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**THE** **ISPATCH**  
OCT 2015

THE MAGAZINE OF THE TEXAS MILITARY FORCES



## Gov. Abbott awards Texas Purple Heart



**MEB**  
preps for  
Warfighter

**TXSG**  
trains with  
Brazoria  
County





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## The Cover



Texas Gov. Greg Abbott awards the Texas Purple Heart to Spc. Jose Romo at a ceremony Sept. 24, 2015. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).





Texas Purple Heart ceremony at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Sept. 24, 2015. The Texas National Guardsmen awarded the medal, were deployed with the 1st Squadron, 112th Cavalry Regiment, which was part of the Multinational Force and Observers mission in Egypt, when they received their injuries. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).



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Greg Abbott



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# Halloween

Commentary by U.S. Army MWR Programs

**I**T'S EASY TO GET SCARED on Halloween but equally important to not lose focus on the fun.

Cautious parents are bombarded with all sorts of well-intentioned safety info about possible health and safety risks that accompany this holiday. If one were to heed every suggested precaution, then their kids would end up sitting in the middle of their rooms all evening with no costumes and no candy.

Some suggestions are reasonable – telling people going trick or treating to be careful crossing the street since drivers may not see all the little goblins darting across the streets.

Others may just require a little more effort – searching for hypoallergenic make-up instead of commercial face paint or a bulky mask. Or, rather than banning all candy because of possible contamination risk, simply inspect everyone's haul before the kids dig in.

**F**OOD: The FDA offers a variety of strategies to help kids to have a healthy experience. These include making sure kids eat a snack before heading outside so they just don't eat candy all evening, and not to dig into their bags while walking. Parents should simply throw out anything that looks suspicious, such as a tampered package or something that isn't wrapped well. Homemade candy where you don't know the source also can get pitched.

**S**AFETY: Walking in groups with adults is a smart move, Halloween or not. Kids.gov also offers other suggestions for parents, including adding reflective tape to costumes that will help drivers to see them easier, and giving every child a glow stick or flashlight. If the children are visiting a certain neighborhood or base community, they can also use a map to plot their route.

**P**ARTIES: Some parents may prefer to have all the kids off the streets and in one place, such as a party. The same rules can apply to food – lots of prepackaged candy for all!

(U.S. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Debbie Lockhart)

# Communication: Email Etiquette

Commentary by Col. Michele Voorhees  
TXARNG G1, Director of Personnel



**T**ELL ME YOU haven't received an email and had to struggle reading through the 16 pages of distribution lists to get to the point. Or received an email that generated a need to call the sender....oops, no contact information available.... Or how about this? The "REPLY ALL" syndrome and half your morning is spent weeding through conversations...stymied at how you were on this distribution to begin with.

So, let's talk about a few email etiquette tips, and how to pare your communication down to where it is effective.

First, keep in mind that most leaders have Blackberries. We have done a great job of sending documents such as operations orders or fragmentary orders with a 'Blackberry-friendly' version in the text of the email. Then we send the correspondence to about 250 people and when opened on a Blackberry, a leader has to scroll down for several pages to get to the meat of the conversation.

*TIP #1: Send your email to yourself...and put all the personnel normally on the TO: line on the BCC: line.*

Second, also keep in mind that some people read EVERYTHING sent in an email string. It gets amusing when the original sender sends a task with a specific suspense date...and the next agency forwards the email, and gives an earlier suspense date, and the next agency forwards the original email with an even earlier suspense date, etc. By the time it gets to the action level, the time to respond has grown short, until the action officer looks through the entire string of email and determines when the project is REALLY due.

*TIP #2: Don't just forward emails. Take the time to digest the content, analyze the intent, and either redact the original, or restate the content in your own words with your own direc-*



*tives. Then send to your distribution list (using Tip # 1).*

Third, the REPLY ALL syndrome. If at first, in an attempt to spread the word to all that 'need to know' a distribution list is huge....and a respondent has something to say to a sender, the tendency is to hit 'REPLY ALL'. This starts a string of emails back and forth, involving everybody on the TO: or CC: lines, and can grow annoying to recipients who aren't, nor should not be part of the conversation.

