Army’s Mobile Tactical High-Energy Laser destroys artillery projectile in flight

WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, N.M. — For the first time in history, a laser successfully destroyed an artillery projectile in flight. Over the desert of New Mexico, at the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command’s High Energy Laser Systems Test Facility (HELSTF), the Mobile Tactical High-Energy Laser (MTHEL) tracked, locked onto and fired a burst of photons on an artillery projectile ... seconds later, at a point well short of its intended destination, the projectile was destroyed.

The event occurred at 2 p.m. EST Nov. 5 as part of a new series of tests to determine MTHEL capabilities. The artillery projectile is only one of the many target sets to be tested.

The MTHEL consists of three major subsystems: the command, control, communications and intelligence (C3I) subsystem; the pointer-tracker subsystem; and the laser subsystem.

The MTHEL stems from the Tactical High Energy Laser (THEL), an Advanced Concept Technology Demonstration (ACTD) program initiated in 1996. THEL tests during 2000 and 2001, which focused on the threat of rockets, proved highly successful, intercepting and destroying 25 Katyusha rockets.

Though their diameters are nearly the same, the artillery projectile measures about two feet in length rather than the 10 feet of a Katyusha rocket. The artillery projectile’s small size, combined with the lack of heat it gives off, makes it much more difficult to track.

The TRW-built MTHEL, managed by the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command, is a collaborative development program between the U.S. Army and the Israeli Ministry of Defense.

National Guard director visits Army Space Command soldiers

By Maj. Laura Kenney
Army Space Command


Accompanied by Colorado’s National Guard leadership, the Adjutant General Air Force Maj. Gen. Mason Whitney, and the Commander of Colorado’s Army National Guard Brig. Gen. Ronald Crowder, Schultz toured Army Space’s new facilities here to include the Army Space Operations Center, and received mission briefs and updates. These included examples of Space-based products and imagery that are provided to the warfighter. But the highlight of his visit was lunch with soldiers of the 193rd Space Support Battalion, a National Guard battalion mobilized after Sept. 11.

The 193rd has sent three Army Space Support Teams on overseas deployments during the past year in support of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM. Teams deployed with a mission of integrating satellite-enhanced capabilities into daily military operations, such as communication, navigation, intelligence, surveillance, reconnaissance, environmental monitoring and missile warning operations.


Schultz enjoyed a buffet luncheon at the NCO Club here with members of the 193rd. The horseshoe table format enabled open conversation, with specialists sitting next...
Veterans Day, Thanksgiving time to reflect on America’s blessings

This month, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving allow all Americans to pause briefly in their busy schedules, spend some time with families and reflect on our uniquely American blessings of peace, freedom and opportunity. That we can do so is due in no small measure to the professionalism and dedication of the men and women, soldiers and civilians of the U.S. Army and the Space and Missile Defense Command. For more than a year now, we have all been front-line participants in the War on Terrorism.

Some SMDC and Army Space Command soldiers are deployed overseas; others are at Kwajalein Atoll; White Sands Missile Range, N.M.; and Fort Greely, Alaska, building and testing future systems for the defense of our homeland; and the rest of us are either supporting the war directly from Colorado Springs, Colo., continuing our technology and experimentation efforts in Huntsville, Ala., and Fort Belvoir, Va., or working in Crystal City, Va., to develop the space and integrated missile defense architectures that will enable transformation.

Whatever the job and wherever we serve, Americans know their security and prosperity are possible only because the Army stands ready to defend their liberties today and tomorrow. Your willingness to serve and sacrifice for the common good is unparalleled in any other profession, and it continues the great tradition of service established by earlier generations of soldiers.

I hope all of you in the SMDC family — uniformed members, civilians, contractors and your families — and especially those of you who may be far from home — have a safe and happy Veterans Day and Thanksgiving holiday.

Many folks deserve thanks for success of AUSA’s annual Army Ten-Miler race

On October 20, more than 18,000 runners and 30,000 supporters converged on the Pentagon’s south parking lot, to participate in the Association of the United States Army’s annual Ten-Miler race. Adding to the excitement of the day, was Hooah Tent City, where October fest-like tents were set up to facilitate camaraderie, team-building, fellowship and partaking of refreshments before, during and after the run. The organizations that invested in a hooah tent added to the festive atmosphere that makes this a happening rather than an event.

The day’s success would not have been possible without the NCOs, who spent four months planning and coordinating the event. Sgt. Maj. Daniel Rutledge, Master Sgt. Preston Lee, Sgt. 1st Class Phil Tomlin and the rest of the NCOs in the command group gave us all a sample of what selfless service is. John Upps and Billy Lindsay in our Information Management Office provided a tremendous amount of technical support. Rhonda Paige and Debra Valine from PAO Arlington and Huntsville were on the scene capturing events of the day on film and paper.

And without the members of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Association in Huntsville, Ala., none of this would have occurred. These great folks for the past two years have sponsored our running teams with uniforms and equipment. They purchased our command’s display banners, and recouped the cost for the hooah tent and the refreshments we all enjoyed.

We also need to thank Larry Burger, who normally won’t accept any thanks for the support we receive from the association, will get some anyway, after all this is my column. Larry from all of us, please accept our sincere thanks to you and your great association for all you did to make this year’s event the best yet, HOOAH!
Native American Heritage Month

November is Native American-Alaskan Native Heritage Month. The theme this year is “Serving with Honor, Pride and Devotion.”

