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October 7, 2009, marked an important day in Texas Army National Guard History. During the 2nd Annual Texas Army National Warrant Officer Conference, participants were afforded the opportunity to witness the retirement ceremony of three Chief Warrant Officer Five aviators.



Cover- Hundreds gather to say goodbye to Staff Sgt. Christopher Staats. Sergeant Staats was killed in an IED attack in Afghanistan on Oct. 16, 2009. (Photo by Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs.)

THE BULLETIN BOARD

TEXAS MILITARY FORCES MISSION STATEMENT

Effective 5 November 2009, the Texas Military Forces Mission Statement reads: "***Provide deployable and diverse ready trained forces.***" Key elements of the mission statement include:

Deployable. First and foremost, we must work collectively to ensure that we recruit and retain Soldiers, Airmen, and Texas State Guardsmen (Service Members) who are physically fit and trained for worldwide deployments.

Diverse. Secondly, we must emphasize the importance of diversity and inclusion in our forces and culture. A proper representation of gender and ethnic backgrounds not only reflects the importance of the diversity of our great State's population, but it brings a wealth of talent, experience and background from a broad spectrum of cultures to strengthen the force. My vision for diversity is not one group at the expense of another. It is about bringing all the talents and perspective to bear.

Ready. Our forces must be "ready" at all times to respond to contingency operations at home and abroad. "Ready" can be measured with complete UMD/UMRs; rehearsed and executable plans, equipment operational readiness rates, and each Service Member's mental, physical, and spiritual readiness.

Trained. Our forces must be highly trained. This includes MOSQ, AFSC, METL, collective skills, weapons qualification, and professional military education for officers, warrant officers and enlisted.



The DISPATCH

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Fire in the Eyes— 551st Engineer Co. Trains with OC Spray

**Story and photos 1st Lt. Darryl G. Frost,
72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs**

FORT BLISS, Texas- Since arriving at Fort Bliss for deployment training, the 551st Engineer Company has been solely focused on the heavy responsibility that comes with taking over an Iraqi internment facility for the next year.

On Tuesday, Oct. 13, Soldiers of the 551st were in high spirits as they had their first big test- the Oleresin Capsicum (OC) spray, or pepper spray, training lane. The primary purpose of the training was to maintain control in the off chance a Soldier sprays too close to his buddy while subduing a detainee.

“The training is important in case a Soldier gets some residual spray in their eyes,” said Captain Richard Ghinelli, the 551st Engineer Company commander. “It gives them an idea of what the detainee is going through and establishes a comfort level with this tool for their safety and the safety of the detainees.”

The morning before the OC spray lane, Soldiers were trained on how to take down unruly detainees through a series of Mechanical Advantage Control Holds (MACH), such as the take-down hold with baton and the buddy team takedown of a detainee hold.

Through training on a series of strikes, gabs, and blocking techniques, the Soldiers learned non-lethal self-defense from the instructors of Task Force Outlaw, a detainee operations training battalion. TF Outlaw’s training was rooted in its members’ experience from prior deployments.

Shortly after 1 p.m., the Soldiers started the OC spray Lane. At the spray point, each Soldier stood six feet away from an instructor holding a can of OC spray in hand. The trainers asked each if they have any medical issues, such as high blood pressure or mild asthma.

When the OC spray hit the eyes, several things happened. First, the eyes slammed shut and the skin surrounding the target area around the eyes started to burn intensely. For many Soldiers, there was an involuntary extension of the hands to the face.

Without training, fear and panic could have quickly set in. However, the Soldiers were coached to remain calm and goal oriented.

“If you’re using [OC spray], said SGT Brock Chase, a team leader in the 551st Engineer Company, “you need to know what it feels like to have it used on you.”

Shortly after OC spray hitting the eyes, each Soldier

leaned over and shook off the excess off their faces. They had to open their eyes before an instructor would allow them to proceed through a series of offensive takedown maneuvers and strikes, as well as defensive blocks. The pain remained evident on their faces.

Throughout the lane, several Soldiers compared the burning sensation to a direct hit in the face with a New Mexican cactus. Nevertheless, each Soldier knew the only cures to the intense burning sensation in their eyes would be fresh air, water and time.

Resorting to rubbing the eyes only made matters worse. They also understood at the OC spray lane’s end, there was relief.

At the decontamination point, trainers squirted no-tears baby shampoo in the hands of Soldiers as they scrubbed their faces to remove the remnants of the burning spray. Recovery time was one hour and it started when the last Soldier finished the lane.

With training completed, each Soldier received a certificate good for the rest of their career. However, unit commanders can train on the OC spray lane at any time they see fit.

At the end of the day, the training brought the 551 Engineer Company closer together. A sense of accomplishment was evident. The earlier momentary fear had given way to a new boldness to face what lies ahead.



After being sprayed, Spc. John Simon demonstrates a Mechanical Advantage Control Hold (MACH) take down with baton drill at station 2.



Guard, Local Communities Enjoy 3rd Annual Oktoberfest

Story and photos by Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson
100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP SWIFT, Texas- The sounds of local bands, helicopters and children's laughter rose up into a bright blue sky as the military and local communities came together during the 3rd Annual Oktoberfest here at Camp Swift on Saturday, October 17. Highlights of the event included military demonstrations, local vendors, musicians, children's activities and the Volksmarch, a non-competitive distance walk through the woods in the Camp Swift training areas.

During the opening ceremonies, Texas Adjutant General, Major General Jose S. Mayorga welcomed the citizens of the surrounding cities, as well as Soldiers and families. Stressing the close relationship the residents of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville have with the Soldiers training at Camp Swift, General Mayorga stated it simply and clearly, "we are part of the community and the community is part of us."

Bastrop Mayor Terry Orr made it clear the city of Bastrop supports the Texas Military Forces. We have "been endeavoring to become known as a 'soldier-friendly town'," said Mr. Orr, by working with Camp Swift and the local chamber of commerce to welcome the local military presence.

Highlighting some of the equip-

ment Texas Military Forces use during both peace- and war-time operations, Soldiers from the 143rd

Long Range Surveillance Detachment performed an airborne demonstration, jumping from Texas Army National Guard Chinook helicopters. After two Apache attack helicopters did a low-altitude fly-by, more Soldiers from the 143rd LRS, completed an "air assault" to deliver a walking stick to General Mayorga, kicking off the annual Volksmarch.

For some, this was the closest they had ever been to the helicopters. "This is great," said Shandra Wilcox, an Austin resident. Her seven-year-old son, Jaris, "is helicopter-crazy," said Ms. Wilcox. For Jaris, the "chance to see [the helicopters] up close was just a great thing for him and all he could talk about on the way here."

Supporting the local community and the military in a slightly different fashion, the animals from the Capital of Texas Zoo in Cedar Creek attracted adults and kids alike. Mo, the camel, was a striking sight under the oak trees and many children bravely held out pellets of feed in their hands to feed him. "This is a labor of love," said Carl Smith, Mo's handler. The zoo comes out every year to support the military "because it's a great organization."

For others, the chance to take a look at a bit of history, both in the Texas



Military Forces museum displays and in Camp Swift itself, was a big draw. "My uncle was in the Army in Vietnam," said Lorena Marquez, "but he lives in California and I never really got to see the stuff he used, so it's neat to be able to look at all the old equipment and think that he might have used some of it."

