



First in Deed

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California
Engineers Train
in Wisconsin



In this issue...

Changes make First Army Stronger
Lt. Gen. Thomas G. Miller

Volunteers Continue to play key role
James Holiday

Division West trainer inspires troops
Spc. Meredith Vincent

177th Armor preps individual augmentees
Staff Sgt. Raheem Lay

479th FA stays on target
Sgt. Erica N. Cain

Age no barrier for Air Assault students
Staff Sgt. April Melton and Maj. Jason Fetterolf

First Army welcomes new CSM
W. Wayne Marlow

Exercise preps 36th ID for Iraq
W. Wayne Marlow

Counter-IED training at Fort Hood
Sgt. Erica N. Cain



On the cover: California Army National Guard Soldiers from the 649th Engineer Company, based in Chico, Calif., conduct squad level movement training Dec. 17 at Fort McCoy, Wis. Photo by 1st Lt., Jeffrey Gruidl, 181st INF BDE, DIV West.

3 *Division West recognizes Reservists* **12**
Michael M. Novogradac

3 *First Army, Winn hospital forge partnership* **13**

4 *Capt. Kurt Van Slooten*
1-289 Soldiers tackle gas chamber **14**

5 *Sgt. 1st Class Sebastian Bankston*
Soldiers build Strong Bonds at retreat **15**

6 *Capt. Marvin J. Baker*
Hawaii ARNG ready for Afghanistan **16**

7 *Spc. Carl Havlik*
Vietnam veteran trains for Iraq rotation **17**

8 *Spc. Carl Havlik*
Arkansas Aviation regiment completes **18**

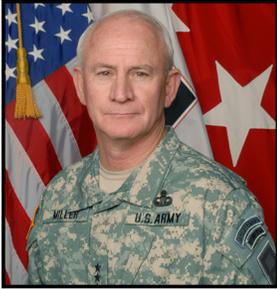
9 *aerial gunnery*
Spc. Carl Havlik

10 *Army helps 53rd Brigade demobilize* **19**
Sgt. Maj. Warren Byrd

California Engineers train in cold, snow **20**
1st Lt. Jeffrey Gruidl

Blue Force Tracker helps cut fog of war **20**
1st Lt. Jeffrey Gruidl

Changes make First Army stronger



These are exciting times for First Army, as we have welcomed new members to the command group and our move to Rock Island Arsenal draws nearer.

Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse L. Andrews Jr. and Deputy Commander, Brig. Gen. Mark MacCarley, are valuable additions

who bring a wealth of experience and talent to our team. We are already reaping the benefits at First Army because of their contributions.

We are within half a year of our first Soldiers and civilians making the move to the Quad Cities area and our

new home at Rock Island Arsenal.

Many of us have made trips to Quad Cities to visit with our future neighbors and get familiar with the area. We have seen excellent schools, a variety of entertainment options, splendid restaurants, and a wholesome, Midwestern atmosphere ideal for raising a family.

Also, we have seen a post suited to our needs for which we are excited to bring our talents and experience. I am confident that First Army and the Arsenal will make for a good team.

Finally, I would like to convey my sincere wishes to everyone in the First Army family, for a healthy, happy and safe New Year.

- Lt. Gen. Thomas G. Miller



Volunteers continue to play key role

By James Holiday
First Army Headquarters Family Programs

The strength of the Army lies in its Soldiers; the strength of Army communities lies in the talents and contributions of its volunteers. Volunteerism benefits everyone. It has a positive impact on communities, Families, and those who volunteer. It stabilizes our Army communities by contributing to community cohesion and enhancing the well-being of our Soldiers, Families, and civilians. Volunteer involvement amplifies overall Family satisfaction with the Army lifestyle and sets an example for others to follow. It provides opportunities for personal and professional development. Volunteers learn skills that they can take with them. As volunteers work side by side, friendships are often formed that last a lifetime. Volunteers are part of the foundation of Army life. These are just some of the reasons why we support our First Army volunteers.

Supporting our volunteers starts with understanding why they volunteer. Clearly volunteers are not motivated by financial remuneration. While there are many theories about why people volunteer, there are many powerful motivators that are apparent. People may be motivated by the sense of satisfaction that goes along with achievement. They set goals, define the path to the goal, develop the necessary skills, solve all the problems, meet all the challenges, and accomplish the mission. People can then look back and say, "I did a good job." Hopefully, others are adding their voices to the recognition. Many people also like to be a part of a group that works together. They like being on a team and developing professional and personal relationships and friendships. They like to help other people, and their recognition is the smile on someone's face. Many people are also motivated by wanting to make a real difference in their community. They are able to see a community need, develop

a strategy, motivate others to join in the project, and then lead the way. Many different programs in military and civilian communities provide volunteers opportunities to pursue these motivations and contribute to their communities.

