

The DISPATCH



CW2 CORRY EDWARDS

IN MEMORY OF THE
CREW OF "RED RIVER 44"

CPT ROBERT VALLEJO II	CW3 BRADY J RUDOLF
CW2 CORRY EDWARDS	SGM JULIO C. ORDÓÑEZ
SSG LUKE MASON	SGT DANIEL M. ESHAUGH
CPL MICHAEL E. THOMPSON	
OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM SEPT 17, 2003	

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THE SERVICE MADE BY
THE CREW OF "RED RIVER 44"
WILL ALWAYS BE REMEMBERED BY A
LARGE NUMBER OF FAMILIES AND MAY
THEIR NAMES KNOW THAT THEIR
MEMORIES WILL LIVE ON IN OUR
HEARTS AS HEROES

PRESIDENT & MRS. GEORGE W. BUSH

TO MY
RED RIVER SOLDIER
IT WAS AN HONOR
TO SERVE WITH
CPT JASON R



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Amid tanks and mule carts, artifacts from the very beginning of the Texas Military Forces sit side-by-side with uniforms and equipment from the Global War on Terror at the Brig. Gen. John C.L. Scribner Texas Military Forces Museum, at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas.

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The small aircraft might fit in a two-car garage albeit with some tinkering to the wings, but as unassuming as it looks one should never underestimate the Predator's accuracy and destructive power.



Cover- The memorial for "Red River 44" in Grand Prairie, Texas. The song "Angel Flight" pays tribute to the crew and the Air Force crew that brought the heroes home. (Photo by Capt. Randall Stillinger, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs)

THE BULLETIN BOARD

New Sesame St. Military Family Website

Sesame Street Workshop launched a user-friendly website for military families called Sesame Street Family Connections. It's like a Facebook site for kids, offering families and friends a child-centered, online space to foster communication. With a Web cam, families and friends can record video messages to share with their loved one, and, of course, their loved one can send a video message back. Elmo and Rosita occupy the website to offer a free, child-friendly, 24/7 way for separated families to stay in touch. The Connections site is part of Sesame Street's "Talk, Listen, Connect" initiative for military families. For more information, visit Sesame Street's Talk, Listen, Connect webpage at <http://www.sesameworkshop.org/initiatives/emotion/tlc>

Operation Military Child Care

Operation Military Child Care is a DoD initiative to support the child care needs of parents who are activated or deployed. This program helps eligible families locate child care options in local communities and reduces child care fees for eligible families who are already using licensed or legally-operating community child care programs and providers.

Eligibility is during the activation or deployment and for 60 days after the return of the deployed military parent. The fee assistance program is intended to help support military spouses' employment, education, or special medical circumstances. Fee assistance will only be provided to single military families, dual military families, and military families with a spouse who is working or enrolled in school.

It will also be provided to military families where the spouse is looking for work for a period of up to 60 days. Fee assistance will vary for each family depending upon total family income, location, DoD child care fee policies and available funding.

For more information contact the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRA) at (800) 424-2246 or visit <http://www.naccra.org/MilitaryPrograms/operation-military-child-care.php> or email omcc@naccra.org.

New Army Wounded Warrior Website

The U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program launched a redesigned website and blog as part of the program's realignment under the Army's Warrior Transition Command. The new U.S. Army Wounded Warrior Program website at <http://www.aw2.army.mil/> and the AW2 Blog at <http://aw2.armylive.dodlive.mil/> are designed to provide robust information and updates on how AW2 is fulfilling its mission of providing personalized support to severely wounded, injured, and ill Soldiers, veterans, and their families. For more information about the Army Wounded Warrior Program, visit the Army Wounded Warrior Program website or call 1-800-237-1336 toll-free.

Call for Veterans' Photographs

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund and FedEx Office recently hosted the launch of The National Call for Photos campaign. This campaign will gather images of the more than 58,000 men and women whose names are on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial. The FedEx Office will use its locations across the country to help in gathering photos. The fund's latest initiative is The Education Center at The Wall whose exhibits will photographs of people whose names are on The Wall, a selection of the more than 100,000 items that have been left at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, a timeline of key military events of the Vietnam War, and a history of the memorial. For more information, visit the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund website at <http://www.vvmf.org/> or telephone 1-866-990-WALL (9255).

Operation Paperback

Operation Paperback collects gently used books and sends them to American troops deployed overseas. Since 1999, they have shipped over 950,000 books to locations around the globe. Operation Paperback is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania. As a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, donations to the organization are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. For more information, go to www.operationpaperback.org.

The DISPATCH

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Spc. Maria Moy
Cheryl Barbeau
John Thibodeau

Managing Editor
Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada

Design and Copy Editor
Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson

Contributing Writers and Photographers
Capt. Randall Stillinger
1st Lt. Darryl G. Frost
Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada
Master Sgt. Brenda Benner
Sgt. 1st Class Tad Browning
Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill
Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson
Spc. Lisa Cope

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TXMF Museum: Looking Forward to Preserve the Past

Story and photo by Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson

Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

CAMP MABRY, Austin, Texas- Amid tanks and mule carts, artifacts from the very beginning of the Texas Military Forces sit side-by-side with uniforms and equipment from the Global War on Terror at the Brig. Gen. John C.L. Scribner Texas Military Forces Museum, at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas. Not only does the collection include rare pieces such as a complete regimental silver service from WWII, it also contains original blueprints of historic armories and WWI service records, among other irreplaceable treasures of Texas military history.

Due to budget constraints, many of the priceless items in the museum have been housed in non-archival conditions, folded up on shelves or rolled up to saved space in cramped rooms with little to no temperature control or ventilation. However, that's all changing, according to Edward Zepeda, Curator of Exhibits at the museum.

The first phase of the renovation is all about infrastructure and access. Construction has been going on for approximately a year, said Mr. Zepeda, but it "feels like forever."

On the structural side, the building has been renovated to increase the physical integrity, and to keep snakes and other small creatures out, helping preserve and protect the collections. New trays have been installed near the ceilings to run data and electrical cabling through, allowing the museum more room to expand data storage and processing capabilities.

A new ventilation system will let the museum control the temperature and humidity in

each exhibit, using small units called Scarab. Each Scarab can be disconnected from the main ventilation lines and moved independently, maintaining artifacts in the best environment for each particular exhibit.

Even with all the structural changes, the collection itself hasn't been neglected, said Mr. Zepeda. To improve access to the museum's collection, new storage solutions were brought in.

"From a collection stand point, we can actually store the artifacts we have in a proper way and find what we have stored and archived, said Mr. Zepeda. "That may not sound like a big deal, but it is absolutely essential for a museum or library."

Many of the flat artifacts will be stored in brand new "compact storage" units, large metal containers that slide on tracks laid on the floor. The compact storage system allows for more items to be stored in a smaller space, while still keeping the collection accessible. The compact storage is also very flexible, with interchangeable flat drawers, for blueprints and other paper artifacts, and deeper drawers and shelves.

The collected uniforms and other fabric artifacts are stored in large, sealed cabinets now, a far cry from the leaky, crumbling room used for clothing storage before the renovation. Each cabinet holds hanging clothes, with spaces above and below for hats and footwear. The seals on the doors allow for a stable, dry environment to preserve the fragile fabrics.

New metal shelves hold the museum's library, an impressive collection spanning the entirety of Texas military history.

While the building has been renovated, Mr. Zepeda and other museum staff have been improving the gallery spaces. Although it's not directly part of the renovation, some of the galleries have been improved with new "super-graphics," including pictures and maps, and informative "reader rails" on some of the many miniature scenes.

With one of the largest military history collections in the United States, Mr. Zepeda is optimistic about the future of the museum.

"This museum belongs to [Texas]," said Mr. Zepeda. "We are here and we are growing. We're always free, and I hope [people] come visit soon!"

The Texas Military Forces Museum is located on Camp Mabry and is open Wednesday-Sunday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm. Admission is free.



Top- Many rolled documents can now be stored flat..

Middle- WWI service records cards in non-archival storage.

Bottom- Documents, photographs and other flat items will be stored in "compact storage" drawers to preserve them.