All Americans, regardless of their heritage, can gain from studying and embracing the ways of the Native American heritage. Americans owe a much larger debt to the Native Americans than they realize.

Almost every aspect of American life has been influenced by the first people of America. They have helped to shape the destiny of modern man in such diverse areas of life as agriculture, government, religion, trade, mythology, literature, economics and arts and crafts.

For your enjoyment and education, complete the crossword puzzle, below and learn about the Native American Heritage.

Down, Cont.
2. T elt sumin, laeM fo epyT
3. * A boy who was a #33A might have gone through an initiation ceremony to enter adulthood that involved ___ or going out all alone into the wilderness for a period of time
4. * Metallic Element, minus the “trium”
5. * Not fake
6. * Ceremony of the Hopi
7. * Where some of the Mehove people were from, without the “fornia”
8. * Certain Caps ...flipped around?
9. * Ceremonial Staff ...spelled backwards?
10. * Native Americans partook in the ___ with the Europeans
11. * In search of food, it’s how aboriginal peoples roamed the land before the Europeans introduced the horse to the New World
12. * Dome-shaped dwellings
13. * Ginger’s follower
14. * Piece of timber in a traditional structure
15. * Sun God, in Egyptian Mythology
16. * And Outs starter
17. * Tribe leader
18. * Triad leader
19. * Holy water or holy oil
20. * It would be used to create various structures and things: ___ Bark
21. * In past times, some people would make ___ from plants such as the sassafras or wintergreen
22. * Chest bone
23. * Landowner, without the “rd”
24. * Pierre’s Pal
25. * Sort of Sloth
26. * Native Americans partook in the ___ with the Europeans

Across
1. * One (var. sp.) would have been made with the hide of #41A
2. * Member of an indigenous people of northeastern Nebraska
3. * Algonquian language
4. * Autumn
5. * Hamitic language
6. * Rifles with a long barrel and carved things such as these: Markers
7. * They were set to catch beavers (see 43D for a related clue)
8. * Northwest Coast Indians were skilled craftsmen who made fine wood carvings, and carved things such as these: Markers
9. * Unemotional, without the “Sto”
10. * Said long ago: ‘Don’t you find ___ that even though we were here first, the European explorers think they can just come in and take over?’ (See 12D for a related clue)
11. * An ___ captured in battle by the An ___ of indigenous clans
12. * An oral history was passed down by ___ Dunmore’s War (The white man against the Shawnee, Delaware, Wyandot and Cayuga)
13. * A boy who was a #33A might have gone through an initiation ceremony to enter adulthood that involved ___ or going out all alone into the wilderness for a period of time
14. * Navajo artists are renowned for creating beautiful jewelry of silver. Question: What is the symbol for silver?
15. * Treaties sometimes are passed to resolve injustices concerning these
16. * Sort of Sloth
17. * Native Americans partook in the ___ with the Europeans
18. * In search of food, it’s how aboriginal peoples roamed the land before the Europeans introduced the horse to the New World
19. * Dome-shaped dwellings
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Puzzle courtesy of www.infoplease.com
Army celebrates American Education Week Nov. 17-23

Redstone Arsenal Education Center

Army educators are joining educators to celebrate American Education Week. From Nov. 17-23, the Army will again refocus on strengthening its resolve to educate America’s soldiers to meet the challenges of leadership today and tomorrow.

This year’s theme is “An Army of One, an Education for All,” which underscores the philosophy that started American Education Week. Distressed that 25 percent of the country’s World War I draftees were illiterate and 29 percent were physically unfit, representatives of the National Education Association and the American Legion met for the first time in 1919 to seek ways to generate public support for education. The contributions of both organizations subsequently adopted resolutions of support for a national effort to raise public awareness of the importance of education.

In 1921, the NEA Representative Assembly called for the designation of one week each year to spotlight education. The first observance of American Education Week occurred Dec. 4-10, 1921. American Education Week is now observed during the week prior to Thanksgiving.

The Army Continuing Education System offers programs and services to assist soldiers in obtaining a college education. These programs and services take into consideration soldiers’ busy careers and the need to earn a college degree through a variety of distance learning programs sponsored through the local Army Education Center.

The Army offers tuition assistance for active duty soldiers at 100 percent if their courses do not exceed $2,500 per credit hour, up to $4,500 per fiscal year.

Missile test Oct. 14 a hit

IFT-9 brings out crews

By J Im Bennett
Editor, Kwajalein Hourglass

As a ground-based interceptor streaked across the sky from Meck Island into the exosphere above the Pacific Ocean on Oct. 14, a group of more than 100 Kwajalein Atoll workers stood by. They had done their jobs, for the present. The missile was away, and it was up to the modern technology and the technical wizardry of the range to ensure a kill.

Around 2:30 p.m., local time, the kill vehicle hit, and the range recorded another intercept to the cheers and pumping fists of those watching monitors across Kwajalein.

“Integrating with the Aegis today is a demonstration of the nation’s deep respect is a final tribute to their country. The ceremonial paying of military funeral honors, the Army offers tuition assistance for active duty soldiers at 100 percent if their courses do not exceed $2,500 per credit hour, up to $4,500 per fiscal year.

New ceremonial bugle to improve veterans’ funeral honors

In a meeting with veterans’ service organizations in Washington, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense John M. Molino unveiled an instrument to improve military funeral honors. Honor guard members, though not musicians, can now play “Taps” on a recently developed ceremonial bugle, thanks to dramatic advancements in digital audio technology.