"I can remember coming out here at Swift for training, years ago," said Max Nelson, a Texas National Guard veteran. "I don't remember having this much fun, though," he said, "since I think it was raining the last time I was out here."

Vendors and informational booths lined the walkways, distributing both products and information. "This is way more stuff available for Soldiers and their families than when I was in," said Mr. Nelson. "I learned more walking around here today than I thought I would."

"We understand the strength our Soldiers provide," said Mayor Marc Holm, from the city of Elgin. "We are very proud to partner with the military personnel at Camp Swift," he said. "We are a family and we want to make sure we all have the same closeness and respect for each other. We know it's going to be a great annual event."

Left- Jake Magness, seven, feeds Mo the camel at the 3rd Annual Oktoberfest at Camp Swift, Bastrop, Texas. Mo, a four-year old Dromedary camel, as well as other animals, were brought to Oktoberfest by the Capital of Texas Zoo in Cedar Creek.

Above- The 36th Inf. Div. band, commanded by Chief Warrant Officer Jeffrey Lightsey, performs during the opening ceremonies of the 3rd Annual Oktoberfest.



T-Patchers and British Army Learn From Each Other

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Brenda Benner

Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

SALISBURY PLAIN, England – Texas Army National Guard Soldiers of the 36th Infantry Division surprisingly found themselves within a few miles from England’s world-famous Stonehenge while training overseas. They could see the mysterious stones as they traveled across the rolling hills of the plateau to various British Army military sites for their training.

During late September and early October, approximately 100 members from the 144th and 142nd Infantry Battalions joined the British Territorial Army’s 3rd Battalion, Royal Anglian Regiment (3RAR) for the second phase of Operation Glow Worm. Joining them were members of the 56th Special Troops Battalion and the 949th Battalion Support Brigade.

Just as the U.S. has its National Guard, the Territorial Army consists of Britain’s reserve Soldiers. Members of the 3RAR, known as the Steelbacks, visited Texas during the intense August heat and trained with the 36th Inf. Div. T-Patchers at North Fort Hood and Camp Swift.

The Texas infantrymen attended numerous weapons classes, live-fire ranges, conducted assaults in training villages and viewed weapons of the past, present and future. Each day they became more familiar with the British Army’s weapon of choice, the L85A2 rifle. They also learned the basics of mortars, archery, Molotov cocktails and setting up trip flares.

After completing their training rotations, they were privileged to experience English heritage and customs from within the sacred walls of The Tower of London and behind the gates of Buckingham Palace.

Multi-national training

Numerous world-wide operations are currently underway that include combined forces from many different countries. Naturally, they possess different political ideals, command systems, strategies and weapons.

British Maj. Ged Murphy, the new training major for the Territorial Army’s 3 RAR, said international training programs help iron out mission complexities, potential frictions and difficulties which ultimately leads to earlier success for everyone involved.



“It’s absolutely imperative that we do everything we can before we end up on operations when things can go wrong and be dangerous,” said Major Murphy. “It’s important not only to train together, but that we actually understand each other. This is a fantastic opportunity for the U.S. and the United Kingdom (personnel) because they will inevitably find themselves working together.”

Often, 36th Inf. Div. Soldiers find themselves working with their foreign counterparts, whether in Texas or overseas. In the past five years alone, they have joined forces with militaries from Japan, Iraq, Honduras, Chile, Egypt and the Czech Republic, just to name a few.

See ENGLAND, next page

Top right- Texas Army National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Charles Tucker, of A Company, 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry, 36th Infantry Division, keeps an eye out for British Army infantrymen portraying enemy forces during multi-national combat training in Southern England.

Bottom right- T-Patcher infantrymen from the 36th Infantry Division, Texas Army National Guard, join their British Army counterparts for weapons classes during the second phase of Operation Glow Worm in Southern England.

Bottom Left- Texas Army National Guard infantrymen from 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry, assault a village during combat training with British troops in Southern England.





ENGLAND, cont. from previous page

Lt. Col. Michael Houston, who commands the 144th Infantry Battalion., emphasized that conducting overseas deployment training (ODT) following a unit's mobilization is the ideal time for effective training

"That's when everyone's skill sets are finely honed from recent combat," said Colonel Houston. "This launches us into a phase of tactical training that will carry us forward to our next deployment. We need to continue these ODTs and partner more units together. Having a sister unit overseas maintains (multi-national) relationships that will carry forward regardless of changes in a unit's leadership."

Urban operations

One of the favorite training sites for the Arrowhead troops was Copehill Down, the site of a modernized urban assault village like none they had seen before. The numerous buildings varied in exterior and interior designs; creating all types of door, window, stairs and wall-mounted ladder entry points for the infantrymen to over-

Top-British Soldiers proudly show their support for their 36th Infantry Division "brothers" during multi-national training in England.

Right- Texas Army National Guard infantrymen from the 366th Infantry Division return from London's Buckingham Palace following their behind-the-scenes view of the Changing of the Queen's Guards.

come. Beneath the streets, a maze of inactive sewer and drainage pipes added another unique challenge.

According to British Sgt. Major Chris Jewell, a senior permanent instructor for the 3RAR, approximately 130 British Soldiers joined the 36th Inf. Div. troops for the urban assault.

One special high-tech building contained the sophisticated LLUST system, the Low Level Urban Street Trainer. With interactive walls and floors, the building tracks every move made in its interior.

"It knows when we are standing, kneeling or in the prone position by using the small electronic tags we put in our pockets and on our boot laces," said Spc. Don Barfield of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Bn., 144th Inf. "Afterwards, we watch the results on a big screen in a different building. It was very interesting, very high-speed."

Following his platoon's rotation through the village, Specialist Daniel Ovalle of C Company, 2nd Battalion., 144th Infantry, said he was impressed with the British instructors and what they were teaching.

"This is a great training environment and a once in a lifetime chance for us," Specialist Ovalle said during one of his breaks. "We're grunts, so we're all about hands-on training because we like to kick in doors and cause havoc. My adrenaline was really going today."

Equipment exhibits

While in Warminster at the Land Warfare Centre, the T-Patchers visited the Infantry and Small Arms School Corps' comprehensive collection of 3,500 weapons from dozens of different countries. The remarkable assortment varied from small hand grenades and pistols to mines, mortars and enormous anti-tank guns.

Self-professed history buff Staff Sgt. Michael Watts, a recruiter from Team 8, Region 2, said the tour guide was a walking encyclopedia of weapons history.

"It was unbelievable, the amount and variety of everything," Sergeant Watts said after completing his tour. "One of my favorites was a 14th Century Chinese-made rifle that had to be ten feet long. It took two people to actually fire it."