LTAT Instructs IA Soldiers on Maintenance, Supply Techniques

**Story and photos by Spc. Lisa Cope
139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

CAMP UR, Iraq – The Ur Logistics and Technical Advisory Team with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, has been working with the Iraqi Soldiers at the Ur Iraqi Army regional Maintenance Center, to improve their skills in maintenance and supply.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Hoover, the officer in charge of the 36 SB LTAT, is an automotive maintenance supervisor for the Gatesville Mobilization and Training Equipment Site, in Gatesville, Texas, and said he has been working in automotive maintenance for about 30 years.

Mr. Hoover, a Gatesville, Texas, native, said their mission isn't so much about the actual maintenance, as it is about the logistics and planning of their maintenance.

"Their mechanics are good mechanics, but as far as how they maneuver different parts and different equipment to different places is a large issue for them," said Mr. Hoover.

One of the biggest problems that the LTAT hopes to fix in the maintenance center is the inefficiency of the parts ordering system, said Mr. Hoover. It can sometimes take more than a year to get the required parts to fix a vehicle, and while their waiting for the parts the vehicle is just sitting there, unused and gathering dust, said Hoover.

Another one of the goals of the LTAT is to teach the IA Soldiers to cross-

train on different jobs within the unit, said Mr. Hoover.

Iraqi Army Colonel Muthana Sobyh AbdalGabar, commander of the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center, said through an interpreter he is appreciative of the efforts of the 36th SB LTAT.

"In these days the meeting and the cooperation between us and the advisors over there with the U.S. Army is very helpful for us," said Colonel Muthana, a Basra, Iraq, native. "We gain a lot of things (that are) very useful ... they always support us and maintain us with many things."

Colonel Muthana said the previous LTAT that worked with the maintenance center helped them to reorganize their center to make it more efficient and effective, but the 36th SB Ur LTAT is teaching the Soldiers more about safety, vehicle maintenance and using more up to date systems involving computers.

Master Sgt. Bennie E. Grubb, the non-commissioned officer in charge of the Ur LTAT, said he has been working with the Iraqi Soldiers on Camp Ur for about three months.

"The main thing about the (IA Soldiers) is they want to learn and they want to accomplish their job or mission but they can-

not do it because of tools, lack of tools," said Sergeant Grubb, a Copperas Cove, Texas, native.

Sergeant Grubb said the IA Soldiers are good at adapting to their conditions by making makeshift tools to help them accomplish their mission.

"They may get a screwdriver, that used to be a philips screwdriver and they will flatten it off to make a flathead screwdriver," said Sergeant Grubb. "They make what they have to make."



Chief Warrant Officer 3 Michael J. Hoover, the officer in charge of the Ur Logistics and Technical Advisory Team with the 36th Sustainment Brigade out of Temple, Texas, and a Gatesville, Texas, native, instructs some of the Iraqi Soldiers with the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center on vehicle maintenance Nov. 3, at Iraqi Army camp Ur, Iraq.

Iraqi Army Pvt. Rahman washes vehicle parts in the maintenance bay of the Ur Iraqi Army Regional Maintenance Center Nov. 3, in Iraqi Army Camp Ur, Iraq.

72nd IBCT Gets Ready to Roll, Heading for Iraq

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Darryl Frost

72nd Infantry Bde. Combat Team Public Affairs

EL PASO, Texas- Since arriving in early October, the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team has been busy preparing for and focusing on Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in the New Mexico desert outside of El Paso, Texas.

In Iraq, the 72nd Brigade Headquarters will operate as the Joint Area Support Group-Central (JASG-C) with responsibility for the administration and security of the International Zone in Baghdad. The infantry brigade will be required to adapt to changes in the operational environment and fundamental changes in the role of US forces as they provide support to the Iraqi Government.

Part of the 72nd IBCT's assignment is to support the responsible drawdown of U.S. Forces in Iraq and the return of U.S.-controlled properties in the IZ to the government of Iraq.

Approximately 3000 soldiers, to include the 1-141st and 3-141st Infantry Battalion headquarters, which fall under the 72nd IBCT Headquarters, will perform various roles in Baghdad and throughout Iraq, such as security and guard force and detainee and convoy operations.

"We anticipate a number of mission changes due to theater requirements," said Colonel Mark N. Campsey, the commander of the 72nd IBCT. "So, we're training on multiple tasks which we might do."

For Colonel Campsey, the main concern is the ambiguity of the mission. However, he believes the 72nd IBCT's training gives the brigade the flexibility, capability and the capacity to meet the demands of the situation in Iraq.

"Our Soldiers are uniquely qualified for what's ahead due to the combination of their civilian and military skills," he said.

As an additional asset, the 72nd Brigade is packed with experienced personnel at all echelons of leadership. This has contributed greatly to overall mission preparedness.

Supply or Die

Starting over a year ago, Major Theresa Cogswell, the 72nd Brigade's logistics officer, and her staff began coordinating with the State of Texas, the National Guard Bureau and government equipment issue facilities to guarantee Soldiers were geared up for their time in Iraq, to include pre-mobilization training and the mission in Iraq itself.

"Currently, we have 99 percent of what we need to get into theater," said Major Cogswell. The rest of the equipment the brigade will receive in Iraq. The unit will fall in on up-armored humvees, special weapons systems and other equipment in theater tailored for their specific mission.

"Compared to when units first went into Iraq, the 72nd is a lot better equipped and ready to perform its wartime mission," she said.

The 72nd IBCT remains flexible for OIF. Through the US Government's Army Electronic Product Support (AEPS), the brigade will be able to cater their supply needs to exactly match the changing mission.

Apply in Person

"We have met all required strength goals," said Major



August Murray, the 72nd IBCT's human resources officer. To make this a reality, the 72nd brigade worked closely with the 36th Infantry Division and applied lessons learned from previous deployments.

Staffing the 72nd IBCT for deployment is an area the brigade started on early. Key leaders, such as First Sergeants, Company Commanders, and Readiness NCOs were assigned a year out, which was key to the successful manning of the brigade as units pressed early for Soldiers to meet deployment requirements.

To qualify the brigade headquarters and its 21 subordinate company-sized units for deployment, each unit completed two three-week events this last year. Most of these events took place at Camp Swift, Texas. During each session, Soldiers completed many critical training tasks to satisfy the requirements and get a "go" for the deployment.

The brigade's high medical readiness was achieved with multiple Soldier Readiness Processing (SRP) events, beginning at 12 and finishing at four months out from deployment, numerous dental truck visits and a SRP remediation plan for Soldiers. Having so many SRP dates during the mobilization process allowed early recognition of medical problems and solutions. A medical Task Force supported by the Division and State ensured the final remediation was completed prior to deployment.

You can talk about us, but not without us.

In preparation for this deployment over the last year, the 72nd IBCT's automation team fielded a series of tactical information technology systems, referred to as the Army Battle Command Systems (ABCS). These systems are used to command and control the force and support the Soldier on the battle field.

In 2009, the 72nd IBCT trained over 100 soldiers as ABCS operators. As part of the training, the soldiers successfully completed three command post exercises, which validated their knowledge and use of the systems.

"Knowledge Management and information sharing are a big part of our preparation for deployment, said Captain Richard Flores, the 72nd IBCT's signal officer. "The systems we use in Iraq are an important tool for us to meet the challenges that lay ahead."

Part of the ABCS suite, Microsoft Office SharePoint is the main system the brigade will use to distribute information in



country. Knowledge of the software is key to success. During the brigade's time at the mobilization platform, the automation team received praise from contracted field service representatives on their technical abilities.

The meat and potatoes

he training in New Mexico is near its end. During the time here, Soldiers have been trained in detainee, convoy and urban operations. The training was some of the most realistic Soldiers in the 72nd IBCT have ever encountered stateside.

throughout many training lanes, actual Iraqi civilians role played and mock weapons systems simulated the environment on the ground. The realism made it easy for Soldiers to stay battle-focused.

This team is the best prepared [that] we can make it," said Colonel Campsey. "We equipped them early." Over the past few weeks, Colonel

Campsey has conducted numerous sensing sessions. During the sessions, he noticed morale is high and complaints are uncommonly low on the basics, such as leadership, pay, equipment and family problems.

Soldiers and families know we're focused on them," said Colonel Campsey. "Overall, Soldiers are satisfied and they like the team."



Opposite page— Soldiers from Delta Company 536 Brigade Support Battalion lined for a Riot Control training exercise at Camp McGregor, New Mexico.

