade

Nov. 11

Veteran's Day

Nov. 27

Thanksgiving

December

Dec. 6

Army/Navy Football Game
Philadelphia

Dec. 7

Pearl Harbor Day

Dec. 19

Hanukkah begins at sundown

Dec. 25

Christmas

Dec. 26

Kwanzaa begins

In the Next CG

Understanding Stop Loss

Senior NCO Dining In

Adoption: Guard-Style

Hispanic Heritage Celebration

Marine Corps Birthday

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month previous to publication.

Postcards Home



Sgt. Chris LaCasse spends time with Freedom, mascot for the 248th Engineers.



1st Lt. Cassandra Webb, 248th Engineers, talks with the commander of the Azajbani Infantry in Ar Ramadi.



Spec. Kelly Burkett, Co. B, 62nd Eng. Bn., Fort Sill, OK, and her brother-in-law, Spec. Trevor Stone of the 248th Eng. Co., CTARNG, got to spend some time together in Kuwait. Their two units crossed paths for four weeks as Burkett's unit was preparing to leave and Stone's was arriving.



Arnold Schwarzenegger spends time with Connecticut soldiers deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Little Anya gets wrapped up in patriotism while supporting her uncle and godfather, Sgt. Kevin Muravnick of the 143rd MPs who is serving in Iraq.



Logisticians from the 1109th Aviation, Classification, Repair, Activity Depot in Groton, Conn., pose for a group photo while at Camp Doha.



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