See ENGLAND, next page

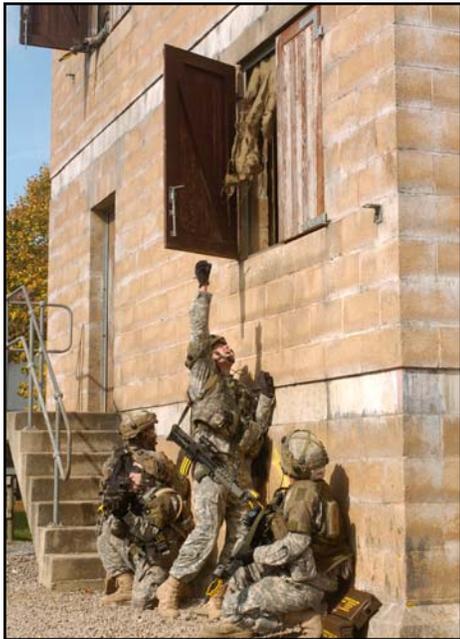


ENGLAND, cont. from previous page

The visiting T-Patchers were also allowed to see the latest high-tech equipment being fielded by British troops. Items ranged from individual combat packs to large combat vehicles.

A different language

Besides learning British Army training procedures, techniques and equipment,



T-Patcher infantrymen from the 36th Infantry Division throw grenades to overcome enemy forces during combat training with British Soldiers in Southern England.

Arrowhead Soldiers also experienced historic English culture each and every day; whether at the training camp locations or while visiting the sights of London.

Their first hurdle was learning a new language. It's English, but vastly different from the dialect of the Lone Star State. The Texans learned vital words such as "ablutions" and "scoff" – which meant latrines and chow respectively. A simple American "no problem, thank you" was known as "no dramas, cheers mate."

Lt. Col. Houston said the unique language of the hosting unit was certainly noticeable.

"We joked that we're two different people separated by a common language," Colonel Houston. "During our conversations, they'll (the British personnel) tell us that they are the only ones speaking proper English."

British instructor Color Sgt. Tiger Gardner, who has taught combat tactics to foreign militaries all over the world, said the exchange training experience teaches everyone a new military language as well.

"Many of the abbreviations are different," explained Sergeant Gardner after completing one of his weapons classes. "For example, our FRP means the final rendezvous point which is the same as the Americans saying ORP; their objective rally point. To overcome this confusing alphabet soup, the more often the British and American Soldiers can interface, the

better."

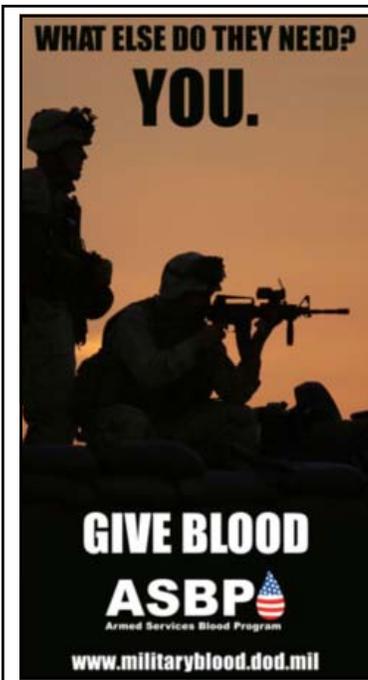
Experiencing English culture

Upon completion of their combat training, the T-Patchers packed up and headed north to London for once-in-a-lifetime experiences at The Tower of London and Buckingham Palace. Dressed in their finest uniforms, American officers and senior Non Commissioned Officers attended a British Army Regimental dinner and viewed the jeweled crowns from Queen Elizabeth's coronation.

The following day, a select group of enlisted Infantrymen were honored with a behind-the-scenes tour of the Changing of the Queen's Guards from inside the gates of the palace. The T-Patchers, dressed in their Class A uniforms, were watched by thousands of spectators as they marched to and from Buckingham Palace. Many of the spectators crowded near the entrances wondering who the special guests were and where they came from.

After the prestigious ceremony, Sgt. Kyle Mallette of 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, said it would be an unforgettable day.

"There's so much history involved with everything they do," he said. "It was a special event and I learned a lot. Some of the things they wear on their uniforms are as old as our country. It was so cool ... I felt like a rock star."



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afterdeployment.org Explores Behavioral Health Information

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The U.S. Army, with oversight by TRI-CARE Management Activity (TMA), has created an interactive Web site that allows service members and their families to explore behavioral health information. The site launched Aug. 5, 2008 at <http://www.afterdeployment.org>, and development continues.

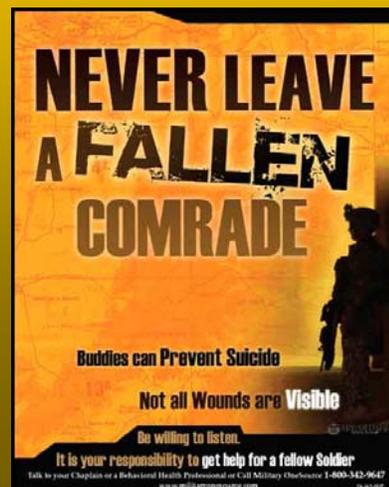
“Afterdeployment.org serves as an interactive, self-help solution to assist with behavioral health needs following deployment,” said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director, TMA.

Authorized by legislation, the site is a pilot project to help service members deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other behavioral health conditions.

Visitors to afterdeployment.org will notice the user-friendly environment. By clicking on a video link play button, users can watch veterans, spouses and other family members tell real-life stories about how war changed their lives and how they dealt with the demands of readjusting after combat deployment.

In addition to these first-person accounts, a tool bar on the left side of the Web site links beneficiaries to educational topics that include: Getting Help, Check How You’re Doing, Staying Healthy Where You Live, Stories from Home and Far Away, and Links, Books, Blogs & Pods. In each of these areas, additional links offer detailed information on chosen subjects.

A user-friendly environment is not all that matters to service members. Privacy is of paramount concern, and users don’t have to register to access the site. Afterdeployment.org provides confidential education on sensitive issues such as stress and triggers, conflict at work, reconnecting with family and friends, moods, anger, sleep, substance abuse, stress management, kids and deployment, spiritual guidance, living with physical injuries and health and wellness.



Texas Adjutant General Receives Flag and Coins



Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas (Sep. 22, 2009)— Colonel Patrick M. Hamilton, Texas Army National Guard Chief of Staff, presented a framed embroidered Afghanistan flag and two coins to the Texas Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Jose S. Mayorga, here on September 22nd, 2009.

The presentation was given in honor of the first Red Team who served in Afghanistan. Their function was to educate officers, senior warrant officers, senior non-commissioned officers, and civilians to enhance staff planning and improve decision making capabilities in today’s dynamic and uncertain environment.

They also managed projects that the Army calls “wicked problems” consisting of analyses of corruption, of governance and development, and of strategic lines of communication in Afghanistan. The team was there from March 2008 to May 2009. They worked directly for the command of Combined Joint Task Force 101 (101st Airborne Division). Members of the team were comprised primarily of Texas National Guard soldiers. *(U.S. Army photo by SPC Maria Moy)*

A Town Says Goodbye To Sgt. "Gabe" Green

Story and photo by Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada
Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

Yorktown, Texas (24 Oct 2009) -- Among rolling farmland lies the small town of Yorktown and Saturday it seemed like everybody in town wanted to pay homage to one of its native sons who came home too soon.

Sgt. Anthony Gabriel "Gabe" Green's homecoming was the sad news his family and friends hoped they would never receive because it meant that this brave Soldier had given the ultimate sacrifice for his country.

Lindsay, his too young widow, and his daughters Madison, 3, and Kaydence, 6, bravely greeted people in the church overflowing with family, friends, and Soldiers in uniform wanting to pay their respects - the Patriot Guard Riders forming the honor guard outside.