This page, top left- Soldiers conduct convoy training. (Photo by 1st Lt. Dagmar Murillo.)

Above- Approximately 3000 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers arrived at Fort Bliss in early October to begin mobilization training.

Texas Agribusiness Team Heads to Training, Afghanistan



Colonel Jeff Adkinson, Command Sgt. Maj. Jeff Mayo, and guidon bearer Spc. Cheyenne Stoker case the colors for Texas Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) in preparation for deployment to Camp Atterbury, Ind. where the team will complete training before deployment to Ghazni, Afghanistan. The ADTs are the tip of the spear in the war on terror in Afghanistan according to Gen. Stanley McChrystal. The team made up from members of the Texas Army National Guard is prepared and eager to assist the Afghans of Ghazni Province live a better life. (Texas Military Forces Photo)

Stress, Depression and the Holidays: 10 Tips for Coping

Mayo Clinic Staff

The holiday season, which begins for most Americans with Thanksgiving and continues through New Year's Day, often brings unwelcome guests — stress and depression. And it's no wonder. In an effort to pull off a perfect holiday, you might find yourself facing a dizzying array of demands — parties, shopping, baking, cleaning and entertaining, to name a few. So much for peace and joy, right?

Actually, with some practical tips, you can minimize the stress and depression that often accompany the holidays. You may even end up enjoying the holidays more than you thought you would.

Recognize holiday triggers

Learn to recognize common holiday triggers, so you can disarm them before they lead to a meltdown:

Relationships. Relationships can cause turmoil, conflict

or stress at any time, but tensions are often heightened during the holidays. Family misunderstandings and conflicts can intensify — especially if you're thrust together for several days. On the other hand, facing the holidays without a loved one can be tough and leave you feeling lonely and sad.

Fi-
nances. With the added expenses of gifts, travel,

food and entertainment, the holidays can put a strain on your budget — and your peace of mind. Not to mention that overspending now can mean financial worries for months to come.

Physical demands. Even die-hard holiday enthusiasts may find that the extra shopping and socializing can leave them wiped out. Being exhausted increases your stress, creating a vicious cycle. Exercise and sleep — good antidotes for stress and fatigue — may take a back seat to chores and errands. To top it off, burning the wick at both ends makes you more susceptible to colds and other unwelcome guests.

Tips to prevent holiday stress and depression

When stress is at its peak, it's hard to stop and regroup. Try to prevent stress and depression in the first place, especially if the holidays have taken an emotional toll on you in the past.

Acknowledge your feelings. If someone close to you has recently died or you can't be with loved ones, realize that it's normal to feel sadness and grief. It's OK to take time to cry or express your feelings. You can't force yourself to be happy just be-

cause it's the holiday season.

Reach out. If you feel lonely or isolated, seek out community, religious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship. Volunteering your time to help others also is a good way to lift your spirits and broaden your friendships.

Be realistic. The holidays don't have to be perfect or just like last year. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to, and be open to creating new ones. For example, if your adult children can't come to your house, find new ways to celebrate together, such as sharing pictures, emails or videotapes.

Set aside differences. Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to all your expectations. Set aside grievances until a more appropriate time for discussion. And be understanding if others get upset or distressed when something goes awry. Chances are they're feeling the effects of holiday stress and depression too.

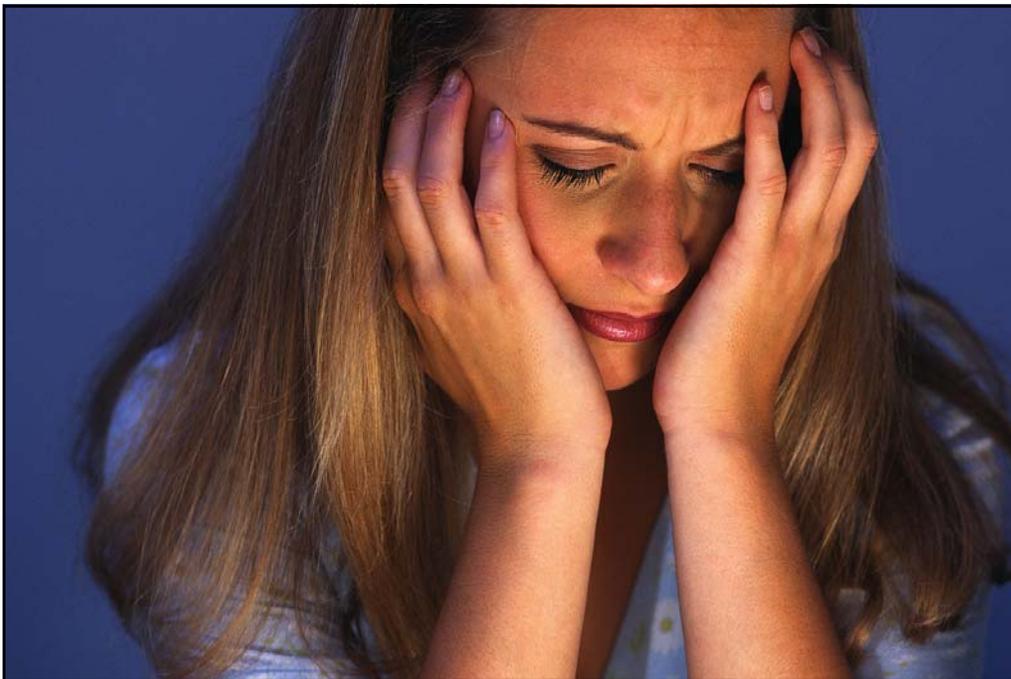
Stick to a budget. Before you go gift and food shopping, decide how much money you can afford to spend. Then stick to your budget. Don't try to buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts. Try these alternatives: Donate to a charity in someone's name, give homemade gifts or start a family gift exchange. Plan ahead. Set aside specific days for shopping, baking, visiting

friends and other activities. Plan your menus and then make your shopping list. That'll help prevent last-minute scrambling to buy forgotten ingredients. And make sure to line up help for party prep and cleanup.

Learn to say no. Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed. Friends and colleagues will understand if you can't participate in every project or activity. If it's not possible to say no when your boss asks you to work overtime, try to remove something else from your agenda to make up for the lost time.

Don't abandon healthy habits. Don't let the holidays become a free-for-all. Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt. Have a healthy snack before holiday parties so that you don't go overboard on sweets, cheese or drinks. Continue to get plenty of sleep and physical activity.

Take a breather. Make some time for yourself. Spend-



See STRESS, next page

Setting and Keeping a Sane Holiday Budget

USA Weekend Magazine

In the next two months, the pressure is on like no other time of year -- to entertain, to purchase gifts, to decorate, to feed extra mouths, to contribute to office or community festivities and to travel to Grandma's house (via sleigh or not).

"No matter how much we tell people not to, everyone goes out and overspends on the holidays," says financial expert Jean Chatzky, author of the newly revised "Pay It Down!" In fact, a November 2008 "Consumer Reports" survey showed that about half of the consumers who had set a holiday budget exceeded it, and 12 million Americans were still paying off holiday debts from 2007!

Don't repeat the pattern: It's time to join the growing ranks of people who've learned to live quite happily within their means. This expert advice (and a few great websites) will help to keep your holiday spending under control.

1. USE COOL WEB TOOLS.

Chatzky suggests using the calculator on her website (www.jeanchatzky.com) to estimate what you can afford to spend at your income level. This number should cover everything -- travel, food, gifts and other costs.

Remember, it's just an estimate. If the number is really too big for you to pay off by February, adjust downward, Chatzky says. Sticking to that deadline allows a little breathing room without the worry of paying too much in interest. If you are already in debt, then trim your budget substantially.

After you've set your bottom-line figure, go to www.about.com and type in "holiday gift spending budget worksheet" and "holiday spending worksheet." Use the gift worksheet to list each recipient and a

spending limit. Keep the list with you when you shop. If you go over budget on one person, cut back on another.

The holiday spending worksheet will help calculate all other holiday-related expenses. Think comprehensively, says Linda Sherry of Consumer Action, an education and advocacy group. Be sure to include things like hostess gifts, year-end tips for hairdressers and other service providers, seasonal flowers, and gas and tolls for out-of-town trips. Then add a bit more to the total for a "last-minute" fund to cover unanticipated expenses. Little things like these can add up quickly.