The Department worked with private industry to invent a small device that can be inserted deep into the bell of a bugle that plays a very high-quality rendition of Taps virtually indistinguishable from a live bugler.

The ceremonial bugle is intended to be a dignified alternative to pre-recorded Taps played on a stereo, but will not be used as a substitute for a military musician when one is available.

“We will ask families if they would like to take advantage of this new technology to honor their loved ones,” said Molino. “In addition to the very high quality sound, it provides a dignified ‘visual’ of Taps, including several taps, something families tell us they want.”

To use the device, a member of an honor guard needs merely to push a button and hold the bugle to his or her lips. It offers several other advantages over a stereo, including increased reliability.

The Department began a six-month test of the ceremonial bugle in Missouri Nov. 7. Fifty prototype bugles will be distributed to military units and other authorized providers of funeral honors, such as veterans’ service organizations. During the test, families and honor guard members will be surveyed. Once that data is compiled and the test is completed, a decision will be made whether to expand the program or not.

The Department of Defense provides military funeral services free of charge to thousands of veterans’ families each year. These honors demonstrate the nation’s deep gratitude to those who, in time of war and peace, have defended their country. The ceremonial paying of respect is a final tribute to their service.

Military Training

Lt. Col. Steve Morris, chief, USAKA Plans, Training and Security, talks on the phone with the RMI ship Lomor as RSE Program Support Manager Dick Lupton, center, looks on. Meanwhile, Paula Weaver, below, reviews her records and tracks mission assets, including the Lomor.
Civilian News

Health Benefit open season under way

Federal Employees Health Benefits program open season runs through Dec. 9. During the annual open season, anyone eligible to participate in the program may enroll, change health plans or options, cancel FEHB enrollment and change participation in premium conversion. To make changes, employees may be able to enroll online using Employee Express. Department of Defense employees can enroll using the DoD automated enrollment systems. Or employees can submit Standard Form 2809, Employee Health Benefits Election Form, to the local human resources office. For more information, visit the Web at: http://www.opm.gov/insure.

Long Term Care Insurance Program available through December

Active and retired federal employees, military personnel and some family members may enroll in the Civilian Long Term Care Insurance Program through Dec. 31. For details, visit the Web at: http://www.ltcfeds.com.

House approves Thrift Savings Plan participant catch-up bill

The House approved legislation giving federal employees age 50 and older the ability to make “catch-up” contributions to their Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) accounts. Under a bill, sponsored by Rep. Connie Morella, R-Md., TSP participants may contribute additional money toward their retirement. The measure now goes to the Senate where Sens. Daniel Akaka, D-Hawaii, and John Warner, R-Va., are pushing their own plan. The legislation has the support of the Bush administration.

In 2004, the catch-up-contribution limit would rise to $3,000. Starting in 2006, and each year thereafter, anyone in government or a member of the military who is at least 50 could invest an additional $5,000 to any of the TSP’s five funds.

myPay replaces E/MSS

ARLINGTON, Va. (American Forces Press Service) — A new online pay account management system debuted in October and promises improved service and information security to military members, DoD civilians, military retirees and annuitants.

The Defense Finance and Accounting Service system, called myPay, replaces the previous Employee/Member Self-Service online system. The site requires users’ Web browsers be equipped with 128-bit encryption to conduct secure transactions. A revamped page design helps myPay users find information and complete transactions more quickly. They receive clear confirmation messages.

Through myPay authorized customers can use existing Employee/Member Self-Service personal identification numbers to view, print and save leave and earnings statements; view and print tax statements (military members will have this service available in January 2003); change federal and state tax withholdings; update bank account and electronic funds transfer information; manage allotments and edit address information; withholdings; update bank account and electronic funds transfer information; manage allotments and edit address information; update tax information; manage allotments and edit address information; update bank account and electronic funds transfer information; manage allotments and edit address information; update bank account and electronic funds transfer information; and complete transactions more quickly. They receive clear

Military News

Perils in veterans benefits possible

In the view of the “Military Update” column in Stars and Stripes, prospects continue to dim for disabled military retirees seeking to catch up on the years when they were weren’t employed, didn’t make up for years when they were weren’t employed, didn’t contribute to their plan, or otherwise weren’t able to save.

TRICARE for Life ID card questions and answers

TRICARE has published an article clarifying questions people might have about TRICARE For Life (TFL) and whether you need to update your Uniformed Services Identification (ID) Card to use the program. If you are a sponsor, age 65 or over, eligible for Medicare Parts A and B, and have purchased Part B you do not need to update your current ID card to receive health care under TFL — even if the medical eligibility status printed on the back of your ID card indicates “Civilian No.” Medicare Part B is required for TFL eligibility; if you have Medicare Part B, your information has been picked up in a data match with Medicare. You do not need to update anything in DEERS other than changes in your residence, mailing address or family member status. If you have further questions, call your regional managed care support contractor or visit your nearest military personnel office that has an ID-card facility and have them register your Medicare Part B enrollment status in DEERS.