Maj. John J. Ploch, himself injured in the IED attack that killed Sgt. Green, sat ramrod straight in his wheelchair, his sister Susan keeping a close eye on him because she knew how hard this moment would be for him - yet he insisted to be there for his friend.

Sergeant Green's father Cornell eulogized his son as a dedicated family man and said: "Gabe will always be my 12th man," referring to his son as the twelfth Texas Army National Guard Soldier to be killed in action since 9-11.

Outside the church, people lined the downtown street to be there when the procession made its way to the cemetery. City Hall and both sides of the street were adorned in American Flags for the somber but honorable moment.

People, who may never have known "Gabe" in life, were moved to be there for his final ride down a street he himself had undoubtedly walked or driven many times before.

Sergeant Green deployed to Afghanistan with the Agribusiness Development Team eleven months ago and gave his life helping Afghani farmers to provide better crops to the Afghani people. We pray that one day Afghanistan will be a prosperous country with abundant crops and where violence is a distant memory.



Member of Sgt. Green's hometown wait on the street to bid a final goodbye as the funeral procession passed.



Gold Star Pin Authorized for Wear on Uniform

The Gold Star Lapel Pin has been authorized for wear on the Army green uniform by soldiers who have lost an immediate family member in combat.

While soldiers always have been eligible for the pin, Army regulations have restricted its wear to civilian attire.

Under the recent change in policy, the pin is authorized for wear on the green uniforms of soldiers who have lost a spouse, mother, father, child or step-child to combat.

An interim change to Army Regulation 670-1 (Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms), requires enlisted soldiers to wear the pin centered vertically and horizontally on the left lapel of the green uniform.

Officers should wear the pin centered on the left lapel one-quarter of an inch below their branch insignia.

Gold Star Family Resources

The following websites are resources for Gold Star Families:

<http://www.goldstarmoms.com/>

<http://www.goldstarwives.org/index.htm>

<http://goldstarfamilysupportgroup.com/>

<http://www.goldstardads.org/links.php>

<http://www.taps.org/>

Hometown Hero Laid to Rest: Saying Goodbye to Staff Sgt. Staats

Story by 1st Lt. William C. Willett
536th Brigade Support Battalion

FREDERICKSBURG, Texas-- On Oct. 29, under a cloudless blue sky, the community of Fredericksburg and members of the Texas Army National Guard gathered together to say goodbye to one of their own. Hundreds of people packed the pews of St. Mary's Catholic Church to remember a friend, a brother and a local hero.

On Oct. 16, Staff Sgt Christopher Neil Staats was killed in the Wardak Province in Afghanistan when his vehicle was hit by an improvised explosive device. Sergeant Staats was assigned to the Agricultural Development Team #2 in Afghanistan. The ADT mission is to teach the Afghan people better ways to develop their land for agricultural purposes, including using renewable resources and modern farming methods. With a degree from Texas A&M University in renewable resources, Sergeant Staats was a natural fit for the team.

Sergeant Staats was described by many of his friends and family as a prank-

ster; a genuine man with a big heart. He was said to reach out and touch everyone who he came into contact with. At the visitation service, on Oct. 29, friends and family told stories from Sergeant Staats's life in the small Texas town, from high school football games, to recent hunting trips. Sergeant Staats's love of his family ranch and of his native Texas was evident in every story.

The memorial service was held on the morning of October 30th at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Sergeant Staats's home church and the church he and his wife, Montaigne, were married in 2007. Patriot Guard Riders, at attention with American flags, and local citizens lined the sidewalks in front of the church.

So many people showed up that the church had overflow seating set up in the "old church" next door and a gymnasium across the street.

As everyone filed into the church, those in uniform filled the first three pews. The ranks ranged from Sergeant to Major General, with almost every branch of service repre-

sented. Among those attending the service were the Adjutant General of Texas, Major Gen. Jose S. Mayorga, Brigadier Gen. James K. Brown, and numerous others, including retirees who served with Sergeant Staats.

Monsignor Edna McKenna presided over the Resurrection Mass, charging those in attendance to "live life as Chris did. Reach out to others as Chris did."

"Christopher means Bearer of Christ," said Msgr. McKenna. "Chris lived his life in such a way that he epitomized the meaning of his name."

At the end of the service, those in uniform lined the route from the door of the church to the hearse and formed an honor guard, each holding a salute as Sergeant Staats was brought out by civilian pallbearers.

As the funeral procession left the church for the interment, hundreds of Fredericksburg citizens and those visiting the city lined the streets to honor Sergeant Staats along the route. The entire student body of Fredericksburg High School stood by the road, en masse. Emergency Medical Services and Fire Department personnel from both Fredericksburg and Stonewall, Texas were in attendance with vehicles to honor Sergeant Staats.

Sergeant Staats was

interred in a private ceremony at the Staats family cemetery in Luckenbach, Texas.

Sergeant Staats is survived by his wife Montaigne Staats of Boerne, his parents, Lorna and Gary Eckhardt of Fredericksburg and Bobby Staats of Fredericksburg, a brother and a sister, and various sisters- and brothers-in-law. His smile and presence will be deeply missed and the prayers and thoughts of the Texas Military Forces are with his family and friends.

Below left- Brig. Gen. "Red" Brown present Mrs. Staats with a flag, "on behalf of a grateful nation." (Photo by Sgt. Jennifer Atkinson, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs)

Below center- A final salute is rendered as Staff Sgt. Staats is carried from the church. (Photo by Sgt. Jennifer Atkinson, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs)

Below- "Vintage Chris." (Family photo)



Soldiers Read to Iraqi Children, Visit New School

36th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

Dhi Qar Province, Iraq – Soldiers from the 36th Sustainment Brigade read books and delivered school supplies to Iraqi children at the Al Moa Men School in the Dhi Qar Province on October 5th as part of the ‘Read Iraq’ program.

Lt. Col. Clinton Moyer, the Chief for Civil Military Operations, who extended with the 36th SB after serving a tour here with the 287th SB, has been instrumental in the relations and support given to the local Iraqis.

“Our mission was to go out and meet with Sheik Tayseer of the Al Ghizzie tribe, who runs the water pump that supplies the water onto Contingency Operating Base Adder,” said Colonel Moyer, “and also go into the classroom and do our ‘Read Iraq’ program where we get Soldiers into the classroom to read stories in English to the kids and we also provide them with school supplies.”

For Colonel Moyer this is his 26th ‘Read Iraq’ mission and he thinks it has been very successful. “This is the first one with the 36th. It’s a good program, the kids really enjoy it and it gives the Soldiers an opportunity to get out and see a part of Iraq that they typically don’t see,” said Moyer.

Sgt. 1st Class Belinda Bilder, the Human Resources NCOIC for the 36th Special Troops Battalion, said she felt a little offset at first due to working with an interpreter but once she got into the classroom the children’s faces lit up.

“As soon as I held up the Sponge Bob book they all got excited because they knew who Sponge Bob was,” said Sergeant Bilder, a resident of Copperas Cove, Texas. “Apparently they watch him on TV. They were really excited about hearing a Sponge Bob story.”

