

OrdnanceReports

News updates from around the world



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This publication is produced by the U.S. Army Ordnance Corps Communications Coordinator. The purpose of this publication is to provide professional development information and news about Ordnance units and activities around the world. Direct your correspondence to Ed Starnes at 410-278-2415 (DSN 298-2415), or email edward.starnes@ocs.apg.army.mil.



‘We Got Him’

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Army selects tanker as 13th Sergeant Major of the Army

by Spc. Bill Putnam

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Nov. 19, 2003) — The top enlisted Soldier in Germany was named the 13th sergeant major of the Army Nov. 18.

Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth O. Preston, the command sergeant major of the Germany-based V Corps since April 2001, was selected by the Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee and Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker to succeed Sergeant Major of the Army Jack Tilley.

Tilley is retiring from the Army Jan. 15 after almost 35 years of service.

Preston, who is also serving as the command sergeant major for Combined Joint Task Force 7 in Baghdad, said the announcement was surprising.

"You always assess yourself as being a little more qualified than some and not as qualified as others," Preston said. "I am very excited about the selection and look forward to the challenges ahead."

Tilley said the announcement is an exciting day for the Army and Preston. "He is an outstanding choice to be the 13th SMA," Tilley said. "He brings a great deal of experience to the table and will do great things for the Army."

Preston has served in every leadership position from tank commander to corps command sergeant major since enlisting June 20, 1975.

National Guard maintenance unit called up

by The Associated Press

BLACKSTONE, Va. — Approximately 250 soldiers of a Virginia Army National Guard maintenance company have been called to active duty.

The 3647th Maintenance Company units will enter active federal service at their home armories in Richmond and Blackstone on December 7, Major General Claude Williams, the Adjutant General of Virginia, said in a statement on Sunday. The mobilization will last for up to 18 months, and that could be extended to 24 months.

The Virginia Army National Guard soldiers are currently scheduled to travel to their mobilization station, Camp Atterbury, Indiana, after a short period of duty at their home armories.

Williams declined to say what the final deployment location of the unit may be.

The 3647th Maintenance Company last saw active federal service during World War II.

The unit provides maintenance support for Army ground equipment such as wheel and track vehicles, tanks, armament, and electronic equipment.

As the Army's top enlisted Soldier, Preston will be Schoomaker's chief adviser on enlisted-related matters. He will travel extensively around the world meeting with Soldiers and their families, and observing Army training and operations.

He will testify before Congress on behalf of the Army, and sit on a wide variety of councils and boards that make decisions affecting enlisted Soldiers and their families.

A native of Mount Savage, Md., Preston's first assignment was the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas. In 1978 he went the 3rd Armored Division's 1st Battalion, 33rd Armor Regiment.

After Germany he was an instructor at the Army's Armor School at Fort Knox, Ky. During that time he was on of the first M-1 Abrams trained instructors and master gunners in the Army.

From there he went on to serve as an exchange instructor at the British Army's Royal Armoured Corps Gunnery School.

Following a tour with the 12th Cavalry Regiment, Preston served as the regimental master gunner for the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. He deployed to Kuwait for Operation Positive Force and Provide Comfort.

Following that assignment Preston went to serve at the Noncommissioned Officer's Academy at Fort Knox. Next he was a student at the Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas, and battalion and brigade command sergeant major in the 1st Cavalry at

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220 Fort Jackson Reservists called up / 175th Maintenance Company

by Chuck Crumbo, Columbia (S.C.) State Staff Writer

About 220 soldiers in an Army Reserve unit at Fort Jackson received orders Thursday to report for active duty.

The soldiers, members of the 175th Maintenance Company, are being called up to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and could be sent to Iraq, said a spokesman for the 81st Regional Readiness Command.

Including the 175th, more than 500 Army reservists in five S.C.-based units have been called up. About 800 S.C. Army reservists are on active duty, 300 serving in Iraq.

The 175th, which maintains and repairs Army vehicles and equipment, will report to the Army Reserve Center at Fort Jackson on Dec. 15. It then will move to Fort Stewart, Ga., for more training and preparation for deployment.

Four S.C. Army National Guard units with about 1,000 soldiers also have been alerted that they could be called up for active duty.

The National Guard already has about 2,100 troops on active duty, including 1,200 in Iraq and the Persian Gulf region.

U.S. troops destroy recovered ordnance

by U.S. Army Spc. Kelly Hunt, 4th Public Affairs Detachment

BAGRAM, Afghanistan, Nov. 11, 2003 — Troops supporting Operation Enduring Freedom looked toward the horizon as the enormous blast transformed the sky into the backdrop for a firework's show.

More than 2,300 pounds of hazardous ordnance was destroyed Saturday morning through the combined efforts of troops from the 441st Ordnance Battalion (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), 797th Ordnance Company (Explosive Ordnance Disposal), Estonian Explosive Ordnance Disposal and the 3rd Special Forces Group who all came together for the first time to rid the area of the potentially harmful material.

"We destroyed 57 millimeter rockets that we recovered, 107 millimeter rockets and a bunch of Air Force (material) that had expired (that) they wanted to get rid of," said Staff Sgt. Barry Peterson.

The majority of the assorted ordnance was recovered during a buy-back mission, he said. This is when hazardous items are voluntarily given to the troops. The remainder of the inventory was recovered from the Bagram area.

Normally, troops from the 797th Ordnance Company make the "explosive" trip out of the Bagram gate once a month to destroy material such as this, but lately, they've had to make that adventure a more regular event.

"We've recovered a lot here (in) Bagram," said Peterson. "This is the fourth (trip) since the first of October.

"We've seen a lot of it lately," he said. "(We're just) trying to get rid of this stuff."

Some of the inventory destroyed during this mission were weapons that could have been used against coalition troops

and fired on anybody. Some were the same type of explosives used on attacks on Bagram Air Base and other firebases, he said.