VFW phone cards say thanks to service members, veterans

The Veterans of Foreign Wars’ annual free phone card program began on Veterans Day for active duty, Guard and Reserve military members serving overseas and for hospitalized veterans. The cards will be offered in increments of at least 10 minutes of calling time, up to 30 minutes. The paper cards feature directions for use. This year, about a million phone cards will be distributed. Historically, people such as parents, spouses, other relatives and military commanders have requested the phone cards for service members and veterans. To request a phone card call the VFW at 1-800-448-1880 or, half of a service member, visit http://www.vfwkc.org/marketing/PhoneCard.asp. To make a donation toward the purchase of cards for distribution, visit http://www.vfw.org/uplink/donation.shtml.
To be the best
NCO, soldier represent SMDC at Armywide competition

By Sharon L. Hartman
Army Space Command

ARLINGTON, Va. — Two Army Space Command soldiers, representing the entire U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command, became a part of history as they competed in the first-ever Department of the Army-level Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year Competition.

Staff Sgt. Darrick Noah from Army Space’s Regional Satellite Communications Support Center in the Pacific, and Sgt. Sherman Johnson of B Company, 1st Satellite Control Battalion, vied against 11 NCOs and 10 soldiers for the titles of DA Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year.

Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery Stitzel, an infantryman with the Old Guard at Fort Myer, Va., and Spec. Justin Brown, a measurement and diagnostic equipment specialist from Baumholder, Germany, took top honors at the awards ceremony Sept. 27. The two earned the titles of the first ever DA NCO and Soldier of the Year respectively. Prizes included an all-expense paid trip to Disney World, a five-minute shopping spree at the commissary and the opportunity to choose their next assignment.

The inaugural competition got under way Sept. 23 at Fort A.P. Hill, Va., with an early morning physical fitness test and a written exam. Competitors then performed common training tasks such as day and night land navigation, M16 qualification, first aid, camouflage, chemical decontamination and a mystery event: a 5.3-mile road march with loaded rucksacks into a chemical environment.

During the events at Fort A.P. Hill, the man behind the competition, Sergeant Major of the Army Jack Tilley, visited competitors.

"That mystery event sounds pretty simple, right? They had to walk five miles with 40 pounds on their back. No problem. Any soldier can do that," Tilley said. "But at the end of that test they got hit with "gas" (smoke). They had to put on their protective masks, run about another quarter of a mile, drop into a fighting position and engage targets and qualify. Then they had to clear land mines. Think about it. That was really hooah stuff.

"That's what soldiers do," Tilley offered words of thanks and encouragement.

"Look at these soldiers here today. The Army is 1.3 million people. I had to go past 1.3 million others to get here. Now that's an accomplishment," he said. "It's a neat way to run a competition. It's a neat way to run a competition. We've got a lot of energy, and they're the type of young sergeants you want your leaders to identify with and gravitate toward when they show up at the units.

They are positive. They know what’s required to develop young soldiers. The example they set lets young soldiers know that, if these guys can do it, so can they."

Adding to that, Adams gave a little advice to anyone considering competing at any level, "Don't be afraid to fail. A lot of soldiers don't compete because they're afraid of not being selected as the winner. I'd take these guys who make an attempt every time over those who are afraid to try, because if you don't try, how can you reach your potential? You don't fail as long as you don't quit.

"Don't be afraid to go out there and take a chance on a competition," Adams said.

"Johnson, Noah, the training cadre who went down to Fort A.P. Hill and us sergeants major — we're all better because of the things we learn from each other. They might say they learned a lot from the sergeants major, well, we learned equally from them. When we go back at the end of the day smarter than we were at the start, I think the unit becomes a better unit.

As competitors, Noah and Johnson added a bit of advice from their perspective.

"Do it," Noah said. "Don't get discouraged into thinking that because you're not in a tactical or high speed job, you're not going to be a competitor. Just because somebody may have an edge doesn't mean you can't compensate for it in some other event."

"Have a good attitude when you come here," Johnson said. "It's a lot of work, but we learned about other parts of the Army we're not normally exposed to. We really enjoyed ourselves. It was an amazing experience."

"It would have been great to win," Noah said. "But just being here and playing a part in history being made was prize enough. I'd recommend the experience to anyone.

Sgt. Sherman Johnson from B Company, 1st Satellite Control Battalion, left, lends a hand to Staff Sgt. Darrick Noah of the Regional Satellite Communications Support Center - Pacific, while preparing for the mystery event at the first-ever Department of the Army NCO and Soldier of the Year Competition held Sept. 23-27 at Fort A.P. Hill and Arlington, Va.
Training program a step toward Air Assault wings for satellite controllers stationed in Germany

By Spc. Bradley Morrow
Unit Reporter

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Satellite network controllers in the past have had a hard time getting slots to attend Air Assault School at Fort Campbell, Ky. But the philosophy of “never too highly skilled or highly challenged” has driven some hooah satellite controllers to seek out the demanding training that would earn them the distinguished Air Assault Badge.

Now, thanks to the dedicated leaders of Charlie Company, 1st Satellite Control Battalion, who worked hard to procure slots for satellite soldiers at Air Assault courses, soldiers interested in becoming Air Assault qualified have started training to ensure they can meet the rigorous course qualification standards.

After coordinating with the local Central Issue Facility, C Co. soldiers were able to draw rucksacks, extra canteens and any other equipment they would need while training. A nearby German Volksmarching Club provided possible routes and challenging terrain for use as training courses.

“The German countryside is full of well-marked and easily accessible foot trails that cover a wide range of difficulties,” said Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Schuetz. “These trails provide the range from low elevations and flat lands all the way up to the hill and mountaintop trails that provide fun and excitement combined with intense challenges.”

The new program consists of three months of ruck marching varying in length and difficulty. Marches will be held a minimum of three times per week to accommodate shift workers.