*TIP #3: Don't just REPLY ALL. Take the time to assess who should receive your response, and manually input all of your recipients into the TO: and CC: lines. Then also use TIP #1, and delete out all the distribution lists from the text of the email.*

Fourth, not everybody knows who you are. Not everybody has your contact information. I can't tell you how many emails I receive with absolutely no signature block on them. No problem, just look them up in the Global Address Book....WHAT? No phone number there either?

*TIP: Include a signature block in ALL your emails, whether they are a Reply, Forward, or original Send. Generally a signature block includes your name, rank, unit, duty position, and phone number(s). Short of putting a signature block on your correspondence, at least update your contact information by going to <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/milconnect>. Be sure and click on the MIL tab under the My Profile tab. There, you can update your duty position, unit information, and most importantly, your phone numbers. Oh and HEY Y'ALL! Don't include unnecessary information or quotes in your signature block.*

Well, there you have it. Easy to do, easy to remember, and will make recipients of your email traffic a lot happier. - **FROM THE TOP**

*By 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs Office*

**A**USTIN, TEXAS – Earlier this summer, the Texas Legislature adjourned its 84th session, after considering thousands of bills and resolutions and pushing the ones passed to Gov. Greg Abbott for his approval or veto.

More than 1,000 of those bills have become laws that have gone into effect immediately or on Sept. 1, 2015.

Of those bills, several impact the Texas Military Forces, while others have a more indirect effect on operations, as they apply to all state agencies.

One significant change includes the way military training and experience is considered when applying for employment with state agencies. With Senate Bill 389, service members will be able to apply their military training and experience in lieu of civilian job requirements for state positions. The bill, which went into effect Sept. 1, 2015, requires the state to research and identify the military occupational specialty codes and Air Force specialty codes to correspond with each position contained in the state's position classification plan.

Another notable bill relates to protecting the confidentiality of state military members, protecting personal information, such as name, service dates, state active duty orders, home address, pay rate, pay grade, official title, length of service, medical records, awards and decorations and deployment locations. The bill, House Bill 2152 is further reaching than the current federal guidelines on military personnel records and information, as it protects personal information forever, said Duane Waddill, director of the Texas Military Department.

During this session, legislation was introduced to allow the 36th Infantry Division to have its own state license plate. The law was passed and signed by Abbott. Effective Jan. 1, 2016, HB 923 relates to the issuances of the division license plates and souvenir license plates to those who've served in the division. - **DISPATCH**

(Courtesy photo)

# New Legislation

## **O**THER PERTINENT bills include:

**HB 115** – relating to the criteria for awarding the Texas Purple Heart Medal to members wounded or killed at Fort Hood Nov. 9, 2009. This change allows TXMF members on federal duty to be awarded the state medal, Waddill said.

**HB 577** – relating to pay, benefits and requirements for state active duty service members. This bill also establishes that a service member called to state active duty is still subject to the readiness and fitness qualification of the TXMF, including drug testing.

**HB 1598** – relating to the TXMF oath of affirmation.

**HB 2123** – relating to participation of the state military forces in the state group benefits program. This bill allows TXMF members who are not full-time or part-time employees and have been on state active duty or state training for more than 60 days to participate in the state group benefits program.

**HB 2965** – relating to administrative support positions with TMD. This bill allows the adjutant general to hire TXMF members to fill state military positions with the department.

**HB 2108** – relating to the Cold War Medal for certain members of the military forces who served during the Cold War. This bill expands who can receive the medal.

**HB 2604** – relating to a concealed handgun license application that is submitted by a peace officer or a member of the state military forces.

**SB 850** – relating to a public duty justification for conduct of a service member of TXMF.

**SB 1824** - relating to limitations on awarding the Texas Legislative Medal of Honor.

## **B**ills relating to mental health treatment and programs:

**HB 19** – relating to mental health and preventative services programs for veteran and military families.

**HB 1762** – relating to the creation of a healthcare advocacy program for veterans.

**SB 55** – relating to the creation of a grant program to support community mental healthy programs for veterans with mental illness.