Spc. Juan Zamora, a personnel clerk with the 36th STB, was not sure what to expect during the visit but once he started reading Nemo he realized that the kids were receiving the message.

Right- Sgt. Clayton Beaver, 368th Seaport Operations, Fort Story, Virginia hands out school supplies to Iraqi children at the Al Moa Men School in the Dhi Qar Province on Oct 5. (US Army Photo by Sgt. First Class Tad Browning)

“I was excited. Getting outside the wire on the way to the school area, I was a little nervous about the surroundings,” said Specialist Zamora, “Not sure what to do, what not to do. In the back of my mind I was thinking this is really neat, really fun to be here and have this great opportunity to meet with the local national kids.”

Specialist Zamora’s favorite part of the experience was seeing the children’s response to the Nemo story he read.

“The children responded by knowing that it’s important to listen to their parents. When they got that line, that knowledge, they understood what the book was about,” said Specialist Zamora.

The overcrowded classrooms where the Soldiers read were situated in a couple of small buildings made of mud, brick and straw. The doors and windows were almost non-existent and the desks and benches sat unevenly on a dirt floor. Due to the assistance from the Army Corps of Engineers and the 287th Sustainment Brigade for its donations of school supplies, the kids will soon get a new environment to learn in at a schoolhouse built by Iraqis to help improve the Iraqi education system.

“One good thing is that every single thing that we gave those kids today was donated, it came at zero cost to the American taxpayers, it was all donated by

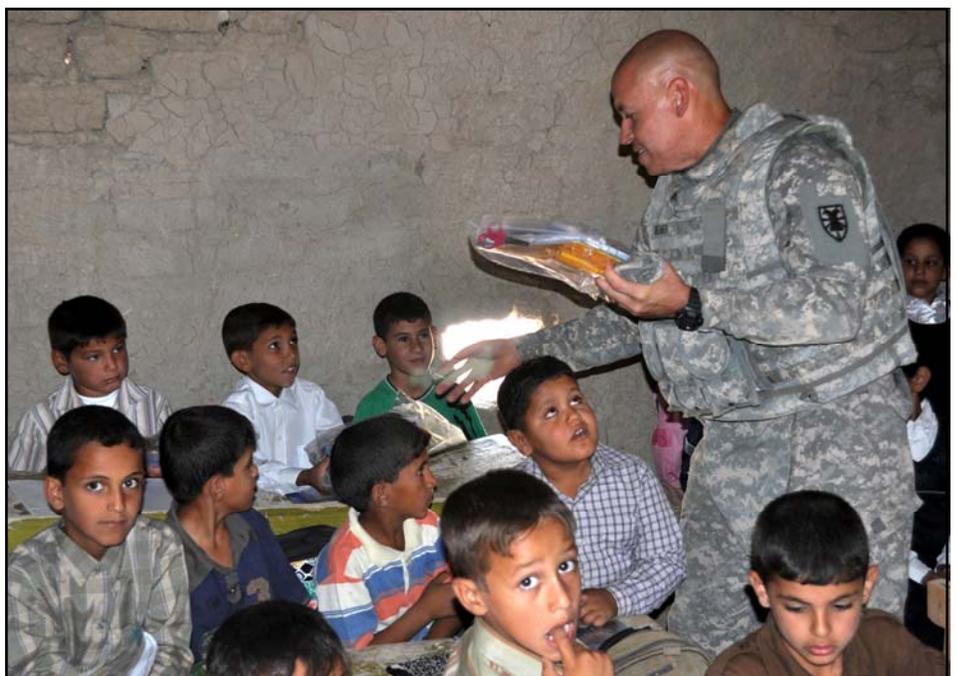
organizations back in Kansas,” said Colonel Moyer. “There is a group in Kansas called ‘Give us hope, help us learn’ run by a retired Col. Gary Lagrange.” A lot of the school supplies being handed out were donated from J. Schiedler Elementary in Topeka, Kansas and Clearwater Middle School, where Colonel Moyer teaches as a civilian.

“They did book drives and they mailed me hundreds of books,” added Colonel Moyer. “I really appreciate the fact that the 36th SB wants to continue these missions. I think they serve two really good purposes. One that US Soldiers are not just people that drive big trucks down the road, but we actually have faces and names and it also gives the Soldiers an opportunity to go out and see a part of Iraq that most of them have never seen.”

The new Iraqi built Al Moa Men School will open soon, and more Soldiers will have the opportunity to read to the children of Iraq and experience their culture.

Sgt. Clayton Beaver, a Soldier with the 368th Seaport Operations Company from Fort Story, Va., handed out school supplies and enjoyed doing public relations work with the Iraqis.

“It was great, it made you realize how lucky we are,” said Sergeant Beaver. “It was really nice seeing some smiles on the kids and seeing the actual environment.”



Voksmarchers "Go the Distance" at 3rd Annual Oktoberfest

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Daniel Griego

100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Revived in Germany as an official sport in the 1960s, the centuries-old tradition of the volksmarch celebrates the new harvest and champions community fitness. Translated as "the people's walk," the volksmarch welcomed all groups of people to come together and celebrate health and life together as a unified population. The neighboring towns of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville could, in turn, think of no better way to collectively celebrate their Oktoberfest than with this iconic tradition.

The flagship event of Camp Swift's annual Oktoberfest, the volksmarch offers participants the opportunity to enjoy nature, new neighbors and fitness together with routes that tour the training areas of the military installation.

"There are three routes," said Chief Warrant Officer James W. Hampton, Oktoberfest project officer. "We have a one mile route for the kids, a 5K and a 10K."

The trails opened up directly following the opening ceremony of this year's third annual festival. Texas Adjutant General Jose S. Mayorga kicked off the event by receiving the ceremonial walking stick from the preceding Airborne/Air Assault demonstration. With staff in hand, he marched directly to the start point of the trail and began his trek around the camp,

with more than a hundred walkers following behind him.

"The volksmarch itself has been something that the entire Texas Military Forces has put on," said Mr. Hampton. "It's not competitive, it's just for fitness."

Participants enjoyed the sharper routes of this year's march after Camp Swift's recent renovations.

"This is her second time," Army Sgt Angela L. Descant said of her daughter after completing the kid's trail. "It's better than it was when she came the first time."

"Last year they came out here and actually cut all these trails," said Mr. Hampton of the new hiking routes at the camp.

Many walkers enjoyed the exercise, despite some lagging in pace. "There were a lot more people walking in front of us," said Jose M. Hernandez, 6.

This year's march also featured the "Tag My Kid" program, wherein children wear pins identifying them as Oktoberfest attendees with their parent's phone number written on the back side in the event they become separated.

"It's good, especially when you have one who wants to run around in the woods or crawl in holes," said Sergeant Descant.

For fitness or for community, the tradition of the volksmarch calls to mind the rich history of fall festivals and our German heritage.

"There's a big German community in Texas and in the military," said Mr. Hampton. "We're using this event to draw together the local areas of Bastrop, Elgin and Smithville and bring them out here to Camp Swift and help offer a better relationship."



Texas Adjutant General Jose S. Mayorga leads the Volksmarch during the third annual Oktoberfest at Camp Swift, near Bastrop, Texas.

Texas Adjutant General Jose S. Mayorga discusses the Volksmarch route prior to departing for the non-competitive walk during the third annual Bastrop Oktoberfest.