In the first month soldiers will be required to complete two 4-mile marches, one 6-mile or one 8-mile march, and one 12-mile march in the fastest time possible.

Month two requires an 8-mile, and in the last month, participating soldiers will march four, eight, six and 12 miles, the last being timed. Although Air Assault only requires 20 pounds of equipment, C Co. soldiers will train with rucksacks weighing between 40 and 60 pounds, a weapon, load bearing equipment and Kevlar helmet.

“If we train above the standards, we will be doing everything possible to ensure that each soldier selected from C Co. will have the highest chance of success at school,” Schuetz said.

Once a soldier meets the company criteria they still have to qualify by battalion standards.

“Before a soldier earns a position on the battalion order of merit list, they must score a minimum of 270 points on the Army Physical Fitness Test,” Schuetz said. “They must meet height/weight standards, not have a profile, and have no misconduct or disciplinary actions while assigned to their present unit. Through this intense process, leaders at all levels are involved in making sure the best candidates get the positions and no resources are wasted.”

Satellite soldiers, long known for their technical skills in the sky, can soon compete to show their prowess in the intensely physical and demanding arena of Air Assault training. With the intense pre-training offered on home ground, these technical experts expect to hold their own with soldiers holding more traditional occupational specialties.


Army Space soldiers teach school children flag customs

By Sgt. Jerod Hall
Unit Reporter

FORT DETRICK, Md. — At Wittier Elementary School in the nearby city of Frederick, fourth-grade teacher Colleen Miller felt her students needed to do something to help foster a sense of patriotism in her students.

After consulting with her colleagues, Miller decided the fourth-grade students should be responsible for raising and lowering the U.S. flag each day.

“By having them raise and lower the flag, and by learning the history of the flag, we felt the students would be able to develop a sense of country and patriotism that hopefully will last their entire lives,” Miller said.

To help accomplish this, Miller asked soldiers from A Co., 1st Satellite Control Battalion, Army Space Command, to give her students a class on the U.S. flag.

Staff Sgt. John Maynard, Sgt. Jerod Hall, and Sgt. Lawrence Lane accepted her invitation and spent a Friday afternoon teaching the entire fourth grade at Wittier about the flag.

After the class, students went outside to practice raising, lowering and folding the flag. Finally, at the end of the day, the students lowered and folded the flag officially for the first time.

Miller hopes to have the fourth grade do this every year, and looks forward to more A Co. soldiers teaching the students.

“The guys did a great job. I truly think this is going to have a lasting effect on all the children.”
Defense Department health official details TRICARE progress

By Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — Edward P. Wyatt Jr., principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for health affairs, said TRICARE, including TRICARE for Life and the Pharmacy Data Transaction Service, is working hard to provide outstanding benefits for active duty service members, retirees and their eligible family members.

The DoD health affairs deputy said today’s biggest challenge is satisfying beneficiaries. One project involves a round of contracts that requires improved system-wide accountability and performance, and a fresh approach and focus on customer satisfaction, Wyatt noted.

“Satisfying our customers has always been important to us. But for the first time, incentives for the contractors are linked directly to the extent to which they satisfy their customers,” he said.

Satisfaction also means as much outreach as possible. He said outreach was particularly important for the implementation of TRICARE for Life.

“The overwhelming set of issues we encountered in the beginning related to other health insurance (providers),” Wyatt noted. “Hard as you try, you just can’t reach everybody with the message. Many people didn’t trust that the (TRICARE) benefit was going to be made available on time and that it would be as extraordinary as it is. So they held off dropping their other insurance (policy). Once they saw that the benefit was working as advertised, they dropped their other health insurance.”

Reaching out for satisfaction includes those elderly and immobile beneficiaries who aren’t aware of what TRICARE can do for them. Wyatt said some of them are in nursing facilities and have been out of contact with the military, particularly with the military health system, for years.

“They’ve always been eligible,” Wyatt said. “We can help them demonstrate their eligibility by getting them re-enrolled in DEERS, up-to-date ID cards or some other registry mechanism so they don’t have any glitches.”

One requirement in the new generation of contracts calls for Medicare beneficiaries under age 65 to be able to use TRICARE as secondary health insurance without having to file paperwork.

Wyatt also dubbed the Pharmacy Data Transaction Service “an enormous breakthrough,” noting small hospital systems around the country use a similar system all the time. “But to apply it to a system of 75 hospitals, numerous clinics and every retail outlet in the contract network is huge,” he said.

The pharmacy service uses state-of-the-art technology to link patient information between pharmacies at military treatment facilities, the National Mail Order Program and civilian retailers that are part of the TRICARE managed-care network.

Officials said the linking of prescription information improves quality and enhances the safety of the military pharmacy program.

Wyatt noted that more than 52,700 potential medication errors or drug interaction problems have been caught and avoided since the program’s implementation about a year ago.

“Some could have been potentially fatal,” he said.

He also talked about efforts between DoD and Veterans Affairs that will eliminate potential adverse drug reactions. He said the departments are conducting a project to stop service members from having to take two physical exams, one before discharge from active duty and the other at a VA facility to determine eligibility for veterans benefits.

Know the signs of breast cancer

Col. Craig D. Shriver, MD, director of the Clinical Breast Care Project at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, discusses breast cancer issues at an SMDC Headquarters’ conference held Oct. 30 in conjunction with Breast Cancer Awareness Month.