**SB 1304** – relating to the creation of a women veterans mental health initiative within the mental health intervention program for veterans.

**SB 1305** – relating to the creation of a rural veterans mental health initiative within the mental health intervention program for veterans.

**SB 1463** – relating to improving the delivery of healthcare services to veterans in the state.

## **B**ills passed relating to vehicle license plates and driver's licensing include:

**HB 127** – relating to the issuance of specialty license plates to honor recipients of certain military medals.

**HB 168**– relating to privileged parking for Distinguished Flying Cross medal recipients.

**HB 789** – relating to license plates issued to retired members of the military.

**HB 1128** – relating to the issuance Combat Action Badge specialty license plates.

**HB 1273** – relating to certain military specialty license plates.

**HB 1814** – relating to the online renewal of driver's licenses of certain active duty military personnel.

**SB 193** – relating to the issuance of specialty license plates to honor recipients of certain military medals.

**SB 1307** – relating occupational licenses for military services members, military veterans, and military spouses.

**SB 1308** – relating to driver's licenses and personal identification certificates issued to veterans.

# Prepping for **WARFIGHTER**

Story and photo by Sgt. Elizabeth Peña, 136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade Public Affairs Office

**R**OUND ROCK, TEXAS - The Texas Army National Guardsmen with the 136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade serve their state and country with two necessary and complementing missions. Stateside, they help their fellow Texans during emergencies with search and extraction, decontamination and medical triage capabilities. Overseas, they fulfill the Army's mission to fight and win our nation's wars through security and maneuver support operations.

This wartime mission requires extensive preparation and practice to achieve proficiency. Their barometer of success is the Warfighter Exercise, a three-week command and control simulation that tests and evaluates a headquarters' coordination and methods of battle. Although their validation is not until November, the brigade's journey to success begins months in advance, with command post exercises at its home station.

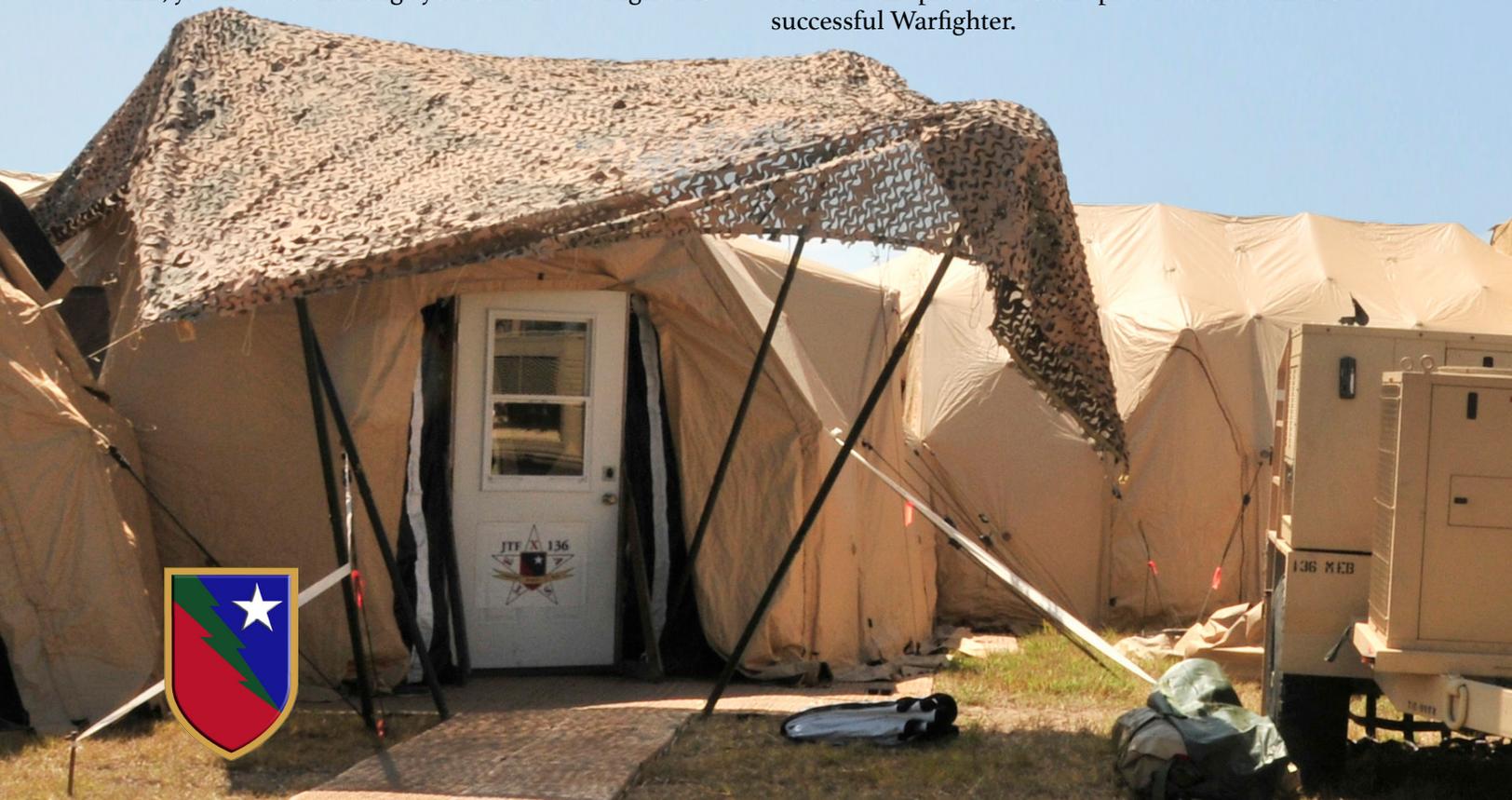
"This allows us to have trained soldiers competent in their tasks and skills with coordinating efforts by other sections throughout the organization," said Chief Warfighter Officer 2 David Esparza, the brigade information services technician. "It takes intensity. To be part of the MEB, you have to challenge yourself and Warfighter is a