Getting rid of the hazardous materials like these helps to prevent those attacks from happening again, Peterson added.

The intense explosion was a result of a skillful crew and 15 cases of C4, but the real thrill was combining troops who do this type of mission frequently with a group of soldiers who never have and having it come out a complete success.

"They were a lot of help and they had fun," said Peterson about the 3rd Special Forces Group soldiers. "They learned about (things) that they don't usually do (and) they got to work with explosives."

Explosive ordnance disposal personnel were thankful for the additional hands and enthusiasm from the Special Forces crew who was there every step of the way, learning the ropes and even discovering the key to safely preparing a blasting cap.

"That was the first time they had touched them," said Peterson after the mission was complete and the debris had settled. "Everybody worked hard, we made our timeline (and) I thought it went well," he said.

Army selects tanker as 13th Sergeant Major of the Army continued

Fort Hood. While at Fort Hood he deployed to Bosnia for a year

After Bosnia he served as the 1st Armored Division's command sergeant major.

In April 2001 he moved on to serve as the V Corps' top enlisted soldier. In February he deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Preston and his wife, Karen, have three children, Valerie, Kenneth and Michael.



Ordnance sergeant is Camp Speicher's jack-of-all-trades

by Jason Chudy, Stars and Stripes

CAMP SPEICHER, Iraq — Words can't describe how much the 404th Aviation Support Battalion has come to depend on Staff Sgt. Robert Fries.

Names will do.

"He's my 'Tim the Tool Man' and my Bob Vila, and also my Rembrandt and my Picasso," said battalion commander Lt. Col. Allan Evans.

Fries has helped build a more livable life at the 404th's battalion area, located around a couple of hardened concrete bunkers on Camp Speicher's far northwest side.

The 18-year Army veteran's military occupational specialty is utilities equipment repairer, but at Speicher he's doing more building, painting and creating than repairing. His tools range from plywood and paint to DVDs and digital cameras.

The results can be seen in the handmade hot showers in the battalion living areas, in the 4th Infantry Division logos painted on the aircraft runways and at the base's front gate, and in the personalized DVDs he either gives to soldiers transferring from the unit or sends to the unit's family support group at Fort Hood, Texas.

"I'm the Renaissance man for the battalion," Fries said.

Fries originally enlisted in the mid-1970s and served in Korea as a medic. While assigned to an Army hospital at Yongsan, South Korea, he painted Disney murals in the pediatric wards and nurseries, earning a reputation for painting that's followed him throughout his career.

He left active duty after a few years, remained in the Reserves, then returned to active duty in time for the first Gulf War. There, he served with the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment as a courier in the Iraqi



Staff Sgt. Robert Fries

desert as the allies made their push north from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Fries transferred to the 404th in 1999 and returned to Iraq this year with the unit's seemingly safe headquarters and supply company. However, his position as jack-of-all-trades means he regularly travels into nearby Tikrit to shop for the battalion.

"I've been RPG'd twice, IED'd twice, and told to get out of town by the infantry two or three times," he said.

But getting attacked by rocket-propelled grenades and improvised explosive devices is all in a day's work for Fries, for whom no challenge is too great.

"The phrase is 'a jack-of-all-trades, master-of- none,'" Evans pointed out. "[But] he masters everything he does. He's an electrician, he's a carpenter, he's a painter."

Whatever Evans can dream up for the battalion — however unusual or seemingly unavailable — Fries seems to come through.

For example, all of the battalion's soldiers are getting holiday greeting cards personalized with their photographs to send out this season. Fries purchased the cards, is photographing all the battalion's soldiers and will be printing out each individual card.

Every soldier transferring from the unit or getting out of the Army gets a personalized DVD. Fries gives them the battalion's video camera, allows them to tape up to 30 minutes of whatever or whomever they want, then edits it into a DVD — complete with music — to take with them as they leave.

It's all part of making life a little better for the battalion soldiers.

"In every unit you have your Sergeant Fries — the one guy who just does a little bit of everything," Evans said.

"If they don't, they should."



Spc. Eric Buffington, from 3rd Brigade, the Army's first Stryker Brigade, helps General Dynamics contractors at Camp Udairi, Kuwait, install slat armor onto Strykers for added protection against rocket-propelled grenade attacks as the vehicles are prepared for deployment to Iraq. Photo by Alan Lessig / Military Times staff.

Army explosive experts dispose old ordnance with a blast

by Staff Sgt. Nate Orme, Public Affairs NCO for the 3rd Personnel Command (EOD)

UDAIRI RANGE, Kuwait—With a loud blast heard for miles around, soldiers of the 62nd Explosive Ordnance and Disposal Company blew up an assortment of expired or damaged ordnance again Nov. 21, a near weekly routine for this unit tasked with the ongoing mission.

To prepare for the controlled detonation, the 62nd soldiers left Camp Arifjan at 4:00 a.m. and headed about two hours north to the sprawling, flat desert area known as Udairi Range, about 20 miles southwest of Camp Udairi near the Kuwaiti border with Iraqi. Assisting the 62nd were two drivers from the 321st Ordnance Battalion, an Army Reserve unit from Charleston, W.V. The 321st supplied the mission with a truck and forklift necessary to haul the 20,000 pounds of ordnance which contained more than 2200 pounds of explosives.

The load this particular mission included 230 fragment grenades, about 500 infrared smoke grenades and four Multiple Launch Rocket System pods, each filled with six 15-foot missiles. The explosives, called UXO, for unexploded ordnance, were deemed unserviceable for various reasons, said Capt. Brett Kryway, commander of the 62nd EOD, the only active duty Army unit based at Tooele Army Depot in Tooele, Utah.

“This UXO is either damaged in some way that it can’t be placed in its intended combat system or it has passed its expiration date,” Kryway said. “Rather than try to repair them or send them back, it is safer to destroy them here.”