Space soldier makes connections for Red Cross in Afghanistan

By Maj. Robert N. Zaza
Unit Reporter

BAGRAM, Afghanistan — For service members deployed to various “hot spots” around the world, the Red Cross is a critical lifeline leading back to loved ones.

“For the Red Cross, the most critical thing is connectivity,” said Vera Kellar, Red Cross Station manager for Station 1 in one of the hottest spots of the world today, the virtual “headquarters” of the Global War on Terrorism.

No soldier wants to get that emergency phone call from the Red Cross — unless the news is joyous as it would be with a birth announcement — but the alternative, not hearing at all, or hearing days after a sad event, is unthinkable.

An Army Space Command soldier was able to help get that critical “connectivity” up and running in record time.

Red Cross Station 1 became operational and began setting up its essential mission of providing emergency services to the soldiers, airmen, Marines and sailors deployed here in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, thanks to the efforts of Sgt. Sean McGrane from Colorado Springs, Colo.

“The folks at Bagram really helped us, but he gave us that extra piece that enabled us to use two computers at once, making us operational long before we had expected to be,” Kellar said.
Sponsorship is key

Preparing soldiers for arrival at new duty stations helps welcome to the community

By Cpl. Jenevieve Murphy
JTAGS Europe, Theater Missile Warning Company
European Region Soldier of the Year

How long is the waiting list for housing? When does the next term for college begin? Where do we board our pet? What opportunities exist for spouses to find employment?

These are just some of the questions any soldier might face with the prospect of a move to a new location. Since the Army realized that soldiers needed help with these issues they implemented the Total Army Sponsorship Program, Army Regulation 600-8-8. Sponsorship can have a tremendous effect on a unit since new soldiers will feel welcome and taken care of, ready to join the unit and do his or her best to support the mission. If a soldier receives no support prior to arrival, he or she may feel as if the new command does not care, or is not concerned with the incoming soldier’s needs. Every soldier is important as the Army’s number one resource. Sponsorship helps take care of soldiers and this is why it should be a priority in every unit. As a first termer on my first permanent change of station, I requested a sponsor at my levy briefing. I received my pinpoint assignment in November but no welcome letters or no sponsor. I visited the s-gate sponsorship Web site and requested a sponsor there on more than one occasion and never received a sponsor. Just 27 days before my report date my assignment was changed. The day after I was notified of my assignment changing to Joint Tactical Ground Station (JTAGS) in Stuttgart, Germany, I received a call from my soon-to-be new first sergeant. Immediately I had a sponsor who answered all the questions and concerns expressedly waived sponsorship. Welcome letters should be sent to the new soldier.

The regulation gives guidelines for appointing sponsors and indicates that a sponsor will be of the same gender, marital status and career field, as well as in a grade equal to or higher than the incoming soldier, when feasible. Further, the sponsor should be knowledgeable about the unit and the community surrounding the post. It is suggested in the regulations that the sponsor not be the person to be replaced by the new soldier and not be within 60 days of leaving.

While these guidelines offer good advice for choosing sponsors, they obviously cannot always apply since soldiers of the same gender or career field may not be available. It is important that the sponsor be someone who is genuinely concerned with assisting the new soldier. The sponsor should answer all the questions or concerns of the new soldier and make them feel welcome to the command. Once the soldier has been appointed a sponsor, he or she can begin corresponding with that sponsor and get answers to all their questions. The losing unit verifies that the soldier has completed the necessary form DA 5434 and monitors whether or not the soldier has received a sponsor. The losing unit should also assist the soldier with processing.

The soldier need not rely on the sponsorship program alone — they may also visit Army Community Service and take advantage of its Relocation Assistance program. In the event the soldier does not receive a sponsor, he or she can visit the s-gate sponsorship Web site for overseas assignments.

When a unit receives notification of an incoming soldier, a sponsor should be appointed within 10 days of that notification, unless the soldier has

Commentary

As noncommissioned officers, it is important to be aware of all the resources available to take care of soldiers. Under the sponsorship program, the soldier should complete a DA Form 5434 during an initial reassignment briefing. After the form is completed, it is forwarded to the gaining major command or activity and then channeled down to the area where the soldier will work — and a sponsor is appointed. The arriving soldier should receive two welcome letters: one from the command and one from the sponsor. Once the soldier has been appointed a sponsor, he or she can begin corresponding with that sponsor and get answers to all their questions. The losing unit verifies that the soldier has completed the necessary form DA 5434 and monitors whether or not the soldier has received a sponsor. The losing unit should also assist the soldier with processing.

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Defense Secretary Rumsfeld sinks ‘CINC’

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The term “CINC” is sunk. Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld put out a memo Oct. 24 to DoD leaders saying there is only one commander in chief in America – the president.

His memo also forbids use of the acronym “CINC” (pronounced “sink”) with titles for military officers.

The title of commander in chief is enshrined in the U.S. Constitution. Article II, Section 2, states, “The President shall be Commander in Chief of the Army and Navy of the United States, and of the Militia of the several States, when called into the actual Service of the United States.”

Even before World War II, however, the title was applied to U.S. military officers, and over the years “commander in chief” came to refer to the commanders of the U.S. unified combatant commands. Their titles became, for instance, “Commander in Chief, U.S. Pacific Command” or “Commander in Chief, U.S. Transportation Command.”

No more. Rumsfeld has been using the term “combatant commander” for months now when referring to a regional organization such as the U.S. Central Command and “commander” when talking about a specified unit such as the U.S. Strategic Command.