challenge we are definitely taking on."

The command post exercises, held in July and September 2015, serve as preparatory rehearsals and proofs of concept for what they'll encounter when they travel to Fort Campbell, Kentucky, in November. The two exercises give the 136th MEB an opportunity to achieve unity of efforts across staff teams by allowing soldiers, officers and enlisted alike, to define their individual roles and responsibilities and gain a better understanding of Warfighter as a whole.

"The feedback that we are getting on some of our products is great," said Capt. Carl Wilson, the brigade's deputy logistics officer. "The collaboration with the advisors and trainers from the 101st will have long-lasting effects not just here and now, but further down the road in Kentucky."

During the second command post exercise, held September 11-13, the guardsmen teamed up with their active-duty counterparts from Fort Hood's 1st Cavalry Division in field services, current operations, fires support, knowledge management and logistics to better understand the procedures and practices that will ensure a successful Warfighter.



“Everyone here wants to be part of a team,” said Esparza. “Anything you want to learn, you will be given opportunities to cross-train. We welcome anyone to come in and see how they can fit in and start working with direction and motivation.”

This is the first Warfighter for the 136th MEB since their deployment in 2012. Although this is not a mobilization, it still requires vast amounts of support, including supplies, maintenance gear and transportation of equipment and soldiers. The logistics section serves as the primary advisor for these tasks.

“Approximately 200 soldiers from the brigade will be participating in Warfighter,” said Wilson, “requiring about 350 cases of MREs and a water buffalo that holds 400 gallons of water. Generators, huvees and LMTVs will be transported to Fort Campbell in late October prior to the main body movement.”

Crucial to mission success, communication support was another key element in learning how best to respond to the demands of a fast-paced, tactical environment. The brigade’s computers, telephones, and other electronic equipment requires 7,000 feet of ethernet cable for the more than 500 different connections.

“We have to monitor networks, communication chan-

nels, information systems and tactical systems,” said Esparza. “It is the architecture we build from the ground up at any location.”