Using the forklift, 321st soldiers unloaded the UXO and placed it



Soldiers of the 321st Ordnance Battalion unload soon-to-be demolished unexploded ordnance at Udairi Range in Kuwait.

on a patch of desert. Then 62nd soldiers led the way, first filling up the frame of the missile pods with the smaller, loose ordnance, and then packing plastic explosives strategically around the frame. Finally, they carefully attached detonation cord leads, making sure the cords were straight so the detonation wave, traveling more than 23,000 feet per second, would not blow out the side of the cord.

“We have to orchestrate (the blast) so everything goes off with no “kickouts” (unexploded ordnance that is thrown clear of the blast without being destroyed properly),” Kryway said. “There

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Joshva Bohannas, with the 4th Infantry Division, prepares a rocket for explosion outside Tikrit, Iraq, on Saturday. Soldiers found hundreds of rockets and missiles at the insurgents’ area and destroyed them. AP photo by Efrem Lukatsky.



Army explosive experts dispose old ordnance with a blast continued

is a lot of work that goes into planning this. There are certain precautions that we need to take on how to destroy each item.”

Missions for the 62nd during Operation Iraqi Freedom have been many and varied.

“We’re tasked with a force protection mission for the services in Kuwait. Specifically, we’re tasked with destroying UXO,” Kryway said. “We sweep the range regularly for hazards so that units can do their missions. We handle suspect packages and evaluate items found in amnesty boxes, such as ammunition, to determine whether it is safe or not. If you find a hazardous item, give us a call and we’ll take care of it.” (EOD in Kuwait can be reached at DSN 438-5117)

In addition to the group in Kuwait, the EOD company has personnel in Qatar and Saudi Arabia. The company works in teams of two, or occasionally a three-man “heavy” team, and keeps its skill set high through real-world missions.

“A decision was made to switch people around in theater so everybody can get a diverse mission rather than doing the same thing all the time,” said Sgt. 1st Class Donald Perry, coordinator for the recent detonation.

Coordination of people and equipment makes up a major part of preparing for a detonation, said Perry.

“My main job this mission was to make sure all the ammunition was prepped, the trucks were fueled, and they had the right “demo” (demolition charges) and enough “det” (detonation cord,” Perry said.

After about three hours of preparing the “shot,” EOD lingo for UXO ready for demolition, the EOD crew moved to high ground

about a mile away. After a short countdown, Sgt. Jason Barth pressed a button on a wireless remote control, blasting the pile into harmless fragments and sending a tower of smoke high into the sky. Just to make sure though, EOD soldiers returned to the scorched-earth site to ensure no UXO was kicked out. Nothing was—another perfect detonation.

Despite being as much of a blast as it sounds, currently, the EOD specialist field is critically short of soldiers, said Staff Sgt. Class Tony Wilson, team leader of the recent demolition.

“E5s (sergeants) with less than one year in grade have the ability to re-class or reenlist for EOD. It is a valuable career field on the outside as well,” Wilson said, adding, “It’s a rewarding job. EOD is a small community. We see a lot of different places and support everyone from Infantry to the secret service.”

The 62nd expects to return home later next month, after serving eight months in theater.



A soldier from the 321st Ordnance Battalion helps the 62nd EOD prepare unexploded ordnance for demolition at Udairi Range in Kuwait.



A 1st Armored Division explosives ordnance disposal (EOD) expert inspects an overturned cart with a rocket launcher Friday, Nov. 21, outside the Palestine hotel in Baghdad. At least six rockets slammed into the Palestine and Sheraton hotels in downtown Baghdad on Friday morning, causing limited damage to the buildings that house many U.S. workers and foreign journalists. AP photo by Dusan Vranic.

Saddam was ‘disoriented, bewildered’ when captured

by Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14, 2003 - Saddam Hussein had been living in “two small rooms in an adobe hut” and seemed disoriented and bewildered when captured by U.S. soldiers, the general in command of those soldiers said today.

Army Maj. Gen Ray Odierno, commander of the 4th Infantry Division, during a briefing from Iraq shortly after 11 a.m. EST, described the area in which Saddam was caught.

The small compound near the village of Adwar is about 15 miles southeast of Saddam’s hometown of Tikrit, which generally is considered the seat of resistance in the country. The immediate area contained two farmhouses, a farmer’s field, a sheep pen, and a hut in the middle where Saddam was hiding. It was close to the Tigris River, and soldiers found boats nearby, Odierno said.

The bedroom of the two-room hut contained one chair, one bed and “lots of clothes strewn all over the place,” Odierno said. A rudimentary kitchen had a sink with running water and an area to cook in.

The hole Saddam was found in was nearby. Odierno said the opening was covered by a Styrofoam insert and a rug, which were then covered with dirt. The inside was “extremely small, (with) not a lot of space to move around.”

Saddam had a pistol on him, which he never used, and \$750,000 in U.S. currency was found in the hut. Two other people were captured at the compound. Odierno said the other two were not in the hole with Saddam and tried to run when coalition forces arrived. They were later captured when the soldiers cordoned off an area of about two square kilometers.

The general said he thought it ironic that palaces from the former regime were nearly in sight across the Tigris River. “I think it’s rather ironic that he was in a hole in the ground across the river from these great palaces that he’s built where he robbed all the money from the Iraqi people,” Odierno said.

Saddam was disoriented as he came out of the hole, and said very little to the soldiers who detained him. Odierno said he was taken south to higher headquarters via helicopter within an hour after being captured. He gave no further details on where Saddam in being held, other than to say he is in U.S. military custody.

The soldiers who captured him were “very excited” once they realized who they were dealing with, but continued to act in a professional manner, Odierno said. The general explained that the 600 soldiers involved in the operation likely only knew they were going after a high-value target beforehand. Most probably had no

idea who had been captured until after the operation was complete.