2. PAY THE RIGHT WAY.

Many financial advisers suggest using only cash or checks to buy presents so you won't spend more than you have. But for many people, that's unrealistic, especially if you'll make purchases online, Chatzky says.

By using a credit card, you'll be able to return items more easily, if necessary, and you'll get some merchandise protection. Plus, you can log into your account and track purchases online during the season to make sure you stay on budget. Just be sure to use your credit card with the lowest interest rate.

3. START SAVING NOW FOR NEXT YEAR. Many banks and credit unions offer "Christmas club" savings accounts. The interest is nothing to brag about, but you can automatically deposit a small amount each month. You usually can't withdraw it without incurring fees until a date near the holidays, when the bank sends you a check. It's painless because you've set money aside slowly over the year.

For the short-term, it's not too late to start saving for this season's post-holiday bills. Starting now, discipline

yourself to put away \$50 or \$100 a week in a safe place so you will have a jump on your credit card bill when it comes due early next year, Chatzky says.

Stretch your budget with online deals

Coupon codes and special promotions mean big savings on many consumer products this holiday season. "Coupons are rampant this year," financial expert Jean Chatzky says. "I've never seen it so aggressive. I probably wouldn't buy anything online without a coupon code."

To find special promotions and coupon codes in most shopping categories, online shoppers should check www.bradsdeals.com and www.dealnews.com. The latter also has a holiday shopping guide with tips, shipping deals and the lowest prices on hot holiday items. Other good sites: slickdeals.net for current deals and fatwallet.com for coupons and cash-back offers. Or, type "coupon code" and the item you want in your browser to see what pops up.

Look for shipping deals, too. Last-minute shipping charges add up, sometimes running more than the present costs. This year, do everything possible to ship early. Use www.shipgooder.com to compare the prices of the major services, including the U.S. Postal Service, FedEx and UPS. And check all of the sites above for free shipping deals at various online retailers.



STRESS, cont. from previous page

ing just 15 minutes alone, without distractions, may refresh you enough to handle everything you need to do. Take a walk at night and stargaze. Listen to soothing music. Find something that reduces stress by clearing your mind, slowing your breathing and restoring inner calm.

Seek professional help if you need it. Despite your best efforts, you may find yourself feeling persistently sad or anxious,

plagued by physical complaints, unable to sleep, irritable and hopeless, and unable to face routine chores. If these feelings last for a while, talk to your doctor or a mental health professional.

Take control of the holidays

Don't let the holidays become something you dread. Instead, take steps to prevent the stress and depression that can descend during the holidays. With a little planning and some positive thinking, you may find that you enjoy the holidays this year more than you thought you could.

36th Inf. Div. Builds Relationships With Foreign Forces

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Brenda Benner

36th Inf. Div. Public Affairs

WEST CAIRO AIR BASE, Egypt – It was a three-week experience on the North African continent that few Arrowhead Soldiers will ever forget. It was their first sighting of the Nile River, the Sphinx and the pyramids that didn't involve turning pages in a travel magazine or watching the History or Discovery channels.

As training preparation for next year's deployment to Iraq, approximately 160 personnel from the Texas Army National Guard's 36th Infantry Division headquarters and other units participated in Operation Bright Star. During most of October they worked closely with military officers from Egypt, Jordan and Pakistan.

Bright Star, which began in 1981, is a biennial joint and coalition training exercise supported and managed by U.S. Army Central Command (ARCENT) which partners military forces from many different countries. Hosted by Egypt, Bright Star allows participating nations to further their pursuit of improved security and interoperability in the region while developing working relationships. It also allows units to enhance their levels of mission readiness.

Besides the activities at West Cairo Air Base, numerous air and naval activities were also conducted in the region.

Maj. Gen. Eddy M. Spurgin, commander of the 36th Infantry Division, said the division's initial Bright Star training experience was an excellent chance to plan and execute a combat operation while in an austere environment.

"It was a great opportunity to integrate the Egyptian, Jordanian and Pakistani officers into our staff during our command post exercise," said the general. "As a result, we learned how they train, support and move their troops through a desert environment."

The general stated the training exercise was most helpful with learning the most effective ways to use the division's translators with verbal and written communications.



Sgt. Stephanie Dugan, a psychological operations non-commissioned officer with the 71st Theater Information Operations Group, worked with Egyptian officers during Bright Star.

"This helps for our deployment when we work with the Iraqi security forces and the Iraqi police," he added.

Sections within the division benefited from having foreign officers training side-by-side with its T-Patch personnel of all ranks.

Sgt. Stephanie Dugan, a psychological operations non-commissioned officer with the 71st Theater Information Operations Group (TIOG), worked with Egyptian army officers during her informal class sessions. She said her multi-cultural training mission was a positive experience.

When she learned the Egyptian army did not have its own information operations section, she shared the knowledge gained from her recent deployment to Afghanistan. She provided the officers with a basic overview of the advantages of IO and how to transform ideas into action. Dugan said she and her Egyptian counterparts enjoyed the creative process and developed several radio and newspaper messages that could have been used as actual products.

"I'm the liaison between the fictitious psychological operations teams within the war game scenario," she said. "I'm getting a broader view of IO here at Bright Star and learning the role that IO has in relation to my psychological operations experience. I inject information to the leaders ... I'm more of an advisor here."

Success stories abound throughout the T-Patch division.

Lt. Col. Alba Villanueva, the chief of the sustainment cell, has previous experience with multi-national training from Panama in Honduras. There, language wasn't a problem since she is fluent in Spanish. Communicating during Bright Star was a totally different experience for her. Some of the Egyptian officers had a basic conversational English foundation, but dealing with technical U.S. Army-speak and its acronyms was a challenge. As the days progressed, all involved became more accustomed to each other's accents and communication became a little easier.

"Our cultural awareness training taught us to set aside time for relationship building at the front end before getting down to business," said Villanueva. "They shared photos of their families while we met over tea and coffee. They were so generous, such excellent hosts. They brought us local food, T-shirts and other souvenirs."

According to Villanueva, female officers in the Egyptian army are mostly in the medical and administration fields and not usually in positions of senior leadership. Being that as it may, the lieutenant colonel said she was well received by the all-male officer corps. Her sustainment cell of 31 personnel was joined by a total of eight Egyptians and two Jordanian officers who rotated through the three-week exercise. Some of them participated with the sustainment cell every day.

Villanueva said much of the combined training time was spent learning about the Egyptian army's funding, equipment assets, re-supply procedures and personnel structure to more realistically coordinate support within the war game scenarios.

"The Egyptian and Jordanian officers provided me with

See EGYPT, next page

Egypt, cont. from previous page

helpful input ... they always had innovative ideas for solving a challenge," she said. "Likewise, the officers mentioned to me that they were impressed with the level of knowledge of my section NCOs," she said. "That's a credit to our cross-training."

"I was pleasantly surprised at the amount of beneficial training we got out of Bright Star," said General Spurgin. "It was certainly more than I had envisioned. We

worked our staff processes, such as our boards, our bureaus and our working groups which ultimately bring products to me so I can get a picture of the operational environment in order to make my decisions."

Although Bright Star was mentally and physically taxing with its long training days and nights, Villanueva said the overall experience was worth it. She emphasized that her Soldiers benefited from the training because they learned how to deal with the fast pace of operations and

gained an understanding of what their sustainment cell's footprint should be.

Additionally, she said the experience was beneficial for all the Arrowhead Soldiers who fostered relationships with the various foreign military personnel.

"I've made new friends," Villanueva said proudly. "I'm getting e-mails from my counterparts saying they miss me. We plan to maintain our new relationship via e-mail and I'm hoping we'll have the chance to work together again, it was a great experience."

Secretary Shinseki Announces Study of Vietnam-Era Women Veterans

Department of Veterans Affairs

WASHINGTON -- Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki announced the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is launching a comprehensive study of women Veterans who served in the military during the Vietnam War to explore the effects of their military service upon their mental and physical health.

"One of my top priorities is to meet the needs of women Veterans," said Secretary Shinseki. "Our Veterans have earned the very best care. VA realizes that women Veterans require specialized programs, and this study will help VA provide high-quality care for women Veterans of the Vietnam era."

The study, which begins in November and lasts more than four years, will contact approximately 10,000 women in a mailed survey, telephone interview and a review of their medical records.