143rd LRS Training Demonstration Wows Oktoberfest

**Story and photo by Spc. Jeremy Spires
100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment**

CAMP SWIFT, Texas -- On a cool, crisp, October morning, two UH-60 Black hawk helicopters demonstrated to the local crowd that training can be combined with German and Texas traditions.

Suddenly a door slides open, and four Texas National Guard Soldiers rush out of the belly of the helicopter to take a up a defensive position in the tall, green grass.

They patiently wait for the maelstrom of wind to cease before making their next move. The Soldiers finally get the word to move out, and quickly fall in line. Walking purposefully, the soldier's enter a teeming area full of cheers and applause from both civilians and other military personnel.

The lead Soldier proudly bears a symbolic German walking stick as he moves to the center stage where the Texas Adjutant General, Major General Jose S. Mayorga, waits for him. This exciting air display, culminating in the handing over of the walking stick, marked the opening ceremony of the 3rd Annual Oktoberfest here at Camp Swift, Texas.

The 143rd Long Range Surveillance Detachment out of Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas, wowed the crowd with an impressive display of seasoned paratroopers doing what they do best: floating silently and gracefully in the clear blue sky. Paratroopers from the 143rd spent two months planning the jump, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 James Hampton, event Officer in Charge and coordinator for the jump.

"We have always seen the para-

troopers making their jumps in the distance, but this is the first time we have seen them up close," said Allen Merten, a 60-year-old native of Bastrop.

Next, the soldiers of the 143rd LRS treated the patrons of Oktoberfest to a fast-paced ground insertion. This demonstration started with two AH-64A's flying in a close formation, which quickly shot across the onlookers. Then two UH-60s landed just a few meters from the gate and deposited soldiers, who performed military tactics. Bearing the walking stick, the Soldiers entered the festival area and headed toward the center stage amongst a gathering of people.

"It was so exciting when they flew in and landed. I was actually jumping up and down with excitement," said Judy Merten, wife of Allen Merten.

Once the soldiers of the 143rd LRS completed the mission, the two helicopters circled back around and landed

once again in the open field, allowing the soldiers to re-enter the helicopters before they flew off in a whirling of wind and the beating of rotors into the blue October sky.

At the end of the air demonstrations, a static display of an AH-64A flew by Capt. Stacy Rostorfer of the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade during the air demonstrations was set up for the visitors of the day's events to get a closer look.

"[The AH-64A] is their tax dollars at work and its good for them to see up close what that money is actually being used for," said Captain Rostorfer.

The Oktoberfest allows for the community of Bastrop and surrounding cities to build a closer personal relationship with the military personnel that may live in their areas.

"We have always wanted to observe and interact with the military on a closer level," said Mr. Merten, "and this provides us with the perfect opportunity."



Soldiers from the 143rd Long Range Surveillance Detachment, exit a UH-60 Black Hawk during an air insertion demonstration during the opening ceremonies the 3rd Annual Oktoberfest on October 17, 2009 at Camp Swift located close to Bastrop, Texas.



Interested in helping those who serve?

Find out more at <http://www.uso.org/howtohelp/>

Hayride Excursion at 3rd Annual Oktoberfest

Story and photo by Cadet Micah X. Barnes
100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP SWIFT, Texas—The children laughed and cheered from the hayride as they rode past the military demonstrations. Parents held them close as the simulated artillery rounds fired into oblivion while Soldiers rappelled from dizzying heights. For more than an hour, patrons enjoyed a relaxing journey through operations and exercises by the Texas Army National Guard at this year's Oktoberfest at Camp Swift, near Bastrop TX.

The hayride event, hosted by the 1st Battalion, 136th Regional Training Institute Combat Arms Unit, located on Camp Swift, featured battle simulations, ghillie suits, and exciting freefalls. A new highlight of Oktoberfest, the ride catered well to the youngest of attendees at this year's third annual festival.

The Combat Arms Unit had four different presentations for the attendees, which showed some commonly rehearsed operations from rappelling to reacting to contact in a war-like environment. Staff Sgt Justin Fusik, a Laredo native, said of the event, "I have been in the Guard for the past five years and I believe this is a great way to showcase all of our day to day operations." Each lane showed the functionality of a different branch of the Texas Army National Guard: Infantry, Field Artillery, Cavalry, and Military Police.

Sergeant Fusik comments on the reasoning behind focusing on these four branches. "Seeing these four branches at Oktoberfest does two things: one, it helps make the festival a blast and it also helps the public associate a face with the Texas National Guard."

The field artillery segment of this intense exhibit showed how quickly the unit's fire team could dismount, coordinate, load, and fire the M119 Howitzer. To the amazement of the audience, the fire crew team was able to accomplish all tasks in less than two minutes. After the applause settled from the crowd, a practical application brought to light the reality as to why the team needs to be so highly and effectively proficient at their jobs. Soldiers in combat depend on the team to send fire support when they are in a tough situation.

Next in the excursion, the cavalry scouts displayed their covert abilities as they hid in a field no larger than a basketball court. For the next seven minutes, parents and children alike attempted to view through binoculars and their naked eyes for these well-trained soldiers. Samuel Levi Weyand, a Georgetown native and cadet of the Georgetown High School Junior Regiment Officer Training Course (JROTC) said of the iteration, "Those scouts were superb, we could not even find the one that was ten feet away from the trailer!" Out of the nine soldiers placed in the field, hayriders discovered only three, and only because the scouts were in their Army Combat Uniform without additional camouflage. Further, to the surprise of these onlookers, they completely missed the humvee and Bradley fighting vehicle that were out in the field as well.

Later in the ride, the battalion simulated a convoy op-

eration returning home to a "forward observation base," passing an abandoned housing complex and encountering a roadside bomb. This explosion initiated an enemy ambush attack on the unsuspecting Soldiers, stopping the vehicles and forcing the Soldiers out of their humvees. Once in their defensive positions, they engaged the enemy with a massive firefight. Before vehicle team bounded around the building, they threw smoke canisters into the battlefield to conceal their advancement.

Within mere minutes of the threat's initial ambush, the U.S. troops suppressed and detained the enemy. This Military Police (MP) scenario, demonstrated the mental and physical agility to defend and eradicate an unknown yet fortified enemy through basic battle drills, such as room clearing.

"I never knew this is the kind of thing you could expect do if you were an MP. I thought only infantrymen did those things," said David Rosebaun, a Georgetown native and member of his high school JROTC unit.

The final stop of the hayride brings its riders to a towering edifice, where the long descent has only one way down. The infantrymen of the combat arms unit gave the audience a detailed look into what it takes to rappel off structures of any size. From the standard, more traditional techniques to the intense Aussie jump, the viewers remained mystified throughout the twenty-minute demonstration. The soldiers also showed the difficulty of rappelling with an eighty-five pound rucksack strapped to one's back along with how to stop an out of control jumper.

By the end of the hayride, Oktoberfest participants cheered wildly and called for more from the combat arms unit teams. The demonstrators serviced the crowd with an enlightening look at the Texas Army National Guard and the training necessary to overcome any obstacle thrown in its path. This fan favorite will surely grow as a new staple of Bastrop's annual festival.



A soldier of the 1st Battalion 136th Regional Training Institute Combat Arms located at Camp Swift, is seen jumping off a rappel tower during a demonstration for the 3rd annual Oktoberfest.