There were no cell phones or communications devices found in the area Saddam had been hiding, leading Odierno to conclude the former Iraqi dictator had not been running insurgency operations himself. “I know he wasn’t coordinating the entire effort, because I believe it’s not coordinated nationally, and I don’t think it ever was,” the general said. “I believe there’s some local and regional coordination that goes on. I think he was there more for moral support, and I don’t think he was coordinating the entire effort.”



Senior U.S. and other coalition officials have said repeatedly that they believe Saddam was regularly moving to new locations. Odierno is on the record as saying he believed the former dictator was moving as often as every three of four hours. His capture at this location seems to confirm those theories. Odierno said coalition troops had been in this area and even down this road before. The fact that soldiers found new clothing still in the

wrappers in the compound also suggests that Saddam had not been there long, the general explained.

“My guess would be that he has probably 20-30 of these all around the country that he moves around,” Odierno said. “And I believe he moved probably to several locations such as this. I’m assuming we’ll find out once we get more information from him.”

Odierno also said he believes Saddam had been moving in an area he called “the former regime element triangle” — in between Kirkuk, Baqubah, and Tikrit — and he hopes Saddam’s capture will lead to even more intelligence information being collected.

“In the past when we’ve picked up people of importance, we’ve noticed that we’ve always had an influx of more intelligence,” he said. “So I’m hoping that’s what’ll occur here and help us capture the other individuals that are involved in this ... insurgency.”

The intelligence that led to this raid was a combination of information collected in both the long and short term. Since 4th Infantry Division soldiers arrived in the Tikrit area in April, intelligence officials have been working to gather information on Saddam and other officials.

“What we realized early on in the summer was that we believed the people we had to get to were the mid-level individuals, his bodyguards and other individuals who we knew were close to him,” Odierno said. “In addition, ... we tried to work through family and tribal ties who might have been close to Saddam Hussein.

“As we continued to conduct raids and capture people, we got more and more information on the families that were somewhat close to Saddam Hussein,” the general continued. “Over the last 10 days or so, we brought in about five or 10 members of these families, who then were able to give us even more information. And finally we got the ultimate information from one of these individuals.”

NCO Academy members serve community project

Students think it's cool to have soldiers at carnival

by Sandy Riebeling, Redstone Rocket

Calling bingo numbers, pouring sodas, helping children with carnival games. Perhaps not the hair-raising excitement these explosive ordnance disposal soldiers are used to but for the students and community they served, it certainly left an impression.

"These guys are great," Shari Watson, Owens Elementary PTO vice president, said while visiting with the soldiers after the Harvest Festival at Owens Nov. 1. "This is our biggest fund-raiser of the year. Having them here was terrific. The kids loved it. Their eyes lit up when they saw the soldiers. And it was great having the extra help. We can't thank them enough."

The 15 EOD soldiers of Advanced NCO Academy class 431-55D40-002-04 plus small group leader SFC Lonnie Havens, arrived early at the school to assist with last minute preparations, worked games and activities throughout the evening and then stayed late to get the school back in order for Monday morning classes.

"They were so very polite and helpful," Ann Robinson, second-grade teacher at Owens, said. "It was good for the community to be able to interact with the soldiers in this kind of environment. It was good for the kids to see the soldiers showing an interest in them. And it gave us all a chance to say thank you to a soldier in person for what they're doing out there in the world."

The soldiers arrived at Redstone Oct. 13 and will graduate Nov. 14. Part of their training at the NCO Academy includes participation in a community project. Havens said they had a choice of several events but decided on this one because, "it was the best choice for us. We had a great time."

"It was good to see everybody having fun. They started to get carried away with the face painting," said SFC Mike Benton, who spent much of his time with a brush in hand. Benton, in the Army 12 years, has a wife, Melissa, and two sons, who are at his home station, Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M.

"For some reason, the kids thought it was more fun to hit me with the bean bags than the holes on the ghost," SFC Dean Smith said with a smile.

The other Smith, SFC Joseph Smith, spent his time helping with the 3-point shootout basketball game in the gym. "I had a great time out there. It was very competitive. The guy with my last name won it."

Smith plays in the over 30 league at his home station, Eglin Air Force Base, Fla, where his wife Darlene, and their 10-year-old son, Dillon, await his return. "They (his family) went to a carnival last night."

Many parents spoke of the positive influence the soldiers' presence had on the event. "I think everything was calmer," parent Ginger King said. "Having them in the hallways made everyone behave a little better. I think the parents who worked with the soldiers had a great time, too."

"My son thought it was so cool to have the soldiers," said parent and teacher Marla Williams. "His eyes were so big looking up at them. He was in awe."

Army recognizes military families

Clippers tour the country, meeting new friends

by Sandy Riebeling, Redstone Rocket staff writer

Traditionally the week of Thanksgiving is celebrated as Military Family Appreciation week, a time to highlight the sacrifices of the family behind the soldier. A time to say thanks to the people who live on the military merry-go-round of constant change and little control because that's what a soldier must do.

"For us, being in the military is an honor," said Julie Clippinger, wife of WO 1 Donald Clippinger of Headquarters and Alpha Company, 59th Ordnance Brigade. "We love it. Yes, there are some sacrifices that have to be made, not everything is perfect but Army life has been great for us. The kids even like moving from place to place. We've gotten to see and do so much more than most people because of the Army."

After just a few minutes of talking with the family, it's easy to see that this silver-lining attitude isn't an act or a rehearsed politically correct response to questions about being a military family. Nor is it naivety. Julie grew up the daughter of a career Navy father. It was a family decision when Donald enlisted in 1993; and they are convinced it was the right thing to do.

The Clippingers were married five years before they joined the Army. "I had my own business," Donald said. "I worked all the time - six days a week. I was up and gone before the kids were up and home late every day. There was Sunday but half of that is spent in church. We didn't have any real family time. Julie worked, too."