As women Vietnam Veterans approach their mid-sixties, it is important to understand the impact of wartime deployment on health and mental outcomes nearly 40 years later. The study will assess the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental and physical health conditions for women Vietnam Veterans, and explore the relationship between PTSD and other conditions.

VA will study women Vietnam Veterans who may have had direct exposure to traumatic events, and for the first time, study those who served in facilities near Vietnam. These women may have had similar, but less direct exposures. Both women Veterans who receive their health care from VA and those who receive health care from other providers will be contacted to determine the prevalence of a variety of health conditions.

About 250,000 women Veterans served in the military during the Vietnam War and about 7,000 were in or near Vietnam. Those who were in Vietnam, those who served elsewhere in Southeast Asia and those who served in the United States are potential study participants.

The study represents to date the most comprehensive examination of a group of women Vietnam Veterans, and will be used to shape future research on women Veterans in future wars. Such an understanding will lay the groundwork for planning and



Vietnam Women's Memorial in Washington D.C.

providing appropriate services for women Veterans, as well as for the aging Veteran population today.

Women Veterans are one of the fastest growing segments of the Veteran population. There are approximately 1.8 million women Veterans among the nation's total of 23 million living Veterans. Women comprise 7.8 percent of the total Veteran population and nearly 5.5 percent of all Veterans who use VA health care services. VA estimates women Veterans will constitute 10.5 percent of the Veteran population by 2020 and 9.5 percent of all VA patients.

In recent years, VA has undertaken a number of initiatives to create or enhance services for women Veterans, including the implementation of comprehensive primary care throughout the nation, staffing every VA medical center with a women Veterans program manager, supporting a multifaceted research program on women's health, improving communication and outreach to women Veterans, and continuing the operation of organizations like the Center for Women Veterans and the Women Veterans Health Strategic Healthcare Group.

For more information on the memorial and women serving in Vietnam, go to www.vietnamwomensmemorial.org

Radney Foster Makes “Angel Flight” Song Take Wing

**Story and photos by Capt. Randall Stillinger
Texas Military Forces public Affairs**

GRAND PRARIE, Texas- It's not every day you see someone walking down a runway singing and playing a guitar, but that's what happened on the first day of filming for the music video for Radney Foster's "Angel Flight." This song was co-written by Mr. Foster and Darden Smith, a singer/songwriter out of Austin. Darius Rucker also lends his voice in the recording of the song, which is a new single from Mr. Foster's new album, *Revival*.

Mr. Smith began writing the song after hearing of the tragic helicopter accident that took the lives of seven Soldiers. On September 17th, 2008 a CH-47 "Chinook" helicopter from the 2nd Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment in Grand Prairie, call sign "Red River 44," went down in southern Iraq. The song tells the story of the fallen Soldiers and the Texas Air National Guard C-130 aircrew from the 136th Airlift Wing that flew them home on an "Angel Flight."

In the song, Mr. Foster sings:
*"I fly that plane called the angel flight
Come on, brother, you're with me tonight
Between heaven and earth, you're never alone
On the angel flight, come on, brother, I'm taking you home"*

Man Bites Dog, a new film production company out of Dallas, donated their time, equipment, and talent to film and produce the music video, which is now a hit on GAC TV and YouTube. The film crew was given complete access to the Texas National Guard by the Department of Defense to ensure accuracy and authenticity during the project.

Filming for the video took place at Hensley Field and Redmond Taylor Army Heliport, both in Grand Prairie, Texas; and the Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base. C-130s from the 136th AW and Chinooks from the 2-

149th AVN are featured in the music video in addition to a memorial park that was constructed to honor the memories of the Red River 44 crew. Mr. Foster, who performed "Angel Flight" during a September memorial service to the fallen soldiers, insisted that the memorial park be included in the video.

An honor guard from the 1st Cavalry Division of Ft. Hood is also featured. Their signature Cavalry Stetsons are prominently displayed as they fold a flag and fire a 21-gun salute inside an aircraft hanger. Soldiers from the 1st Cav performed funeral duties for the fallen 2-149th Soldiers last September.

In addition to the pro bono work done by Man Bites Dog, 90 percent of pro-

ceeds from the sale of both the "Angel Flight" song and video on iTunes will benefit families in crisis through the Texas National Guard Family Support Foundation.

"The Texas Military Forces appreciates the efforts of Darden Smith, Radney Foster, Darius Rucker, Man Bites Dog and all those who helped make the 'Angel Flight' song and video possible," said Maj. Gen. Jose S. Mayorga, Adjutant General of Texas. "Proceeds from this project for our Family Support Foundation will go far to benefit military families experiencing difficult situations. We appreciate the care they have taken to memorialize fallen military members and the air crews who bring them home to their loved ones."



A crew member films the memorial for Red River 44 during the making of the Angel Flight music video.



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Tracking Convoys and Commodities in Iraq

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Tad Browning
36th Sustainment Bde. Public Affairs

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq –Soldiers with the 36th Sustainment Brigade are busy tracking convoys and commodities at Joint Base Balad as liaisons with a higher purpose, to ensure the flow of accurate information between units.

Maj. Charles Lanfear, a Texas National Guard liaison officer with the 36th SB, ensures his Soldiers communicate between elements to accomplish the mission.

“Basically, we are the eyes and ears of the 36th SB to the higher headquarters and our daily mission is to keep the 13th Sustainment Command(Expeditionary) informed of our actions in (Multi National Division) South,” said Major Lanfear. The liaisons are in charge of managing and coordinating the distribution commodities from wherever they come from to the customer, he added.

Master Sgt. Mark Busch, a 36th SB liaison officer and father of five from Killeen, Texas, tracks the flow of information on convoy movements and commodities to make sure high visi-

bility movements and other items get to their destination successfully.

“We keep up with convoys from the point of origin to the point of destination and ensure that everything goes smoothly,” said Sergeant Busch. “Commodities and convoys are our bread and butter here.”

If 36th SB has information they believe was sent up to the 13th ESC and the 13th ESC cannot locate it, they contact the 36th SB LNO and ask for the missing information. The LNO has to figure out where the disconnect is and we get it fixed, added Sergeant Busch.

Some of the challenges the liaison officers will face in the coming months during the responsible drawdown of forces is to track commodities and equipment and make sure those items get to their intended location.

Major Lanfear stated that their challenges will be getting equipment that is not needed presently, identified, and coded whether it is serviceable or non-serviceable, and then turned into the appropriate element so it can be retrograded back to Kuwait and eventually back to the U.S. or Afghanistan, or wherever it is needed.

To assist in getting the mission accomplished, the liaison team uses current technology and resources to communicate.

“With technology the way it is, the communication is much easier than it has been in years past, with phones, computers, we have real-time communication back and forth,” said Major Lanfear. “We have a lot of officers and NCOs within the 36th that communicate very well in writing as well as verbally.”

In addition to tracking convoys and commodities, 36th SB liaison officer, Staff Sgt. Diana Wilbert, manages other tasks necessary to accomplish the mission.

“I’m the one that gets to do all of the running around. I take care of visitor management, billeting arrangements, help them get flights in and out if they have problems,” said Sergeant Wilbert. “Additionally, I pick up parts for both our unit and any other down-trace units if they need something. If they can’t get it, I go pick it up and ship it to them.”

Major Lanfear stated that shortly after his unit departs, there should be about 50,000 Soldiers here in Iraq.

“With that in mind we need equipment that can support those 50,000 Soldiers instead of the equipment that we have, which will support almost 300,000 Soldiers” said Major Lanfear.



Texas National Guardsman, Staff Sgt. Diana Wilbert, a 36th Sustainment Brigade liaison officer, inputs data into a computer to track commodities and convoy movements Oct. 22 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

“Tiny but Mighty” Predator Introduced to the Public

Story and photo by Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada becoming.

Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

Ellington Field, Houston, Texas (10 Nov, 2009) – The small aircraft might fit in a two-car garage albeit with some tinkering to the wings, but as unassuming as it looks one should never underestimate the Predator’s accuracy and destructive power.

The MQ-1 Predator or Unmanned Aerial Vehicle can be operated by a pilot and sensor operator from anywhere around the world and is only 27 feet long. Its wing span is 55.25 feet wide and its height 6.9 feet. It is powered by a turbocharged four-cylinder snowmobile engine with 115 horsepower. It is armed with two AGM-114 Hellfire Missiles and equipped with cameras that can detect a heat signature from 25,000 feet with amazing clarity. Once in its crosshairs, there is no escape. The last thing the enemy may hear is the missile’s sonic boom on its inbound trajectory.