What to Know About the Swine Flu and You

Centers for Disease Control

What is 2009 H1N1 (swine flu)?

2009 H1N1 (sometimes called “swine flu”) is a new influenza virus causing illness in people. This new virus was first detected in people in the United States in April 2009. This virus is spreading from person-to-person worldwide, probably in much the same way that regular seasonal influenza viruses spread.

Why is 2009 H1N1 virus sometimes called “swine flu”?

This virus was originally referred to as “swine flu” because laboratory testing showed that many of the genes in this new virus were very similar to influenza viruses that normally occur in pigs (swine) in North America. But further study has shown that this new virus is very different from what normally circulates in North American pigs. It has two genes from flu viruses that normally circulate in pigs in Europe and Asia and bird (avian) genes and human genes. Scientists call this a “quadruple reassortant” virus.

2009 H1N1 Flu in Humans

How does 2009 H1N1 virus spread?

Flu viruses are spread mainly from person to person through coughing or sneezing by people with influenza. Sometimes people may become infected by touching something – such as a surface or object – with flu viruses on it and then touching their mouth or nose.

What are the signs and symptoms of this virus in people?

The symptoms of 2009 H1N1 flu virus in people include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, body aches, headache, chills and fatigue. Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea. People may be infected with the flu, including 2009 H1N1 and have respiratory symptoms without a fever. Severe illnesses and deaths have occurred as a result of illness associated with this virus.

Prevention & Treatment

What can I do to protect myself from getting sick?

This season, there is a seasonal flu vaccine to protect against seasonal flu viruses and a 2009 H1N1 vaccine to protect against the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus. A flu vaccine is the first and most important step in protecting against flu infection. For information about the 2009 H1N1 vaccines, visit H1N1 Flu Vaccination Resources at <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/vaccination/>.

For information about seasonal influenza vaccines, visit Preventing Seasonal Flu With Vaccination at <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/>.

There are also everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause respiratory illnesses like the flu.

Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.

Wash your hands often with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.*

Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.

Try to avoid close contact with sick people.

If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

What is the best way to keep from spreading the virus through coughing or sneezing?

If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.)

Keep away from others as much as possible. Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Put your used tissue in the waste basket. Then, clean your hands, and do so every time you cough or sneeze.

If I have a family member at home who is sick with 2009 H1N1 flu, should I go to work?

Employees who are well but who have an ill family member at home with 2009 H1N1 flu can go to work as usual. These employees should monitor their health every day, and take everyday precautions including covering their coughs and sneezes and washing their hands often with soap and water, especially after they cough or sneeze. If soap and water are not available, they should use an alcohol-based hand rub. If they become ill, they should notify their supervisor and stay home. Employees

who have an underlying medical condition or who are pregnant should call their health care provider for advice, because they might need to receive influenza antiviral drugs.

What is the best technique for washing my hands to avoid getting the flu?

Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs. CDC recommends that when you wash your hands -- with soap and warm water -- that you wash for 15 to 20 seconds. When soap and water are not available, alcohol-based disposable hand wipes or gel sanitizers may be used.. You can find them in most supermarkets and drugstores. If using gel, rub your hands until the gel is dry. The gel doesn't need water to work; the alcohol in it kills the germs on your hands.

What are “emergency warning signs” that should signal anyone to seek medical care urgently?

In children:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Not waking up or not interacting
- Being so irritable that the child does not want to be held
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Fever with a rash

In adults:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Pain or pressure in the chest or abdomen
- Sudden dizziness
- Confusion
- Severe or persistent vomiting

Are there medicines to treat 2009 H1N1 infection?

Yes. These drugs can make you better faster and may also prevent serious complications. This flu season, antiviral drugs are being used mainly to treat people who are very sick, such as people who need to be hospitalized, and to treat sick people who are more likely to get serious flu complications. Your health care provider will decide whether antiviral drugs are needed to treat your illness. If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities. (Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.) Stay away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

Warrant Officers Retire After Decades of Service to Guard

**BY Chief Warrant Officer 5 Earnest E. Metcalf
Texas National Guard Command Chief Warrant Officer**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas— October 7, 2009, marked an important day in Texas Army National Guard History. During the 2nd Annual Texas Army National Warrant Officer Conference, participants were afforded the opportunity to witness the retirement ceremony of three Chief Warrant Officer Five aviators.

What made this event extra special was each has performed over forty years of service to our great nation and the state of Texas. Their experiences are irreplaceable to our organization. All are Vietnam veterans with more than 2800 combat hours and well over 25000 hours total flown during their respective careers.

Chief Warrant Officer Fives, Alvarado, Roberts, and Sampson will be truly missed both in the aviation community and the Texas Army National Guard. They have mentored throughout their careers and will continue to serve as mentors to former superiors, peers, and subordinates throughout our organization.

Chief Warrant 5 Luis Alvarado served as 3rd Command Chief Warrant Officer for the Texas Army National Guard from April 2006 to May 2009. Mr. Alvarado began his military career in May 1969 by joining the active Army to attend Flight School and become an Aviation Warrant officer.

Upon completion of basic training and flight school in June 1970, he performed a one year tour in the Republic of Vietnam as a UH-1 Helicopter Pilot in the 155th and 282nd Assault Helicopter Company. Upon returning from Vietnam, Mr. Alvarado left the active Army and in May 1974 joined the Texas Army National Guard.

He continued service in the Texas Army National Guard in various capacities, some of which included Instructor Pilot and Standardization Instructor Pilot in the OH-58A/C "Kiowa," UH-1H "Iroquois," UH-60 A/L "Blackhawk," and the EH-60A "Blackhawk" and a Maintenance Flight Evaluator in the OH-58A/C, and the UH-1H. Mr. Alvarado is married to Carmen Alvarado and they have four children and four grandchildren.

Chief Warrant Officer 5 Roberts entered the United States Army on 23 July 1968 and attended Basic Training at Ft. Polk, Louisiana. He then went on to Primary Helicopter Training at Ft. Wolters, in Mineral Wells, Texas and completed Advanced Helicopter Training at Fort Rucker, Alabama in June 1969.

In September of 1969 he was assigned to the 498th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) in the Republic of Vietnam and served as a pilot, aircraft commander, and Maintenance Officer in the UH-1H "Huey" helicopter. He flew over 800 hours of combat time and earned eight Air Medals.

Mr. Roberts joined the Texas Army National Guard in June 1971, and over the course of his career performed duties as a UH-1 "Iroquois" and OH-58 "Kiowa" pilot. He attended the transition course to the CH-47 "Chinook" in 1978. In 1986, he was assigned to 1/149th Attack Helicopter Battalion and attended the AH-1 "Cobra" transition course. In 1988 he attended the AH-1 Instructor Pilot Course and the test pilot course. He attended the AH-64 "Apache" transition course in 1990, the Instructor Pilot in 1991 and Test Pilot Course in 1992.

During his service in the Texas National Guard, Mr. Roberts served as a maintenance officer, tactical operations offi-

cer, instructor pilot and standardization instructor pilot.