The brigade is no stranger to self-sustaining operations through extensive practice with their Deployable Rapid Assembly Shelter system in isolated areas without infrastructure. This command post exercise demonstrated once more the 136th MEB’s ability to establish a tactical footprint and execute their support mission.

“The way we prepared for this weekend was getting the personnel ready,” said Esparza, “as well as the communication pieces, the logistical support, cables, wires and any other supplies we might need in order to make this happen.”

The guardsmen will complete their final preparations in October before moving out for Fort Campbell. There, they will use the skills, products and battle methods developed at their command post exercises during these summer months to achieve success at their culminating evaluation.

“Without this CPX, we could not perform well in Kentucky,” said Wilson. “I know for a fact they are setting us up for success.” - **136th MEB PAO**



# Emergency Response Partners

Texas State Guardsmen team up with Brazoria County to prepare for a natural emergency

*Story by Warrant Officer Malana Nall, Texas State Guard Public Affairs Office*

**H**OUSTON - In the spirit of cooperation, education and training, the Texas State Guard partnered with the Brazoria County Office of Emergency Management and the Fort Bend community to run a hurricane evacuation and sheltering exercise June 25-28, 2015.

Joint training benefits the Texas State Guard, local city and county emergency management and residents so in the event of a real emergency, everyone will be able to respond effectively and provide assistance to those in need.

Using the armories in Angleton, Rosenberg and Houston as a base of operations, troops first mustered at the Westheimer Armory in Houston, to receive safety and mission briefings before heading to their duty assignments.

Using the Brazoria County All Hazard Response Network, a system similar to the Evacuation and Tracking Network used by the state to track evacuees, soldiers assigned to Angleton conducted mock evacuations of Brazoria County residents, from both the Lake Jackson Civic Center in Lake Jackson and the Pearland Recreation Center in Pearland.

Guardsmen also conducted a mock mass casualty incident at the Lake Jackson Civic Center. Soldiers assigned to the Rosenberg Armory set up a temporary daytime only shelter at the First Assembly of God Church in Rosenberg for residents escaping rising flood waters. The local volunteer organization, Helping Hands, which helped clean homes damaged by the Memorial Day flooding, assisted by acting as evacuees.





As the exercise moved into the third day, the 8th Regiment set up and operated points of distribution on the campus of Alvin Community College in Alvin, and at the Rosenberg Civic Center in Fort Bend County for local residents who were without electricity and in need of food, water and ice.

At the same time, the State Guard engineers used this training as an opportunity to inspect local roads, bridges and levees for damage from the recent rains and river flooding.

Volunteers from Brazoria and Fort Bend counties assisted with the

exercises by becoming role players to enhance the complexity and realism of the training.

“They were very quick to find a solution to the problem.”

A real world event, solar flares disrupted radio communications with the tactical operations center. Command Sgt. Maj. John Marshall, Texas State Guard, immediately assisted with re-establishing communications.

“They were very quick to find a solution to the problem,” said Marshall referring to how his soldiers responded. - **TXSG PAO**



Texas State Guardsmen with 8th Regiment distribute cases of ready-to-eat meals for residents of Brazoria County during a points of distribution exercise at Alvin Community College in Alvin, Texas, June 27, 2015. (Texas State Guard courtesy photos).

# TAKING TO THE SKIES ACHIEVING FIRSTS

## 147th Airmen fly to Latvia to test aircraft

*Story and photos by 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy  
147th Reconnaissance Wing Public Affairs Office*



A 136th Airlift Wing C-130 is parked behind a 147th Reconnaissance Wing MQ-1 Predator after landing at Lielvarde Air Base, Latvia, Sept. 1, 2015.

**L**IELVARDE AIR BASE, LATVIA - The combined efforts of Air National Guardsmen from several states helped execute the first noncombat deployment of the MQ-1 Predator and its first flight in Eastern European airspace.

From mid-August to mid-September, airmen traveled to Latvia for the short deployment. The objectives achieved during the mobilization made the nation the prime option for remotely piloted aircraft operations in the Baltic region, said Lt. Col. Chris Recker, intelligence, surveillance and reconnais-

sance access and interoperability officer for United States Air Forces Europe-Africa.