But don’t toss out that old stationery or signs. The memo also tells officials to use old stocks and replace signs only when done in regular maintenance. The changes should be done “without any undue additional cost to taxpayers.”

The new term is simply “commander,” as in “Commander, U.S. Northern Command” and “Commander, U.S. Special Operations Command.”

The next hurdle is getting over the conversational habit of referring to “the CINCs.”

Defense Secretary Rumsfeld sinks ‘CINC’
our soldiers, but in your families and in your employers. I recognize the sacrifices all three groups made in this marathon mission. This is volunteering at its finest.”

He then opened the floor for questions. He emphasized that communication was the key to any difficulties that might occur.

“It makes it very clear that leadership cares about soldiers when someone of his rank and position takes time to break bread with us and actually listens to the things we have to say,” said Staff Sgt. Eric Peterson, noncommissioned officer for the 193rd.

“lt. Col. Michael Yowell, said, “The director of the Army National Guard’s visit is a clear indication of the importance he places on the mission of Army Space. In less than two years, we’ve gone from concept to mobilization and operational deployment with more missions to follow. We’ve moved at a rapid pace and come a long way.”

—LTG Roger C. Schultz

“Achievement of goals and success are usually measured by how well you use the resources given to you,” Schultz said. “The same goes for operations. It’s up to you to make sure we have the right tools, right budget, and right people at the right places at the right times to be successful.”

People-to-People delegation takes lawyers to China

SMDC attorney only military specialist among group

By Debra Valine

P eople in China are not quite what Juanita Sales Lee, an attorney in SMDC’s Legal Office, expected. She visited China in September as part of a People-to-People Ambassador Program Delegation planned by the Georgia Bar Association.

The group of 25 attorneys and 15 spouses participated in group discussions, visited some well-known sites and spent time one-on-one with Chinese families in Beijing and Shanghai. The group represented attorneys from various specialties. Sales Lee was the only military attorney in the group.

Sales Lee gave a presentation on professional responsibility at the All China Lawyers Association. The Chinese association is similar to the American Bar Association. The big difference is that the ABA is a voluntary organization. Belonging to the Chinese association is mandatory.

“I did not find the Chinese the way I expected them to be,” Sales Lee said. “My expectations were based on how the Chinese and the Chinese government are depicted through the news media. In reality, the Chinese people we met were very warm and caring. They openly answered any questions we had, and they were genuinely interested in what we had to say.”

She understands now that the system under which the Chinese operate is different from how Americans operate, but that it has to be. China has 1.2 billion people so progress has to be slower to effect change. After all, the rule of law in the Chinese legal system is approximately 20 years old.

The People-to-People Ambassador Program sprang into existence through the 34th president of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower. Eisenhower believed ordinary citizens of different nations, if able to communicate directly, would resolve their differences and find a way to live in peace. He believed if people could visit each others’ homes, attend their schools and see their places of worship, then the misunderstanding, misperceptions and resulting suspicions—which were making war a viable option—would disappear. He wanted people to know and understand that while we are all different, our values, goals and day-to-day issues are very much the same.

“We met with lawyers, judges, representatives from the Chinese Ministry of Justice and the All China Lawyers Association,” Sales Lee said. “The Chinese lawyers are governed by a code of professional responsibility, too—ours is patterned after the ABA model rules of professional conduct. The Chinese professional responsibility code incorporates some of the same principles as the ABA model rules. For instance they have rules on not revealing information obtained through their professional relationships with clients.

Because of their history, the Chinese legal system for the most part practices alternative dispute resolution in solving the majority of the disagreements and disputes of its people, Sales Lee said.

“At SMDC, we practice alternative dispute resolution with the unions when we try to reach agreement without resorting to a grievance,” Sales Lee said. “Also, managers practice alternative dispute resolution with their employees in seeking to find resolution to problems such as misconduct or performance within their organizations.

“Our system is still based on trial by jury or judge,” Sales Lee said. “But alternative dispute resolution is pushing its way into many of our venues. Many contractual relations, such as buying a car or household goods, require that all disputes be settled through mediation, a form of alternative dispute resolution.

“I understand why the Chinese use an alternative dispute resolution process because there are so many people, and the rule of law is not established,” she said. “What I’m trying to understand is our country’s rush to mandatory alternative dispute resolution. I know the companies want to use alternative dispute resolution techniques because of the uncertainty of jury awards, and because the legal process is slow. But I think there is still a place for judicial remedies to conflict.”

AUSA, SMDC to host missile defense symposium in El Paso

T he Association of the United States Army, in cooperation with the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command, will sponsor an unclassified symposium Dec. 10-12 at the Judson F. Williams Convention Center in El Paso, Texas. This year’s conference theme is “Integrated Air and Missile Defense in a Transforming World.”

Integrated Air and Missile Defense (IAMD) is a joint, overarching concept tying together a network of space-based and terrestrial sensors, command and control capabilities and weapon systems to protect the homeland and defeat anti-access strategies of potential adversaries. IAMD must be prepared to deal with the full range of possible threats—including ballistic missiles, cruise missiles, manned aircraft and unattended aerial vehicles. For this reason, IAMD is a critical enabler for both homeland defense and future Objective Force operations.