As officials at Ellington Field “rolled out” the MQ-1 Predator the Wing Commander, Colonel Ken Wisian, took the stage and spoke passionately about the 147th Reconnaissance Wing’s exciting new mission:

Today marks a significant milestone for the Texas Military Forces, the Texas Air National Guard and the 147th Reconnaissance Wing. It is nice to have our new aircraft the MQ-1B Predator here on station, although having the aircraft here today is just one step of standing up our new mission. It is symbolic of the entry of the Texas Air National Guard into this new leading edge of what warfare is

To put this in perspective, since the dawn of history stand-off distance, or how far do you have to be from somebody to hit them, has gone from arms length to spear and rock throwing range, to today when it is rifle, artillery and rocket range.

Although there have been long-range weapons like ICBMs before. They were not life, in the sense that once they were launched that was it, there was no more change. Now, short of leaving the planet itself, we have maximized the stand-off distance.

Right now we are flying live missions on the other side of the world in Afghanistan and Iraq and are doing it from right here, just about a quarter mile down the way, on our own base.

Just think about that for a minute - right now from right here, we are flying combat missions in the war. Houston and Texas are in the fight every day. But it is not just the stand-off distance that has improved. This new class of weapons, I would say, is revolutionizing war fighting capabilities in other ways as well. This weapon with its unblinking eye flying over the battle field provides continuous live video feeds anywhere in the world – from the Pentagon to the guy on the ground – everybody sees the bad guy on the other side of the ridge simultaneously. For this reason alone the demand for combat air patrol (CAPs) orbits is virtually unlimited. As fast as people and equipment are coming out of the school house and off the production line, it is in the war.

The second factor that is revolutionary is the precision strike that we bring. Not so much, the precision, because that has been around for a while, but the ability to hang around on the battle field for 20 hours or more at a time but still be ready in an instant. The bad guys know that this is always a possibility.

By the way, the Predator is fairly quiet and rarely observed by the bad guys. This is old-school stealth. It is a small quiet high-flying aircraft, and for that reason, according to at least some published reports, is the weapon that is most feared today by the Taliban and Al-Qaeda.

Although we are getting our aircraft here on station just now, our crews and the maintenance support teams have been doing the mission for about two years from here and from Nevada. In that time we have roughly accumulated 20,000 hours of flying time in the combat zone, dozens of missile strikes and we participated in more than 200 combat actions and raids. As those statistics show, we primarily provide support to the guys on the ground.

In the current war Remotely Piloted Vehicles (RPVs) are almost entirely tactical, but in the future that will change. Over the long-term the demand for these is likely to fluctuate dramatically. For that reason, and because we fly them in garrison, right here from home-station, that makes the Guard and the Reserves ideal Total Force Operators of this weapon system. Our ability to flex with part-time members or Traditional Guardsmen ac-

See PREDATOR, next page



The Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicle on display in a hanger at Ellington Field, near Houston, Texas.

PREDATOR, cont. from previous page

ording to the needs of the Country and the State, makes us perfect for these missions.

I get really excited when I talk about the possibilities and potentials at hand. We are at the same point, in my mind, in the development of RPVs as manned aircraft were in WWI flying in open-cockpit bi-planes. The improvements; the idea and the roles are changing and growing at a furious rate. I am confident that there are major roles and missions for this type of weapon system that we have not even thought of yet, that will eventually become routine. By the way, new ideas do not only apply to the combat environment. Think of the potential for domestic use, from aid to law Enforcement, to watching the border, or disaster response under the legal authority of the Governor or the President.

We would like to provide that capability to the State of Texas and the Country. Do you think Governor Rick Perry, the FEMA Director or the President of the United States would like to have that live video of a disaster scene as opposed to having to rely on second-hand relayed phone information or, no offense, having to watch our friends in the media for their reports? We have the capability to provide direct information!

Think of what it would do for search and rescue or damage assessment. It is not always easy to see when you are in the middle of change, how big it is. Most periods of what are called revolutions in military affairs are not always recognized as such at the time. Although it is quite tempting I will not say conclusively that RPVs by themselves constitute a revolution in military affairs, but what is certain, is that RPVs have changed the way the war is fought in a major way. In my opinion, it is on the level of inventing the telegraph or the radio - it is having that much impact in the way things are done. We are only beginning to see what will become a remote-controlled war much as the people in WWI had no concept of super-sonic aircraft or cruise missiles or how they would impact warfare.

I mentioned revolution a couple of times and by the way, history is littered with countries that failed to adopt or adapt to the new ways of war. The United States is the world leader in yet another revolutionary way in the methods of war and we are in our superpower prime.

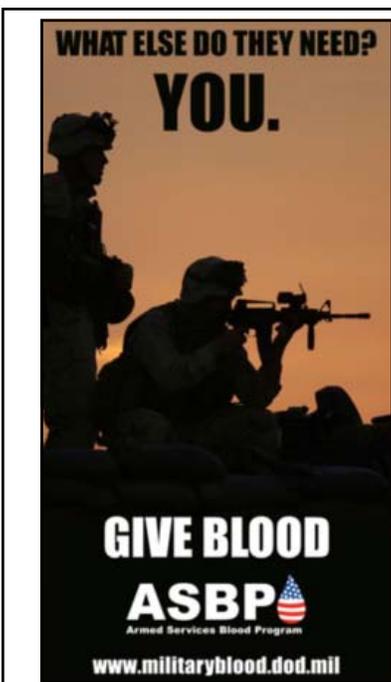
Back to the technology – all this technology is exciting and glamorous and ground breaking but it was because of creative people thinking of potentials in using new technologies. We are just beginning to tap that potential. This unit is quickly becoming a fountain of new ideas. Our talent is leading the way in developing new tactics. Our people must and will make the difference. It is our people that are out in front and I am not talking just about the air crews. Everybody in the Wing is responsible for this mission and deserves credit. This is a team effort we are all a part of. Having this ceremonial family day is appropriate, especially since the Air Force is celebrating the Year of the Family right now.

I give my sincere thanks to the family members who are here today. You sacrificed a lot for your spouse, your mom, your dad to serve our country and our state. It is not forgotten and it is appreciated – Thank You!!

The 147th Reconnaissance Wing, the Texas Air National Guard and the Texas Military Forces have a long history of being out front in combat history. With this new leading edge mission, and our outstanding people, I am confident we will add in a big way to history that is still to be written.

While the youngest among the crowd were busy sucking a bottle, sleeping or playing a game on the hangar floor during his speech, Col Wisian's passion for the new mission had all adults in the audience hanging on his every word.

War is serious and deadly business, but with this eye in the sky, the playing field will be leveled to our advantage. Creative people will continue to refine these “revolutionary” applications; one day Airmen no longer need to crash to their death in their aircraft and Soldiers no longer need to die on the battlefield.



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Information Management Exercise at Bright Star

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Brenda Benner

36th Infantry Division Public Affairs

WEST CAIRO AIR BASE, Egypt – Immense quantities of data were literally at Soldiers' feet when considering the vast arrangement of cables hidden under the floor in their temporary tent complex during the latest iteration of Operation Bright Star. In fact, more than three miles of cable were placed beneath hundreds of interlocking floor panels to ensure everyone could keep pace with the war-gaming training exercise.

Two dozen signal personnel from the 36th Division Special Troops Battalion worked diligently amid a flurry of deadlines to set up more than a hundred tables, chairs and laptops along with copy machines and LCD projectors before the main body reported to duty.

Master Sgt. Steven Gray, the information management senior signal non-commissioned officer assigned to C Company, 36th Division Special Troops Battalion, said it took three full days to set up the tent "city" known as the DRASH, a Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter. He said nearly 80 percent of the G-6 section was manned by Soldiers who were having their first experience at setting up signal equipment in an austere environment where nothing but sand existed before their arrival.

Brig. Gen. Len Smith, the division's deputy commanding general-manuever, said the new DRASH system provides the division with much more flexibility and capability with its war fighting functions and future on-site support to civil authorities during times of natural disasters.