In December 1997, he was selected and promoted to Chief Warrant Officer 5. He attended the UH-60 "Blackhawk" transition course in 1998. During February 2003, Mr. Roberts deployed with SFOR 13, Task Force Warrior and SFOR 14, Task Force Renegade, to Bosnia Herzegovina in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He completed his deployment and returned from active duty in May 2004. Mr. Roberts concluded his career in Joint Forces Command, Aviation Section performing duties in both aviation safety and standardization.

Mr. Roberts has been married to Susan Roberts for 33 years and they have 3 children.

Mr. Sampson entered the Army at age 18 and attended helicopter flight training in the summer and fall of 1968. His first tour of duty was with the 101st Airborne Division in the Republic of Vietnam flying missions in northern I Corps, the A Shau Valley, and along the Laotian border. Upon his return from overseas Mr. Sampson was assigned to Hunter Army Air Field, Savannah, Ga. and served as a UH-1 test pilot for the remainder of his active duty. During a short separation of military service he worked as a civilian pilot and attended college, after which he resumed his military career joining the Texas Army National Guard in February 1974.

In his 41 year flying career Mr. Sampson has accumulated over 15,000 flight hours with over 1,200 combat and imminent danger flight hours. He has been qualified as an instructor pilot and instrument examiner in seven different helicopters and airplanes. His flights have taken him to North, Central, and South America, Asia, Scandinavia, all parts of Europe, and the Middle East. Among his military awards are the Distinguished Flying Cross, two Bronze Stars, three Meritorious Service Medals, and several Air medals. MR. Sampson is married to Linda Sampson.

Congratulations to these fine Warrant Officers on their retirement, and we thank them for their service. Their presence with the Texas Army National Guard will be sorely missed.



**From L-R— Mr. Alvarado, Mr. Roberts and Mr. Sampson.
(Texas Military Forces Photo.)**

News Briefs

Students Participate in 2009 Annual Red Ribbon Rally

AUSTIN, Texas- (October 15, 2009)-Students traveled to Austin, TX to rally on the steps of the States Capitol in support of Red Ribbon Week. The rally consisted of participants not only from Austin, but from throughout our state. Drug Demand Reduction member Staff Sgt. Scott led a group of students from Delvalle Middle School to the capitol. The event started with students touring the capitol.



Master Sgt. Roy Martinez talks to local students during an annual Red Ribbon Rally. (Photo by Master Sgt. Gerold Gamble)

Tour Guides escorted the students through the halls of the House of Representatives and the Senate Chambers. The Drug Free t-shirts worn by the students were given through the generous support from the Counterdrug Task Force, DEA and the Combined Law Enforcement Association of Texas.

Around noon, a large group of students gathered at the south entrance gate for the march on the capitol. Carrying a large banner and posters with the slogan “2 smart 4 Drugs”, the crowd marched to the capitol with a loud message that could be heard in the capitol and as far as a mile away!

Austin Chief of Police Art Acevedo joined the students and led them in cheer with a strong drug free message. Greg Thrash, DEA Resident Agent-in-Charge Austin Resident office spoke of the history of Red Ribbon Week. Col Tony West, Texas Joint Counterdrug Task Force Commander challenged the students to stay off of drugs and to help keep friends and families drug free.

The event came to an end with a performance by International performer Patsy Torres as students danced on the steps of the capitol. The Red Ribbon became a symbol to eliminate the demand for drugs. This celebration became the annual catalyst to show intolerance for drugs in our schools, work places, and communities.

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Why should I call the Lifeline?

The **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to anyone in suicidal crisis. If you need help, please dial 1-800-273-TALK (8255). You will be routed to the closest possible crisis center in your area. With more than 130 crisis centers across the country, our mission is to provide immediate assistance to anyone seeking mental health services. Call for yourself, or someone you care about. Your call is free and confidential.

Para obtener asistencia en español durante las 24 horas, llame al **1-888-628-9454**.

From immediate suicidal crisis to information about mental health, crisis centers in our network are equipped to take a wide range of calls. Some of the reasons to call 1-800-273-TALK are listed below.

- Call to speak with someone who cares.
- Call if you feel you might be in danger of hurting yourself.
- Call to find referrals to mental health services in your area.
- Call to speak to a crisis worker about someone you're concerned about.

A graphic for the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. It features a green horizontal bar at the top with the word "NATIONAL" in white. Below this, the words "SUICIDE" and "PREVENTION" are written in large, bold, black letters. A green telephone handset icon is integrated into the letter "I" of "SUICIDE". Below "PREVENTION" is another green horizontal bar with the word "LIFELINE" in white, followed by a trademark symbol. Underneath that, the phone number "8 2 5 5" is written in small black text, followed by "I-800-273-TALK" in large, bold, black letters. At the bottom, the website address "www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org" is written in a smaller black font.

This Month in Military History: November

1917-- Texas and Oklahoma guard units assembled at Camp Bowie (Tarrant County) and formed the Thirty-sixth Infantry Division, which went overseas between May and August 1918 and participated in the Meuse-Argonne campaign in October and November. The division suffered 2,584 casualties, including 591 killed in action, before sailing for home in May 1919.

1940- The 36th Infantry Division was activated prior to World War II on 25 November 1940. The 12,526 guardsmen of the 36th Infantry Division reported on November 25, 1940, and returned to Camp Bowie, Texas. It deployed overseas on 2 April 1943, commanded by Fred Walker. The 36th Infantry Division landed in North Africa, 13 April 1943, and trained at Arzew and Rabat. It first saw action, 9 September 1943, when it landed by sea at Paestum on the Gulf of Salerno against intense German opposition. The Germans launched counterattacks on September 12-14, but the 36th repulsed them with the aid of air support and naval gunfire, and advanced slowly, securing the area from Agropoli to Altavilla.

After a brief rest the 36th returned to combat, 15 November. It captured Mount Maggiore, Mount Lungo, and the village of San Pietro despite strong enemy positions and severe winter weather. This grueling campaign was marked by futile attempts to establish a secure bridgehead across the Rapido River, 1 January to 8 February 1944. After assisting the 34th Division in the attack on Cassino and fighting defensively along the Rapido River, the severely depleted 36th withdrew, 12 March 1944, for rest and rehabilitation. On 25 May, the Division was sent by sea to the Anzio bridgehead to take part in Operation Diadem. It drove north to capture Velletri, 1 June, and entered Rome on the 5th. Pushing up from Rome, the 36th encountered sharp resistance at Magliano, but reached Piombino, 26 June, before moving back to Paestum for rest and rehabilitation.

The 56th Cavalry Brigade was federalized on November 18, 1940, with 2,564 guardsmen. Its training site was Fort Clark, Texas. Along with the Thirty-sixth Division was the 111th Observation Squadron, an aviation unit organized in 1923 that formed the basis of the postwar Texas Air National Guard.

BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN C.L. SCRIBNER TEXAS MILITARY FORCES MUSEUM

**BUILDING 6, CAMP MABRY,
AUSTIN, TEXAS**

HOURS OF OPERATION:

WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY—10:00AM TO 4:00 PM

MONDAY AND TUESDAY - CLOSED



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.



A soldier of the 1st Battalion 136th Regional Training Institute Combat Arms located at Camp Swift, is seen bounding off a rappel tower with a eighty five pound rucksack during a demonstration for the third annual Oktoberfest. (Photo by Cadet Micah X. Barnes, 100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)