Volunteers deserve the best care we can give them. Some of this has to do with effective management and some has to do with recognition. Have clear job descriptions. Know the skills of the volunteers and match them with jobs that utilize those skills. Ask people to volunteer for specific jobs. One important reason people volunteer is because someone asked them. Provide opportunities for training so volunteers can enhance their skills. Create ways for volunteers to advance to greater levels of responsibility. Provide the resources, tools, and workspace needed for volunteers to be successful and efficient. Know and follow the regulations to establish the necessary support systems needed for volunteers to get the job done. This support helps accomplish the specified mission and helps volunteers know they are a necessary part of accomplishing the total Army mission.

Volunteer recognition is critical to helping volunteers feel valued, appreciated, and validated. While it is just the right thing to do, recognizing volunteers is also an important part of retention. Volunteers who feel appreciated are more likely to continue to volunteer. The next National Volunteer Recognition Week is April 10-16, 2011. The theme will be "Celebrating People in Action." This is the time that installations will host recognition ceremonies and present awards. Installation ceremonies are wonderful and elaborate events. However, we recommend that First Army at all levels also recognize volunteers at unit ceremonies. This enhances unit cohesion and gives our commanders the opportunity to say how much they and all of us appreciate our volunteers. All volunteers must be registered in the Volunteer Management Information System which can be accessed online at <https://www.myarmyonesource.com> (select volunteer tools, upper right).



Division West trainer inspires troops

Story and photo by
Spc. Meredith Vincent
197th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP MCGREGOR, N.M. - Across a wide stretch of dirt and sand, a dozen Soldiers lined up in formation, shields at the ready, waiting to be attacked by an opposing force. To the side, another Soldier watched them intently, looking for any discrepancies or weaknesses in the formation.

Staff Sgt. Jose Saenz is a senior instructor with First Army Division West's 5th Armored Brigade. At Camp McGregor, along New Mexico's southern border, Saenz teaches the use of non-lethal weapons, riot control and other detainee operation tactics to deploying Soldiers.

This group of Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers is deploying to Afghanistan and Saenz knows what they learn in New Mexico will affect every mission they undertake overseas. After the training exercise finished, he gathered the Soldiers together to discuss what could be improved, what worked well and what they learned.

A New Mexico native, Saenz has been in the military for 18 years, two of which he spent in Iraq. Saenz said his time overseas improved his skills as an instructor.

"We actually had direct contact, not only with Iraqi nationals, but also de-



Staff Sgt. Jose A. Saenz, a senior instructor with First Army Division West's 5th Armored Brigade, instructs Soldiers from the Michigan Army National Guard's 1776th Military Police Company on riot control procedures.

tainees from all around," he said. "This kind of training was not around when I was a young Soldier, and I'm glad I've been given the knowledge I have to show these troops out here."

Saenz is passionate about his job. He laughs and jokes with the Soldiers he trains, but also emphasizes how important their mission is.

"He tells you what you need to work on, while at the same time telling you what you're doing right," said Spc. Rebekah Hubers, with the 1776th Military

Police Company from Taylor, Mich. "He really motivates us and keeps our energy high, but also keeps us focused on the task at hand."

Spc. Luke Langmeyer, also with the 1776th MP Co., explained why Saenz's training is so important.

"He gets more in-depth," Langmeyer said. "It's a good eye-opener and re-establishes why we train the way we do."

Staff Sgt. Thomas St. George, also a 5th AR Bde. instructor, has worked with Saenz for nearly three years and has observed the qualities that make him a unique and capable teacher.

"He makes the training fun, makes it realistic," St. George said. "The Soldiers respond very well to him."

It is also important that the training is not confusing or too complicated.

"For some of these newer, younger Soldiers, it's a good hands-on experience," said Sgt. Scott Stonebreaker, from the 1776th MP Co. "It's straightforward. It's cut and dried. There's no beating around the bush and it'll help them out a lot during detainee ops."

The Michigan Soldiers will be escorting and searching detainees, and Saenz stressed that they not let their guard down at any time.

First in Deed

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Rock Island ready to welcome First Army

By Jennifer Fowler
City of Rock Island

Rock Island is rolling out the welcome mat for the First Army. We can't wait to call you neighbors and friends. We'd like to share a little bit about Rock Island.

"We feel we get a lot of the benefits of a larger city, but we also like the small town feel that we have," said Dr. Brian Cady, resident and medical practitioner in Moline, Ill. "We understand you're moving to the Quad Cities from a major metropolitan market. However we know you'll find many of the conveniences you're looking for in Rock Island."

