



Deterring Modern Day Slavery

By OLS PA Staff Writer

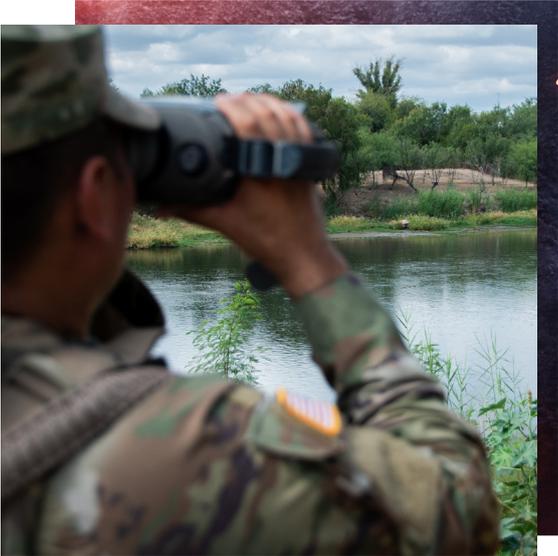
In Task Force East, a platoon leader along the Rio Grande River discussed the tactics illegal migrants use to cross onto U.S. soil. One of those tactics included wrist bands for migrants to identify which smuggling organization they had paid into. The wrist bands were scattered along the bank of the river among the trash left behind by previous migrant groups. “This represents the smuggling organization,” said the platoon leader. “But it also represents modern day slavery. This [shows] they are continually in debt bondage wherever they go in the U.S.” TMD’s presence along the border helps deter and disrupt these kind of smuggling operations.



Moving Troops closer to Home

By OLS PA Staff Writer

Lt. Col. Fitzgerald’s decision was immediate – within moments, the Task Force Commander gave the order. Task Force West had just completed a reorganization with Task Force Center, sending more than 100 troops to Laredo, with a similar amount in return. The reorganization aligned troops with their organic units and moved several service members closer to family along the Texas-Mexico border. “The purpose was to get Soldiers back with their organic units – taking consideration that Soldiers drill with their units,” said a senior NCO familiar with the movement. “This allows them to do drill without having to reach back to their units.” But one Specialist was moved further from family, and no one knew until after the reorganization. “We learned one Soldier we had moved actually has family here in Del Rio,” said an officer in the troop’s chain of command.



“The purpose was to get Soldiers back with their organic units”

Lt. Col. Darren Fitzgerald
Task Force Commander

“He’d already moved to Task Force Center, then we discovered we’d moved him away from family.” This created a hardship for the Soldier and his family, who had just relocated to Del Rio after their previous housing situation was no longer available. As soon as leadership got word of this, they informed the Task Force commander and his staff. “Our troops sacrifice a lot to be down here,” said Lt. Col. Fitzgerald. “Get that Soldier back here.” (continued on Page 3)



From Band to Border

By OLS PA Staff Writer

In the border town of Brownsville, Texas, Air National Guardsmen are nestled along the Rio Grande River. They come from all across Texas, each bringing their own unique set of skills. But their goal remains the same: defend Texas and protect its citizens. “My kids know what their mom does; I am doing all of this for them, my family,” said an Air Force Staff Sgt. from the 136th Airlift Wing, charged with patrolling Texas’ border. The Staff Sgt. is a band member in the Texas Air National Guard and typically performs at ceremonies and concerts during monthly drills. However her duties have adapted to the needs of



“I am proud; proud to be doing the mission.”

Operation Lone Star, something she said she is thrilled about. “I am observing and reporting anything we see illegal to the correct personnel,” said the Airman. “I never thought that I would be doing something like this. I am really enjoying being out and doing what I am doing right now, and I am proud; proud to be doing the mission.” Brownsville’s population has doubled since the 1980s. Now several neighborhoods are adjacent to



the border wall, where Guardsmen like the Air Force Staff Sgt. conduct foot patrols. Community members often express their gratitude for the presence of the Texas Military Forces on the border. “I sleep better at night now, knowing y’all are just a stone’s throwaway,” said one member of the neighboring community. The Air Force Staff Sgt. is pleased with the impact Operation Lone Star has had in Texas communities. “I think this mission is really important because we decrease crime and anything that may put Texans in harm’s way,” said the Staff Sgt.



OLS DASHBOARD



As Of 1 March, 2020

111,600+
Illegal Immigrants
Referred to DPS

12,600+
Turned Back at
Border

77.6%
Hardship
Approval Rate

90%+
Pay Discrepancy
Resolution Rate

17.1 mi Temp Barrier
Built 20 mi in Progress
75 mi Under Contract

COMMANDER'S CORNER



“The impact you are making to our state and nation is tremendous. As we continue on this mission, it is important that we remain a ready force. We have many resources to support personal readiness to include our Chaplains, Behavioral Health teams and our Family Support Services. If you need support in any of these areas, do not hesitate to reach out. Identifying a need for support and seeking it out is a sign of strength.”

Brigadier General Ulis
Operation Lone Star Commander



Brig. Gen. Wallace Visits the Troops

Brig. Gen. John M. Wallace, Deputy Commanding General, 36th Inf Div, Texas Army National Guard, visited troops along the border to ask them questions about their health and welfare. He asked them questions about their pay, lodging and living conditions, as well as daily activity and concerns about health insurance.



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“It makes me feel like they’re listening and trying to do something,” said the Soldier. “I didn’t even expect it. It happened pretty quick.” The Soldier is now back home with his family in Del Rio, supporting Operation LoneStar with Task Force West. “It makes me feel good that they’re listening and trying to make it better,” said the Soldier. “I really appreciate them listening and actually doing something about it. My family is really happy, too.”



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YOUTUBE CHANNEL**



SERVICE MEMBER RESOURCES



Important Numbers

TMD Wide

TMD Counseling Program 512-782-5069

Commander's Urgent Behavioral Health Resources Line: 888-400-4123

Task Force West

S1/HUMAN RESOURCES 888-400-4123

S8/PAY ISSUES 888-400-4123

CHAPLAIN 281-780-0014

LEGAL 775-376-4512

MEDICAL 806-681-8515

Task Force Center

S1/HUMAN RESOURCES 940-368-2828

S8/PAY ISSUES 940-368-2828

CHAPLAIN 325-430-7800

LEGAL 214-542-9454

MEDICAL 409-656-5587

Task Force East

S1/HUMAN RESOURCES 737-270-4556

S8/PAY ISSUES 512-360-9684

CHAPLAIN 972-979-4229

LEGAL 843-359-2401

MEDICAL 737-270-4557

Task Force South

S1/HUMAN RESOURCES 713-532-3678

S8/PAY ISSUES 713-532-3678

CHAPLAIN 817-673-0962

LEGAL 915-269-7538

MEDICAL 210-955-1382

Task Force Sustainment

S1 OIC 682-888-3939

S1 NCOIC 832-920-3372

S8 512-782-1234

CHAPLAIN 817-675-2312

MEDICAL 512-508-9175