"The expandable vans from five years ago are easily eclipsed by our new DRASH system," said Smith. "We now have a huge command and control multiplier for any situation."

When evaluating his signal section's progress near the end of the exercise, Gray said the value of everyone's hands-on experience was immeasurable compared to classroom instruction.

"Our intent was to use Bright Star as a stepping stone toward our 2010 overseas deployment," said Gray. "We're training as many Soldiers in as many multiple occupational skills as possible ... even those who are not in the 25B field. They have succeeded well beyond my expectations."

The advance party's efforts were obvious. On their first duty day, the vast majority of main body personnel were treated to work-ready stations.

"Some of the folks sitting at their battle stations don't know all the work that's involved. It's the same as people loving to watch movies and having no idea what goes on behind the cameras with the film and the set crews," explained Gray.

General Smith said he understands the complexity of the G-6 mission.

"They have a huge challenge in not only the physical work they must do, but it's also a huge mental exercise for them to pre-plan the layout of the system. The hard work of the advanced party was appreciated. We were well on our way to being completely functional on our first day."

Besides being extremely beneficial for signal training, Gray commented that the Bright Star mission was also a learning experience for the end users so they may determine how much computer equipment they need coupled with other work station concerns. He said it was a solid first step for deployment planning.

With the physical backbone of the Coalition Local Area Network (C-LAN) intranet system in place, the next vital task was dispersing all of the war-gaming information to Bright Star participants.

According to Maj. Bill Heiser, the division's knowledge management (KM) officer, information in its many forms is basically the heartbeat of the organization.

"KM is not just about technology, it's about any type of process that helps share any type of information whether it's electronic, handwritten or verbal," explained Heiser.

He said his KM section plans to tailor the C-LAN system to what Arrowhead Soldiers need rather than pushing a certain product down to them. After more experience with the system, Heiser said he could see the end users getting more comfortable with handling all of the incoming and outgoing data.

"Most of the information in the flow is not that critical," said Heiser. "We winnow the wheat from the chaff so the command staff is not drinking out of a fire hose all day."

Feedback directed to the KM personnel showed that Soldiers liked having ownership of their own section's information instead of having it located in one huge file.

"They know how to find their own products and we provide the links so those in other sections can access it too," Heiser continued. "We've learned a lot during the past three weeks and adapted on the run."

To increase the effectiveness of managing huge quantities of information, Heiser suggested continued training for all who use the system in order to maximize its full capabilities.

"We'll have additional pre-mobilization exercises next year to practice using our system that is similar to C-LAN so we can better determine how to set up our system when we deploy."



Sgt. Theodore Miller, a system operator/maintainer with the signal section, monitors the Joint Node Network.

New Senior Enlisted Leader Brings Passion for National Guard to Position

By Army Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON (11/24/09) - The first female and first Air Force senior enlisted advisor to the chief of the National Guard Bureau said her new job is a calling.

"It's not about a job," Chief Master Sgt. Denise Jelinski-Hall said during a break after Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley announced her selection to about 2,400 people at the National Guard's 2009 Joint



Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Denise Jelinski-Hall, the new senior enlisted leader assigned to the Office of the Chief, National Guard Bureau, is seen at the 2009 Joint Senior Leadership Conference at the Gaylord National Hotel and Convention Center in National Harbor, Md., on Nov. 19, 2009, moments after Air Force Gen. Craig McKinley announced her appointment. The third senior enlisted leader to the CNGB, Jelinski-Hall is the first Air Guard member and the first woman to fill the role.

Senior Leadership Conference here on Nov. 19. "This is truly a calling and a passion – I have a passion for the National Guard."

Like many Guardmembers, Chief Jelinski-Hall has had a varied career spanning multiple states. Originally from Little Falls, Minn., she did stints in Nebraska and California before serving in the Hawaii Air National Guard for 19 years.

She was an air traffic controller, a combat air space manager, a wing command chief, a state command chief and her state's senior enlisted leader. She's been both a traditional Guardmember and a technician.

In her new role, Chief Jelinski-Hall is responsible for advising McKinley on the enlisted affairs of 457,000 Soldiers and Airmen of the Army and Air National Guard.

"It's about service, about commitment and making a difference ... for America – adding value," she said. Adding value to America was the theme of last week's JSLC, an event attended by the most senior Defense Department and other federal government leaders.

"I see my role as advising Gen. McKinley on all matters affecting the enlisted corps, Army and Air, and their families," she said. "I see myself working on big, broad programs – Yellow Ribbon, family programs, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, anything that touches our enlisted men and women.

"Resiliency training – Army and Air – is critically important."

Both the Army and the Air National Guard also have senior enlisted leaders. "I see us as a triangle," she said. "I don't serve over them. They don't work for me. We have different lines of leadership. We will be working together very closely. The three of us will work very, very well together."

The National Guard is busy in every state and territory and dozens of countries. "Especially where there are Soldiers and Airmen in the fight, that is critically important, and I know how much they appreciate going out, whether it's

Iraq, Afghanistan, Qatar, Kuwait, Africa – wherever they are – they appreciate leadership coming, just to say, 'Thank you for answering the call to serve our country.'"

Chief Jelinski-Hall said it's also important to visit the National Guard armories, wings and installations located in virtually every community in America. "Those that are called to service, we need to go and get in front of them and say 'Thank you' to them and to the families and to the employers and to the communities."

One of her goals is to grow the field of senior enlisted leaders who can be tapped for the most senior positions. This echoes a charge made to General McKinley when he was appointed to chief – grow the field of senior officers who can be considered for the most senior positions throughout DoD.

"It's my responsibility to give Gen. McKinley that opportunity to have a wide pool to choose from," she said. Right now, she and her husband, who served on active duty, are focused on their first PCS move in two decades.

"Growing up in Minnesota, I get the cold and whatnot, but it is certainly going to be a big culture shock and a transition," she said. "I look forward to being able to do some different things other than going to the beach, which I truly love, but really taking in the culture here on the East Coast, the battlefields and the museums. It's exciting for us."

Chief Jelinski-Hall hopes to squeeze some time hiking and visiting the ocean, but she said that requires some serious time management. She juggles work, marriage, her own child, stepchildren and continuing education. "There's not a lot of extra time," she said.

Not that she's complaining: "It is such an honor and privilege to be able to wear this uniform that represents the best military. It's a calling and a passion, and I believe that this is where I'm meant to be – wearing a uniform that represents the United States of America."

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News Briefs

Strong Bonds Marriage Seminars— Weekend Retreat for Soldier, Spouse

Strong Bonds Seminars are a FREE weekend retreat for Texas Military Forces Single Soldiers, Married Couples and Families to focus on their relationships. For the Marriage Enrichment seminars, the Chaplain covers topics such as expectations, communications, reunion and friendship. He provides tools for the couple to use in the future. For the Singles Soldier seminar, the Chaplain helps soldiers establish relationship goals and gain essential skills in mate-choosing patterns. The Family Wellness seminar is for the entire Family to come to an off-post retreat and gain skills to help sustain healthy interactions, relevant teaching and training. They will also have time for relaxation, recreation, fellowship and fun.

Attendance for Service Members will be in lieu of drill. All Service Members will receive a performance certificate upon completion of the seminar. The spouse or lowest ranking Service Member will be put on Invitational Travel Orders and will need to complete a Travel Voucher (DD 1351-2). The Family Wellness Retreat, provides on-site daycare for children ages 0-8, Daycare is not provided on-site for the Marriage Enrichment or the Single Soldier Retreat. We are currently working on having childcare costs reimbursed to the attending service members.

WHEN & WHERE:

There are two Strong Bonds Seminars in January.

January 15-17 at the Overton Hotel in Lubbock and Jan. 29-31 at the Omni Downtown in Austin.