The symposium will consist of individual and panel presentations, with corresponding dialogue on the following topics: “The Changing Strategic Environment,” “Operationalizing Integrated Air and Missile Defense for the Objective Force” and “Solutions—Getting from Here to There.” LTG Joseph M. Cosmano Jr., commanding general, SMDC will be speaking, along with invited speakers such as Adm. James O. Ellis, commander, U.S. Strategic Command; Gen. Thomas A. Schwarz, U.S. Army (Ret.); Gen. Ralph Eberhart, commander, U.S. Northern Command; and Lt. Gen. Ronald Radish, director, Missile Defense Agency.
Landstuhl runner completes sixth Army Ten-Miler

SMDC sends two teams to annual race

By Debra Valine

Editor, The Eagle

Dawn broke gray and cold as the 18,470 runners lined up on the starting line for the 2002 Army Ten-Miler Oct. 20 in Washington, D.C. Among the crowd, a soldier from Landstuhl, Germany, took his place in the second fastest group wearing a green bib and the number 793. He’s not quite as fast as he was in high school, but Lan Dalat, 30 years old, commander of Charlie Company, 1st Satellite Control Battalion, did sustain a 7-minute mile run to a 71-minute finish. “The course was very nice,” said Dalat, a member of the Space and Missile Defense Command Ten-Miler team. “It was very flat, and the temperature was perfect.” Dalat trains for the race by running the hilly streets and trails in southwest Germany, where at 5:30 a.m., it is “very dark and cold.” This was Dalat’s sixth time running the Army Ten-Miler. The only year he missed was 2001 when the race was canceled due to 9-11. Dalat started running in 1983 in southern California on his Tustin High School’s cross-country team. His goal was to make the varsity team, which he did his senior year. “When I got to college at California State University, Fullerton, I continued to run,” Dalat said. “When I enlisted in the Army back in December 1985, I did my two miles in 9 minutes, 40 seconds. The drill sergeant didn’t believe I completed all the laps and made me run another lap. Now I’m slower, I do two miles in under 13 minutes.” Two teams from the United States Army Space and Missile Defense Command competed in the race. In addition to Dalat, Team Discovery included Cory Anderton, Bob Barrett, Tim Kao, James Meisinger, Samuel Patton and Phillip Tomlin. Team Columbia included David Farrissee, William Reese, Michael Smith, Stephen Redmon and Phillip Tomlin. "Motocross is a very challenging sport due to the combination of endurance, fast reflexes, and the will to win that is a requirement if you want to stack up against other riders," Leiby said. “Not to mention the adrenaline rush you get jumping your bike 70 feet and hitting the ground with the throttle wide open.” Leiby races regularly on the weekends and takes his wife Jen and 4-year-old son Erich with him. It has really turned out to be a great way for him to spend time with his family on the weekend because almost everyone who has children takes them out to the track to support their rider. There are some overhead costs to get involved: the bike itself, the protective equipment and getting a way to transport the bike. Leiby said. "In motocross, wrecks are inevitable, but responsible riders invest in all of the protective equipment needed to help us stay safe.” — Mike Leiby

Motocross hobby allows Army Space soldier to ‘fly’

By Staff Sgt. Garrison Mothershead

Unit Reporter

FORT DETRICK, Md. — Every Army unit has its closet rock musician, or a guy or gal who can make anything with pistons run or some other out-of-the ordinary person whose after-duty occupation would seem exotic to many.

In the ranks of A Company, 1st Satellite Control Battalion, Army Space Command, a variety of skills and competencies can be found that go far beyond those required of professional soldiers and skilled satellite controllers. In the business of space operations, more than a couple of the folks in this unit do things like liquid-cool their home computer’s CPU in an effort to be the first to break 64-bit encryption or to speed up their gaming capability.

Mike Leiby

Hobbies and pastimes of the more physically audacious type are also found.

One staff sergeant spends as much of his free time as possible rocketing around a dirt track on a highly specialized motorcycle in the very fast and high-flying sport of motocross.

Mike Leiby, 30, comes from a family in northeastern Pennsylvania where riding dirt bikes is second nature. He started riding when he was only 6 and has managed to find a way to stay involved in his favorite pastime despite the traveling lifestyle of today’s soldier.

Opportunity for participation and competition abounds in the continental United States. In fact, competition is very stiff due to the number of years the sport has been around and the accessibility of tracks. When Leiby received orders for Okinawa assigning him to E Co., 1st Opp. Leiby

SMDC teams in the Ten-Miler Oct. 20 are listed below:

Team Discovery

Cory Anderton 1:12:34
Bob Barrett 1:26:44
Lan Dalat 1:11:14
Tim Kao 1:08:18
James Meisinger 1:25:32
Samuel Patton 1:13:46
Stephen Redmon 1:04:23
Philip Tomlin 1:31:38

Team Columbia

David Farrissee 1:07:35
William Reese 1:17:52
Michael Smith 1:20:50
Tim Murtha 1:25:32
Joseph Cosumano 1:24:52
Robert Limaico 1:35:29
Michael Child 1:35:36

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Army Space Command Ten-Miler team. “It was all white, and the temperature was perfect.”

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This was Dalat’s sixth time running the Army Ten-Miler. The only year he missed was 2001 when the race was canceled due to 9-11.

Dalat started running in 1983 in southern California on his Tustin High School’s cross-country team. His goal was to make the varsity team, which he did his senior year.

“When I got to college at California State University, Fullerton, I continued to run,” Dalat said. “When I enlisted in the Army back in December 1985, I did my two miles in 9 minutes, 40 seconds. The drill sergeant didn’t believe I completed all the laps and made me run another lap. Now I’m slower, I do two miles in under 13 minutes.”


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