When the business closed, Donald spent six months looking for work before he and Julie talked to the Army recruiter. "I didn't know if it was something we'd stay with," Donald said. "But once I was in, I liked it. The family liked it. We realized we had more time together with me being in the Army than what we had as civilians."

In the past 10 years, the Clippingers have spent about equal time among three duty stations: Fort Stewart, Ga., Fort Lewis, Wash., and Redstone. While stationed at Fort Lewis, Donald spent a year deployed to Johnson Island in the Pacific for chemical weapons demilitarization.

"Every time we move, we make it a family vacation," Julie said. "The kids and I have seen all but 14 states in the United States. We've

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Clippers tour the country, meeting new friends continued

seen the Grand Canyon, Mount Rushmore. Sometimes kids will ask our children if we're rich because they've gone all these different places. They just say, 'No, we're military.' We've been wanting to go overseas but that hasn't happened yet."

"When I came into the Army as an ammo tech I was told I'd never get promoted because there were so many of us," Donald said. "But I did. I made E-5, then E-6 then E-7 in less than 10 years. I guess it just proves that if you give something your best and stay with it long enough, you'll get promoted."

The Clippers, with their three children, Kristen, 8, Matthew, 12, and James, 14, arrived at Redstone in 2000. Donald was an instructor before a two-year stint as a drill sergeant.

"That was probably the hardest, for me and the family," Donald said. "Even though you get extra pay, it's not really a benefit because you end up spending all that on expenses that come up because of the job. The hours are long. I don't regret it. I'm proud that I was a drill sergeant. Soldiers remember their drill sergeants, even 20 or 30 years later. I've gotten letters from some of my soldiers. I also got feedback from commanders. They'll let you know if you're sending out quality."

The decision to stay in the Army and go to warrant officer school was again, a family decision. There were concerns, especially with the war in Iraq but they are military all the way. Donald finished his school in September and is now going through the warrant officers basic course here.

In January, he'll ship out to Korea for a one-year tour.

The family will stay busy with volunteer work. Julie works at Wal-Mart part time but still finds the energy to serve as an instructor with Army Family Team Building, the mayor for her housing area and as a member of the Enlisted Spouses Club.

"I've learned so much from spending time with other spouses, right from the start," she said. "I learned from their experiences. And having their support - it's like having another family. It's one of the reasons we do so much volunteering. There was someone there for me when I needed it. And they still are. So I want to be around to help other people with what I've learned."

Volunteer work is another way to get in some quality family time. "The kids help me with a lot of the things I do. I think it teaches them, too, about giving to others."

Julie and Donald say that the Army has taught their children many

things. "They make friends quicker," Julie said. "Once they get to a new place, their first goal is to get out and make a friend. They learn to cherish friendships because they never know when one of them will have to move on."

Giving their children a worldview is another benefit. "Even though we haven't had a chance to go overseas yet, they've seen a lot of different cultures right here in America," Donald said. "They've learned to accept all people. Race, religion, money * that stuff isn't important to them when they make friends. In our world, there's one color * green."

The Clippers say that Army life and its uncertainties help build stronger bonds among the family and at the same time, teaches them self-reliance. Having strong faith and a solid church family is also important.

Even though they focus on the positives of military life, Julie and Donald each have opinions about needed improvements. Julie's biggest gripe would be with the health care system. "We don't have enough specialists in this area and you have to wait so long and get through so much paperwork to get medical attention. That needs to be fixed, I think."

For Donald, it's the overall operational tempo for active duty soldiers and the Reserves and National Guard called to active duty, especially since the war in Iraq.

"Congress, the people, need to fund more active duty personnel," he said. "The deployments are getting longer and the time between deployments shorter. You can't make any kind of stable life if you're always trying to adjust to coming home or getting ready to leave. I'm not saying we shouldn't deploy. I'm a soldier. I knew what that meant when I joined. I don't have a problem with going but we need a bigger active duty Army. If they're going to send us all over the world in big numbers, they need to be willing to pay for the manpower to support it."

Being in the military means taking the good with the bad and they all agree the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks.

This week is dedicated to appreciating the sacrifices of military families. The Clippers do that. They love and depend on and appreciate the military families that serve with them. But they are also grateful to the Army. "There's still a lot more things we want to do - a lot more of the world we want to see," Julie said. "The Army can take us there."



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by Janet Wray

FORT LEAVENWORTH, Kan. (Dec. 3, 2003) — Like the Army it serves, the Center for Army Lessons Learned at Fort Leavenworth is transforming.

The director of CALL, Col. Larry Saul, notes that because of the war in Iraq, CALL has had to transform.

One way CALL is doing this is by embedding staff with units forward-deployed. Saul explained that by having CALL embeds with units in Iraq and Afghanistan, Soldiers and leaders are afforded near-immediate access to emerging insights and observations.

“We’ve embedded some of our team members in the divisions in Iraq. ... If an event occurs right now, today, and a unit experiences a new enemy TTP (tactic, technique, procedure), they conduct an (after-action review) and then they send that information through their chain of command to the division. We have three liaison officers with the divisions in Iraq ... we also have a team with (Combined Joint Task Force 7) in Afghanistan. They get this information and share it with the other division (liaison officers), who share it with their brigades and battalions. We (CALL at Fort Leavenworth) get our piece of it and distribute the information as well,” Saul said.

CALL distributes the information primarily to follow-on units, the combat training centers and TRADOC mission activities (including the centers and schools) as well as Joint, interagency and multinational organizations.

Saul said CALL is the Army’s only organization that is a “true training aid” because CALL takes what units have experienced — either in training or in actual operations — to provide insights, observations and analyses with the goal of increasing warfighting capabilities across the force.

“We’ve spent a lot of time in Iraq and Afghanistan. We tell the Army what is going on. We provide the TTPs, and we share insights and observations,” he said.

In addition, CALL also follows through. “A lesson isn’t learned unless a behavior is changed,” Saul said.