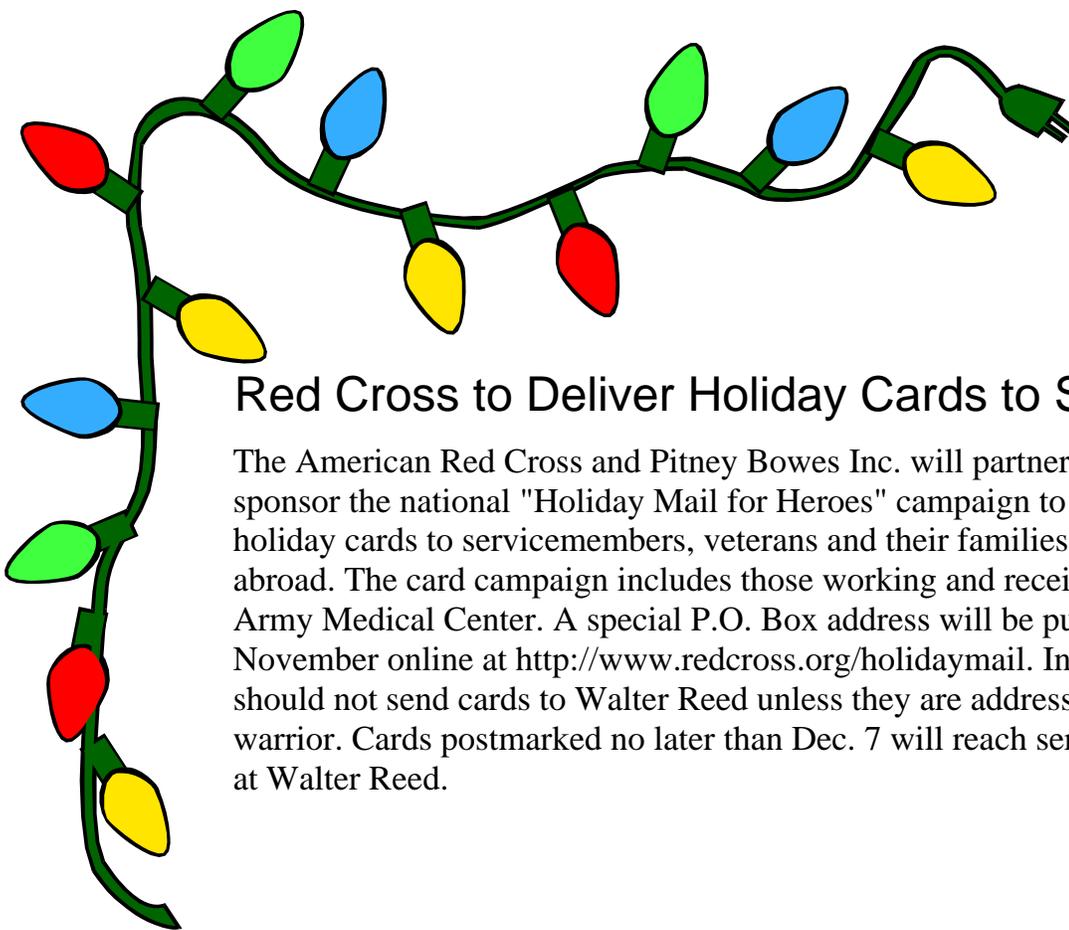
To register for a Strong Bonds Seminar, complete the appropriate form fill out the form for the seminar that you wish to attend and return it to the Strong Bonds Coordinator.

Registration Forms are located at: <https://www.tx.ngb.army.mil/sites/J1/Family%20Readiness/Strong%20Bonds/Forms/AllItems.aspx>

Send form to:

Fax 512-782-6953

E-mail: equilla.coleman@ng.army.mil for more information.



Red Cross to Deliver Holiday Cards to Servicemembers

The American Red Cross and Pitney Bowes Inc. will partner for the third year to sponsor the national "Holiday Mail for Heroes" campaign to receive and distribute holiday cards to servicemembers, veterans and their families in the United States and abroad. The card campaign includes those working and receiving care at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. A special P.O. Box address will be published the first week of November online at <http://www.redcross.org/holidaymail>. In the meantime, people should not send cards to Walter Reed unless they are addressed to a specific wounded warrior. Cards postmarked no later than Dec. 7 will reach servicemembers recovering at Walter Reed.

This Month in Military History: December

1835- In fall 1835, following skirmishes with Mexican regulars at Gonzales and Goliad, several hundred Texans laid siege to San Antonio. In late November, Edward Burleson took command of the "Army of the People," the Texas Revolutionary Army, after Austin left to solicit aid from the United States. Engagements at Concepcion and at the Grass Fight highlighted the siege until December 5, when Benjamin R. Milam and Frank (Francis W.) Johnson led several hundred volunteers in a successful assault against the Mexican troops.

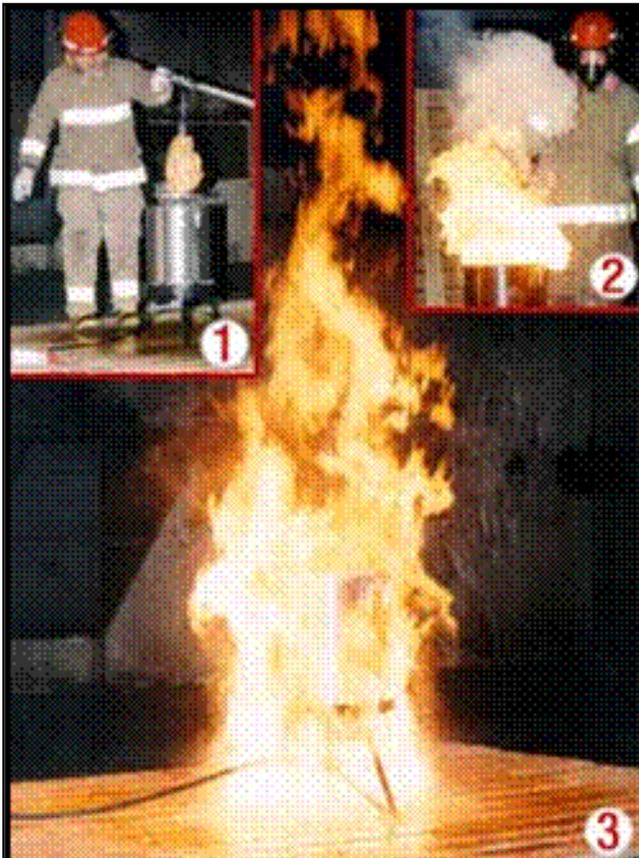
1945- After 400 days of combat, the 36th Infantry Division returned to the United States in December 1945. It was deactivated on 15 December 1945. The 36th has been recognized by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum as a liberating unit for their work securing the sub-camps of the Dachau concentration camp system.

Right- Survivors of the Ampfing subcamp of the Dachau concentration camp soon after liberation by U.S. troops. Ampfing, Germany, May 4, 1945.



Turkey Frying Safety— How to Cook a Great Bird SAFELY!

Turkey fryers should always be used outdoors a safe distance from buildings and any other material that can burn.



Never use turkey fryers on wooden decks or in garages.

Make sure the fryers are used on a flat surface to reduce accidental tipping.

Never leave the fryer unattended. Most units do not have thermostat controls. If you don't watch the fryer carefully, the oil will continue to heat until it catches fire.

Never let children or pets near the fryer when in use. Even after use, never allow children or pets near the turkey fryer. The oil inside the cooking pot can remain dangerously hot, hours after use.

To avoid oil spillover, do not overfill the fryer.

Use well-insulated potholders or oven mitts when touching pot or lid handles. If possible, wear safety goggles to protect your eyes from oil splatter.

Make sure the turkey is completely thawed and be careful with marinades. Oil and water don't mix, and water causes oil to spill over, causing a fire or even an explosion hazard.

The National Turkey Federation recommends refrigerator thawing and to allow approximately 24 hours for every five pounds of bird thawed in the refrigerator.

Keep an all-purpose fire extinguisher nearby. Never use water to extinguish a grease fire. Remember to use your best judgment when attempting to fight a fire. If the fire is manageable, use an all-purpose fire extinguisher. If the fire increases, immediately call 9-1-1 for help.

"To all members of the Texas Military Forces

December is a month of celebration when many Americans will visit with family and friends. As you spend your Christmas and New Years with loved-ones, please keep our deployed service members and their families in your thoughts and prayers.

I ask that you share your time with the families of our deployed soldiers and airmen during this holiday season to ease the burden of separation from their loved one.

If you travel, please do so safely as you are our most valuable resource and what adds value to our organization.

On behalf of my family, thank you for the work you do every day in defense of our great State and Nation. You remain the very best our Nation has to offer.

I look forward to another great year in 2010 and in working with you to take the Texas Military Forces to the next level of excellence.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Sincerely,

MG Jose S. Mayorga
Adjutant General