Planning, airlift and the successful execution of the historical mission included the contributions from the Texas ANG's 147th Reconnaissance Wing, the Michigan National Guard, the Tennessee ANG's 164th Airlift Wing, the Mississippi ANG's Airlift Wing, the TXANG's 136th Airlift Wing and the New York ANG's 105th Airlift Wing.

The deployment was nearly a 100 percent Air National Guard-executed mission, said Col. Stanley

Jones, commander of the 147th Reconnaissance Wing, Texas Air National Guard. From the conception to fly the RPAs at Lielvarde to the coordination, airlift, equipment and personnel, the Air National Guard accomplished nearly all of the efforts to make the mission a success.

The contributions of all the units and agencies involved culminated with the first launch, operation and recovery of the Predator RPA on Sept. 1, 2015, at the Latvian air base.

"This is a really historic day for



“We are doing a lot to strengthen security in the Baltic region,” said Latvian President Raimonds Vejonis.

The Michigan National Guard first conceptualized the idea to use Lielvarde Air Base for RPAs in September 2011 with Latvia’s State Partnership Program partners at the Michigan National Guard. From there, partnerships with the Michigan National Guard and several Latvian agencies, to include the Latvian Civil Aviation Authority, the Latvian National Armed Forces, Air Navigation Service Provider and the Riga Area Control Center helped make the execution of the historic flight possible.

With the flight of the Predator, Latvia became the first nation in Europe to develop nationwide RPA flight procedures with countrywide corridors that tie into special use airspace to de-conflict civilian and military flights, as well as allowing for nationwide use of surveillance capabilities to support a range of government needs, from search

and rescue to firefighting and border control, said Col. James Andrew Roberts, Combat Readiness Training Center commander, Michigan National Guard.

The mission not only included an exchange with Latvian armed forces on RPA operations, but troops from Lithuania and Estonia also participated in the training mission to familiarize with air traffic management with MQ-1 operations, supporting one of the ERI’s objectives.

“The ERI is an important piece in European security,” echoed Lt. Gen. Raimonds Graube, the Latvian chief of defense.

The ERI demonstrates the steadfast commitment of the U.S. its NATO and European partners through a persistent, rotational presence of U.S. forces and by increasing the responsiveness of U.S. forces to contingencies in Central Europe. - **147th RW PAO**

Latvia,” said Latvia’s defense minister, Raimonds Bergmanis. “It’s the first time this system has been deployed in Europe, and I’m really proud that Latvia is hosting this aircraft.”

In addition to meeting objectives from the Michigan National Guard, the 147th and USAFE, the deployment was in direct support of the European Reassurance Initiative.

The ERI is a president-directed, congressionally-approved funding effort to bolster the security and capacity of the United States’ NATO partners.



# TEXAS Purple Heart



Texas Gov. Greg Abbott joins Maj. Gen. William "Len" Smith, left, Deputy Adjutant General and Commander of the Texas Army National Guard, Sgt. Michael Cantu, Spc. James Burkett, Spc. Jose Romo, Staff Sgt. Guadalupe Chapa and Col. Mark Swofford, Chief of Staff, Brooke Army Medical Center, for a group photo. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. 1st Class Malcolm McClendon).



**S**AN ANTONIO - Family, friends and guests joined Gov. Gregg Abbott as he recognized the service and sacrifice of four Texas Army National Guardsmen at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC) in San Antonio, Sept. 24, 2015.

Gov. Abbott awarded the soldiers the Texas Purple Heart Medal for wounds received from a roadside bomb while on deployment with the 1st Squadron, 112th Cavalry Regiment, as part of the Multinational Force and Observers mission in Egypt.

“On behalf of the State of Texas, I express my sincerest gratitude to these soldiers and to all of the brave men and women who have served our country, worn the uniform with honor and who have courageously placed themselves in harm’s way on our behalf,” Abbott said.