To assist in this mission, Saul said the CALL DOTMLPF team is charged with analyzing issues from observations and insights that need to be fixed. CALL identifies lessons that have significant impact on or require changes to Army doctrine, training, organization, materiel, leadership, personnel or facilities. CALL makes recommendations to headquarters TRADOC, which then forwards them to Army level for review and approval.

Center for Army Lessons Learned transforms in light of war lessons-learned

Information technology advances have allowed CALL to disseminate its products much faster than in the past. Previously, the CALL process could take months.

“We have changed how we do business pretty significantly (from when) CALL focused on what went on at the (combat training centers). ... It took about a month or more for the unit to ‘hot wash’ through the information and figure out what was important, then send it on to CALL. It

took CALL a couple of months to analyze the data, then add the printing cycle and six months easily could pass before the unit in the field got a useful product,” Saul said.

Another way CALL disseminates its information is via the “request for information” feature of its Website. Requests come into a CALL central e-mail account and are farmed out to either the lessons-learned or research division. Requestors receive immediate confirmation of their RFI.

Some RFIs take longer than others, depending on the amount of research it takes or if the information must be coordinated with other agencies. The goal is 48 hours, but the average response time is four to six hours.

For those with authorized access — and that includes current members of the DoD community — CALL’s database can be accessed from the homepage, <http://call.army.mil>. Information regarding operational and force-protection issues from the latest Operation Iraqi Freedom/Operation Enduring Freedom products to combat training center operational records are available. Visitors can also participate in a threaded discussion on the Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

So, what kind of feedback does the director get about his efforts to disseminate lessons-learned? A recent e-mail reads: “Yesterday afternoon I requested information from your organization ... They did an outstanding job. I am overwhelmingly impressed. I have 21 years of military service (Army and Navy), so I have seen how long some of these requests can take. Not with your staff!”

Saul credits the staff of CALL for doing their jobs exceptionally well.

“I get a lot of positive feedback. CALL has a great team made of people who are dedicated and hard-working — they are the difference between being exceptional and being just mediocre,” he said.

CALL’s staff is part of its transformation. They help identify significant issues/insights; provide near-real-time situational awareness; coordinate and collaborate with units, institutions and major Army commands to develop solutions; and recommend those solutions to the Army.



77th Maintenance Company returns from Operation Iraqi Freedom

Story and photos by Donna Dean, 233rd Base Support Battalion Public Affairs Office

BABENHAUSEN, Germany — More than 100 Soldiers from 77th Maintenance Company, 3rd Corps Support Command, were welcomed home here Nov. 26 after being deployed for eight months in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Newlywed Spcs. David and April Head reunite with hugs and kisses as David's unit, 77th Maintenance Company, 3rd Corps Support Command, returns to Babenhausen (Germany) Kaserne Nov. 26. The unit, part of the corps' 3rd Corps Support Command, deployed for Southwest Asia just two weeks after the couple's wedding at Fort Polk, La. in January.

He thanked the families for their patience, support, and the time and energy they spent in sending care packages to the soldiers.

"You are the backbone of what makes our Army great," he told the spouses. "We can go away, do our jobs, and come back knowing that all has been taken care of."

As the patient families sensed that their Soldiers would soon be released to go home, they gathered their belongings and shuffled toward the stairs. As soon as the unit was released, the families ran to greet each other. Daddies held their babies for the first time; and newlyweds, like Spc. David Head and Spc. April Head, started again to build their life together.

"It seems like I haven't seen him forever," April said. "We married on Jan. 17 while stationed at Ft. Polk. David left the end of January for Germany." April stayed at Ft. Polk until August, when she moved to Babenhausen to begin her current job as a chaplain's assistant at the community's chapel.

"It was hard to keep in contact at first," she said. "He called once a month until about August, and then we were able to e-mail each other. We're going to start all over — start from the beginning."

She says she has nothing to complain about. "I think I did good while he was gone," she said, "and I feel blessed. Some [soldiers] didn't come home alive."

Spc. Mark Shene held his sleeping daughter, Madison, 2 months old, for the first time.

"As soon as he left, I found out I was pregnant," said Rachel Shene. "I went to New York to be with my parents and to have the baby. Since he wasn't going to see her born, I asked my mother-in-law to join my mom [in the delivery room]. I came back to Babenhausen a week ago."

Even with shrieks and laughter emanating throughout the building, Dominik Lipari fell asleep in his father's arms.

"He was only 12 days old when I left," said Capt. Ben Lipari, the 77th's commander. The Liparis said they planned to relax over Thanksgiving weekend. "I'm going to let daddy change diapers," laughed Melissa Lipari.

Excited wives and children carrying signs, flowers and American flags gathered on the sidewalk outside the Army Community Service center on Babenhausen Kaserne to greet their loved ones.



Capt. Ben Lipari, commander of 77th Maintenance Company, and his wife, Melissa, cuddle their 8-month-old son Dominik during the 77th's Nov. 26 welcome home to Babenhausen (Germany) Kaserne. The captain and more than 100 members of the 77th deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom when Dominik was 12 days old.

With a military police escort, the Soldiers marched from their motor pool through the base to ACS. With the first glimpse of the unit, family members broke out in cheers and tears flowed. Children jumped up and down and "Daddy!, Daddy!" could be heard from one end of the street to the other.

The unit filed into ACS and stood in formation as family members looked down on the 107 Soldiers from a balcony above. Children jumped and wiggled and moms snapped pictures and waited patiently as Lt. Col. John MacGillis, the 3rd COSCOM rear detachment commander, welcomed the soldiers home and summarized the unit's mission in Iraq.

"77th Maintenance Co. began their move across the

Iraqi desert in March and set up at Camp Cedar," MacGillis said. "Within a five-to-six-week period they recovered more than 125 vehicles that had broken down as units moved forward to Baghdad. They supported each other in very harsh conditions." The unit moved on to Camp Dogwood where they stayed until they began the redeploying in October and moved to Taji, north of Baghdad, MacGillis said.

Improvised armor adds protection

by U.S. Army Spc. Melissa Walther, 367th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BAGHDAD, Iraq — As convoys throughout Iraq continue to come under attack, some soldiers are adding additional protection in the form of innovative armor plating on their vehicles.

Members of the 358th Civil Affairs Brigade weren't satisfied with relying on sandbags to fortify their vehicles so they are installing armor kits that were designed by U.S. military personnel and constructed by local Iraqi contractors.

Consisting of a nine-piece kit made of steel plates six millimeters thick, the armor includes steel doors, roof and walls for the bed of the vehicle as well as steel plates for the floor. Weighing 500 pounds, the kits cost about \$1,000 each, making them much cheaper than up-armored Humvees, which have yet to be distributed to many units in Iraq.

"I'd rather take an up-armored Humvee outside the gates than a regular one," said Staff Sgt. Ricky White, a unit mechanic with the 358th and a Wilmington, Del. resident.

Up-armored Humvees, which are now being manufactured in the U.S., feature armor components that help repel grenades, improvised explosive devices and small arms fire.

Until they become widely available, every little bit of protection is welcome.

"We feel a little safer with the kits," said Staff Sgt. Roman Moreno, the noncommissioned officer in charge of special functions for the 358th, an Army Reserve unit based in Norristown, Pa.

The kits bolt to the frame of the vehicle and installation takes only a few hours. Originally available from a contractor in Baghdad, various units are making changes to the design to fit their needs, Moreno said.

"The point of the kits is to protect against IEDs and small arms fire,"



Staff Sgt. Roman Moreno of the 358th Civil Affairs Brigade, an Army Reserve unit from Norristown, Pa., removes panels in his Humvee, which will later be outfitted with armor plating. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Melissa Walther

added Sgt. Jamie Taylor, a gunner with the 358th.

According to White, the armor has been tested and has been found to be an extra deterrent to small arms.

"It won't stop a bullet but it'll slow it down a lot," said Moreno, a resident of Lubbock, Texas.

In addition to armor, the kit also includes a pole on the front of the vehicle to catch and snap wires insurgents string across the road to assail gunners who are perched above the Humvee's roof.

"I feel a lot safer now that we have the kit," Taylor said.



An Iraqi worker in Baghdad welds steel plates together, as part of an improvised armor kit for a Humvee. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Melissa Walther

Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.

I am a Warrior and a member of a team. I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.

I will always place the mission first.

I will never accept defeat.

WARPIAETHOS
I will never quit.

I will never leave a fallen comrade.

I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.

I am an expert and I am a professional.

I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.

I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.

I am an American Soldier.

Protecting our combat readiness

We are an Army at war. The challenge of the global war on terrorism demands the highest level of leadership and soldier proficiency. We cannot be risk-averse; however, our soldiers are our most valuable combat assets. Therefore, reducing preventable losses throughout our formations is fundamental to protecting our combat readiness.

Last year the Army experienced the highest accident rate in the last ten years. The current trend, if not abated, will exceed last year's losses. Leaders must understand the impact of inexperience in their formations, and where it will require education, training, direct leadership, and enforcement of standards to overcome. I hold leaders and myself at all levels accountable for meeting this challenge.

Since World War II over half of our combat losses were caused by accident fatalities. Risk management integration has proven to be effective in reducing accidental losses. In Operation Iraqi Freedom, our accident rate has remained at 38%, a tribute to the performance of combat leaders' effective use of risk management. However, in order to win the global war on terrorism and protect the force we must aggressively attack adverse trends in three key areas.

I expect senior leaders to focus aviation training on potential operational environments and aircrew coordination. Brownouts caused 75% of aviation class A accidents in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Aircrew coordination was a factor in half.

Almost half of ground combat losses occurred during rollovers. The primary cause was speed, aggravated by the failure to wear seatbelts. In addition, far too many of our soldiers have been killed in theater by negligent discharges. I challenge our noncommissioned officer corps to train soldiers to standard, enforce those standards, and supervise.

During the last ten years, over half of our accidental fatalities occurred in POVs. This year is no exception. Our programs are not effective. In order to make an impact we must change our culture. Risk management is a 24-hour leader responsibility, and soldiers must be held accountable for their actions. I have provided you tools to drive our culture change and reduce risk, which are assessable through the Army Knowledge On-Line website.

We will win the global war on terrorism, but we must not accept any unnecessary risk, which places our soldiers in jeopardy.

General Peter J. Schoomaker
The Army Chief of Staff

Army focuses on Change

The Army has published online “The Way Ahead,” its plan to increase Army wartime relevance and readiness and institutionalize a Joint and Expeditionary mindset that reflects Army interdependence with Air Force, Navy and Marines.

“We are accelerating change to help our Soldiers and our Nation fight the current war on terrorism,” said Acting Secretary of the Army Les Brownlee.

The Army will reorganize its combat and institutional organizations, and redesign its formations to provide modularity and flexibility. It will also re-balance the Active and Reserve forces, and emphasize adaptability in leaders and Soldiers.

To expedite change, Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker established focus areas to immediately channel Army efforts.

“We are re-examining doctrine, training and systems to support joint and expeditionary capabilities, along with our ability to sustain land campaigns during war fighting and peacekeeping,” he said.

Army agencies are finalizing plans for each of the focus areas below, with implementation decisions to be announced in the future:

Develop flexible, adaptive and competent Soldiers with a warrior ethos.

Prepare future generations of senior leaders by identifying and preparing Army leaders for key positions within joint, interagency, multinational and Service organizations.

Focus training at Combat Training Centers and in the Basic Command Training Program to meet requirements of the current security context and the Joint and Expeditionary team.

Train and educate Army members of the Joint Team.

Conduct a holistic review of Army Aviation and its role on the Joint battlefield.