The Texas guardsmen are currently recovering at BAMC. - **DISPATCH**

*For more photos of the event, [click here.](#)*

Texas Purple Heart

**H**OUSTON – Col. Richard Noriega, Assistant Division Commander for Support of the 36th Infantry Division, was promoted to the rank of Brigadier General during a ceremony Sept. 26, 2015.

The Commander of the Texas Army National Guard, Maj. Gen. William “Len” Smith, promoted Noriega to the one-star rank in the shadow of the San Jacinto Monument with many friends, family members and colleagues present.

After enlisting as a private in the Army Reserves, Noriega received his Army Commission in 1984 through the University of Houston Reserve Officers Training Corps.

Over the course of his military career, he has deployed to Afghanistan and along the Texas-Mexico border during Operation Jump Start. He has also commanded units at the platoon, company, battalion and brigade levels, most recently serving as the commander of the 71st Theater Information Operations Group. He is now responsible for all support activity within the 36th Infantry Division.

On the civilian side, Noriega is the President and Chief Executive Officer of AVANCE, Inc., a non-profit organization that offers early childhood education, parenting and comprehensive family services to families. Noriega also served five terms representing District 145 in the Texas State House of Representatives from 1999 to 2009.

During the ceremony, Noriega thanked the friends,

family and his colleagues that were in attendance, and recognized his 3rd grade teacher, who was also present for the promotion.

Noriega, born and raised in Houston, said, “With this rank comes a responsibility to talk to young soldiers and ensure they know that if they work really hard, they can have opportunity and achieve their dreams.”

“He’s achieved a lot of things that we knew he’d be able to do, and he strives to provide the best opportunity for those coming up behind him,” said Maj. Gen. Les Simpson, commanding general of the 36th Infantry Division.

“I appreciate your hard work in all you do, and look forward to serving with you over the years,” Simpson said.

The event was family-focused with his mother Tommie placing the new shoulder boards upon his uniform and his sons presenting him with traditional gifts: Ricky Noriega gave him with the signature General Officer Belt with brass buckle and Alex Noriega unfurled a red flag with a white star, symbolizing the new rank.

I want to dedicate this day to the rock of our family, my mother, who celebrated her 84th birthday this week,” Noriega said. “My mother was the drill sergeant in the house, and she embraced it. Mom, this day is for you.”

**- 36th ID PAO**



Alex Noriega, right, presents Brig. Gen. Richard Noriega, left, with the traditional one-star flag, assisted by Capt. Ben Cline.



# HOUSTON NATIVE PINS STAR

Story and photos by  
Maj. Randall Stillinger  
36th Infantry Division Public  
Affairs Office



**MY MOTHER WAS THE DRILL  
SERGEANT IN THE HOUSE,  
AND SHE EMBRACED IT.  
MOM, THIS DAY IS FOR YOU.**

Tommie Noriega, left and Melissa Noriega, right with Brig. Gen. Richard Noriega in the shadow of the San Jacinto Battle Monument in Houston.



# WHAT DO YOU WANT?



**REAL  
Guidance**

Courtney J. Lynch, PhD, LCSW  
and Tracy K. Ward, M.Ed. LPC

(Courtesy photo)

*“You can’t always get what you want  
But if you try sometimes you might find  
You get what you need...”  
-Rolling Stones*

**T**he Rolling Stones’ lyrics offer some very wise advice. Indeed, you don’t always get what you want but, as the song says, you might get what you need if you try. Have you ever noticed it seems easier to say or imply what you don’t want instead of stating what you do want?

**Consider the following examples:**

*Person 1: Babe, what do you want for dinner?  
Person 2: I don’t know, but I don’t want hamburgers.*

*Person 1: What do you want to watch on TV?  
Person 2: Anything but sports.  
Person 1: What do you want to do this weekend?*

*Person 2: I don’t care.  
Person 1: What do you want from me?  
Person 2: I don’t want to argue.*

*Person 1: What do you want to change?  
Person 2: I don’t want to be sick.*

**Why do most of us find it difficult to state what we want?**

Perhaps we are afraid we won’t get what we ask for and risk feeling disappointed. True, there is a chance you may be disappointed. However, you have a better chance of getting what you want if you state it clearly and directly, rather than leaving it open to chance that the other person will ‘guess’ correctly.