Accelerate fielding of select Future Force capabilities to enhance effectiveness of the Current Force.

Leverage and enable interdependent, network-centric warfare.

Create modular, capabilities-based unit designs.

Retain campaign qualities while developing a Joint and Expeditionary Mindset.

Redesign the force to optimize the active and reserve component mix.

Ensure stability and continuity, and provide predictability to Soldiers and their families.

Provide intelligence to commanders with speed, accuracy

and confidence to impact current and future operations.

Enhance installation ability to project power and support families.

Clarify roles and enable agile decision-making.

Redesign resource processes to be flexible, responsive and timely.

Tell the Army Story so that the Army’s relevance and direction are clearly understood.

To read a summary of the Army’s plan and the focus areas, go to <http://www.army.mil/thewayahead>.



OUR ARMY AT WAR
RELEVANT AND READY
www.army.mil/thewayahead/foreword.html



CompanyCommand
companycommand.com
<http://companyteam.army.mil>



Soldiers
Operation R&R
www.army.mil/soldiers/



JRTC:
<http://usasma.bliss.army.mil/Journal/>



DFAS to release tax statements on the Web

by Jessica Iñigo, Stars and Stripes

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service has compiled a schedule of dates when military members and Department of Defense civilian employees can access their tax statements through myPay.

Servicemembers, military retirees, military annuitants or beneficiaries, and civilian DOD employees will be able to view, save and print their tax statements from mypay.dfas.mil before February.

The myPay Web site provides a secure method for users to manage their pay account information, without having to make office visits, according to a release announcing the schedule.

DFAS is projecting tax statements will be posted on myPay on the following dates:

- Military annuitants — from Saturday to Dec. 18;
- DOD civilians — from Dec. 24 to Dec. 29;

- Reserve and National Guard — from Dec. 26 to Jan. 1;
- Military retirees — from Jan. 1 to Jan. 5;
- Marine Corps — from Jan. 13 to Jan. 21;
- Army, Air Force and Navy — from Jan. 16 to Jan. 26.

According to the Web site, all current myPay military users and DFAS civilian employees who request or already have a myPay personal identification number and access myPay are consenting to receive only an electronic W-2. They may, however, elect to receive a hard copy W-2 through the myPay Web site.

All other DOD civilian employees who use myPay may elect to receive an electronic W-2 in lieu of a hard copy through myPay.

Last year, more than 1.2 million users viewed their tax statements on myPay, according to a DFAS statement.

For assistance, call myPay customer support in the States at 1-800-390-2348 or call unit finance offices.

No war trophies allowed from Iraq, Afghanistan

by Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Dec. 11, 2003 – Do not even think about bringing back to the United States war trophies from your service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

With about 140,000 American service members due to rotate out of Iraq and Afghanistan, U.S. Central Command officials are very clear that service members cannot bring home weapons, ammunition and other prohibited items.

A few soldiers of the 3rd Infantry Division understand how serious the command is. Some soldiers tried to smuggle weapons back from Baghdad, and they have gone through courts martial. Others received Article 15 administrative punishments. “There is a whole spectrum of punishments, depending on the severity of the offense,” said Maj. Robert Resnick, an Army lawyer at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Army Gen. John Abizaid, the commander of U.S. Central Command, has put out the policy.

Basically, under no circumstances can individuals take as a souvenir an object that was formerly in the possession of the enemy. The taking of war trophies goes against the coalition mission in Iraq and Afghanistan, officials said.

“We didn’t go into Iraq or Afghanistan to conquer them, but to liberate them,” said Marine Capt. Bruce Frame, a Central Command spokesman. “Taking articles from those countries sends the wrong message.”

Service members with questions should work through the chain of command, CENTCOM officials said, adding that service members

will be given ample briefings on what is allowed and what is not. In the case of Iraq, unit commanders will brief service members on the policy before leaving for Kuwait.

In Kuwait, military police will explain the policy and will permit an amnesty period before searching gear and vehicles. In the United States, U.S. Customs Service officials will examine individual gear.

In Afghanistan, unit commanders will explain the policy, and MPs there also will explain it and offer an amnesty period before the service members board the planes. Again, Customs will examine gear and baggage upon return to the United States.

The same prohibitions pertain to American civilians serving in the Central Command area of operations.

Other federal laws pertain to other items. For example, service members cannot bring back plants, animals or other organic materials. Some Marines returning from Afghanistan in April 2002, for

example, tried to bring back the skulls of sheep attached to their guidons. The Customs agents met the Marines as they landed on the beach at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and confiscated the items.

No one can bring back antiquities into the United States, and of course, no one can bring drugs or drug paraphernalia into the United States.

The overall prohibition does not pertain to souvenirs that can be legally imported into the United States, officials said.



AMERICAN FORCES INFORMATION SERVICE
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Holiday Greetings 2003



For generations, U.S. service men and women and government civilians have spent the holiday season far from loved ones, so that all Americans can celebrate the peace, prosperity and liberty that our Armed Forces have fought to protect.

Today, you continue to keep steadfast watch across the globe, from bases on land, planes overhead, and aboard ships at sea; from distant, remote locations, and within our own borders.

During this holiday season, the United States is asking much of you - and you are responding with a strong sense of duty, a willingness to give up personal comfort for the greater good, and the professionalism that has earned our military services honor and respect throughout the world. It is never easy to be away from home, but especially during the holiday season, the courage, patriotism and unconditional support of families and loved ones mean so very much.

Your service and the sacrifices of your families come at a crucial moment in our Nation's history. Your dedicated work is making the world a better, safer, and more peaceful place. I am inspired by your character and courage, and am extremely proud to serve with you. The Joint Chiefs of Staff join me in sending to you and your families our very warmest wishes for a wonderful holiday season.

General Richard B. Myers, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff



www.tradoc.army.mil/pao/Web_specials/Cul_of_Innov/index.htm

Happy New Year