Perhaps we don’t want to appear selfish, demanding, or impolite. This depends on your tone. Assertive does not equal aggressive. Assertiveness is advocating for what you need or want in a confident and self-assured manner.

Assertive communication is not aggressive or demanding. Perhaps we are apprehensive or fearful of getting a negative reaction or response from others. Remember, you are responsible for delivering the message. The other person (not you) is responsible for his or her reaction. Bottom line: each person is responsible for his or her own statements, feelings, responses and reactions. Just as we don't want to leave someone guessing about what we want, we cannot predict or guess what their response will be.

Perhaps stating what you don't want is simply a habit or a pattern. Breaking the "I don't want" habit requires awareness of how you communicate. Notice the next time you are asked what you want. How do you respond? If you respond with "I don't care, I don't know or I don't want", stop and think about what you do want. Now, after pausing, answer the question using the words "I want." Notice if anything changes. Awareness, patience and practice are critical in developing this skill.

**Let's reconsider the previous examples using different language:**

*Person 1: Babe, what do you want for dinner?*

*Person 2: I want blackened salmon.*

*Person 1: Would you settle for baked salmon since blackened salmon makes a mess?*

*Person 2: Sure.*

*Person 1: What do you want to watch on TV?*

*Person 2: I want to watch Big Bang Theory.*

*Person 1: What do you want to do this weekend?*

*Person 2: I want to go to a movie. What do you want?*

*Person 1: I want to go fishing. Let's fish in the morning and go to a movie tonight.*

*Person 1: What do you want from me?*

*Person 2: I want a peaceful household.*

*Person 1: What do you want to change?*

*Person 2: I want to be healthy.*

To recap, be aware of the process of asking for what you want. Notice the words you use and begin to practice using the words "I want..." Communicating what you want in a direct and clear way increases the chances that you will get what you want, eliminates guessing, reduces frustration and opens the door for negotiation. And remember, practice, practice, practice because – "if you try sometimes, you might find you get what you need."

**- REAL Guidance**



(U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. David Miller)



**SSG CURTIS RUST  
RBOT INSTRUCTOR  
2ND REGIMENT  
TEXAS STATE GUARD**



Staff Sgt. Curtis Rust is the lead instructor for the Regional Basic Orientation Training with the 2nd Regiment, Texas State Guard.

“I look for leaders within the trainees to step up and take the lead. These are the guardsmen that will one day take over my job.”

When not looking for tomorrow’s leaders, Rust lives with his family near Waco, Texas and serves as a police officer. - **OUR FORCE**

**OUR FORCE** 



## New Key Leadership Position



### Col. Megan Erickson

- **Role:** Support Director, DOMOPS
- **Experience:** Commissioned in the US Air Force as an Information Management Officer. Deployed as the Chief of Protocol, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, the days following the Khobar Towers bombing. Served in the Force Support (Personnel), Executive Support (Protocol), and Executive Officer fields while on active duty. In 2002, transferred to the Oregon ANG as the Community Manager and Public Affairs Officer. Her next assignment was as Commander of the 173rd Financial Management Squadron and later took command of the 173rd Logistics Readiness Squadron as well as the Deputy Mission Support Group Commander. In 2012 transferred to the 149th Fighter Wing as the Inspector General and transitioned to the Deputy Commander of the 149th Mission Support Group. Assumed the DOMOPS Support Director position in April 2015.
- **Education:** B.A. in Mass Communications from University of North Carolina - Wilmington and a M.B.A. from Embry Riddle.
- **Did you know:** Col. Erickson lives in Garden Ridge with her husband, Col. Leif Erickson and their two kids, five dogs, five koi, a sun conure and a hermit crab.
- **In your words:** I am extremely excited to join the DOMOPS Task Force. It's a tremendous opportunity to support our soldiers, airmen, State guardsmen and civil authorities in protecting the lives and property of Texas.

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