Young professional Greg Hass added, "With Rock Island being one of the most affordable cities in the Midwest, you get more for less."

When it comes to looking for a new home, there are a variety of options. Rock Island has historic neighborhoods like Highland Park and Broadway Historic District. There are established neighborhoods with mature trees, such as the Watch Hill and Wildwood neighborhoods, but also new construction in the city's southwest that affords a more

rural feel

Over the past few years many downtown buildings have been renovated into apartments and condominiums. This includes Renaissance Lofts, Gold-



man Lofts, Sala Flats, and Voss Brothers Lofts. Anne Johnson, downtown resident, said, "Living downtown has given me a great opportunity to take advantage of all the events. There are some great restaurants and art galleries, and there is a theatre."

Rock Island also has excellent schools. "Both my wife and I are very impressed with the education that our children receive," Cady said. "The classes are large enough where they have a diversity of children but not too large where they don't get the individual attention that they need." Over the last few

years, \$22 million has been invested in Rock Island's public school buildings and 2010 saw the opening of a new elementary school, the Rock Island Center for Math and Science.

For entertainment, Rock Island has parks, the Whitewater Junction, and many options in The District, Rock Island's downtown.

Rock Island resident Jerry Jones said, "You can find a house that you can live in, in a neighborhood that's safe, in an area that you want to bring up your kids, with a quality education. The area enjoys diversity of its population, and that's one of the things that sold us. Rock Island provides us with activities that we can take our entire family to. It's small enough that you can meet people that you know every day, but large enough in that you can have a variety of activities to get engaged in."

To find out more about living in Rock Island visit LiveRI.com and click on First Army. The site features details on a giveaway for First Army employees, including free golf, aquatic center, and fitness center passes. Or call Kerry Mangelsdorf at (309) 788-6311.

177th Armor preps individual augmentees

By Staff Sgt. Raheem Lay
177th AR BDE PAO, DIV East

CAMP SHELBY, Miss. - Reserve and Active Sailors from all over the country form a united front in support of the Operation Enduring Freedom. This year, the Sailors of "Navy Group 2" will conduct a detainee operations mission in Afghanistan. Knowing how critical this mission will be, the 177th Armored Brigade is dedicated to ensuring that these Sailors have the necessary tools and guidance in order to make their mission a success.

"We have been training non stop here a Camp Shelby," said Senior Chief Petty Officer Mike Luong, from Orange County, Calif. "Although we have a week to go before entering the detain-

ee operations training facility, the field training exercises have kept our motivation and confidence level high. Our Soldiers are dedicated to the training and to the mission we stand to face in theatre."

The Sailors are being trained on the most recent detainee operation procedures and war fighting tactics executed in theatre. Veteran Soldiers, who have just returned from battle, are currently working with the Operation Warrior Trainer program under the 177th AR Bde. at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Lt. Cmdr. Brett Tittle from Los Angeles, Calif. said he appreciates the input from the trainers who have recently deployed to theater.

"It gives us more confidence with the preparation we have received thus far,"

said Tittle. "Knowing that we are being educated with the most recent Intel raises our levels of understanding and awareness of our mission in combat."

So far, the Sailors have undergone an extensive amount of training in regards to basic military precision, operation and current war fighting skills.

"Ninety-five percent of my Sailors are volunteers and many of them have never been in a combat zone before. Their level of concentration and preparation has been off the charts in my opinion. They understand that they have a critical mission overseas and each of them has made significant contributions towards helping one another in developing a team effort environment."



First Army welcomes new CSM

By W. Wayne Marlow
First Army Public Affairs

FORT GILLEM - A 30-year veteran with four combat tours of Iraq has joined First Army as its senior enlisted Soldier.

Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse L. Andrews Jr. comes to First Army from the 3rd Infantry Division, where he served as division command sergeant major. First Army Soldiers and civilians welcomed him in a ceremony in front of First Army headquarters on Oct. 14.

"There couldn't be a better day for First Army...to get an NCO of this caliber," said Lt. Gen. Thomas G. Miller, First Army commander. Miller noted Andrews' three decades of service and frequent combat tours and said, "I dare anybody to match those credentials."

Andrews and First Army will be a good match, according to Miller. "We have no other mission than to get Soldiers ready for war... and they will get the benefit of his leadership," Miller said. "There's not a person in First Army that's not going to be a better Soldier because of what he's going to bring to the plate."



479th Field Artillery hones skills

Story and photos by Sgt. Erica N. Cain
479th FA BDE PAO, DIV West

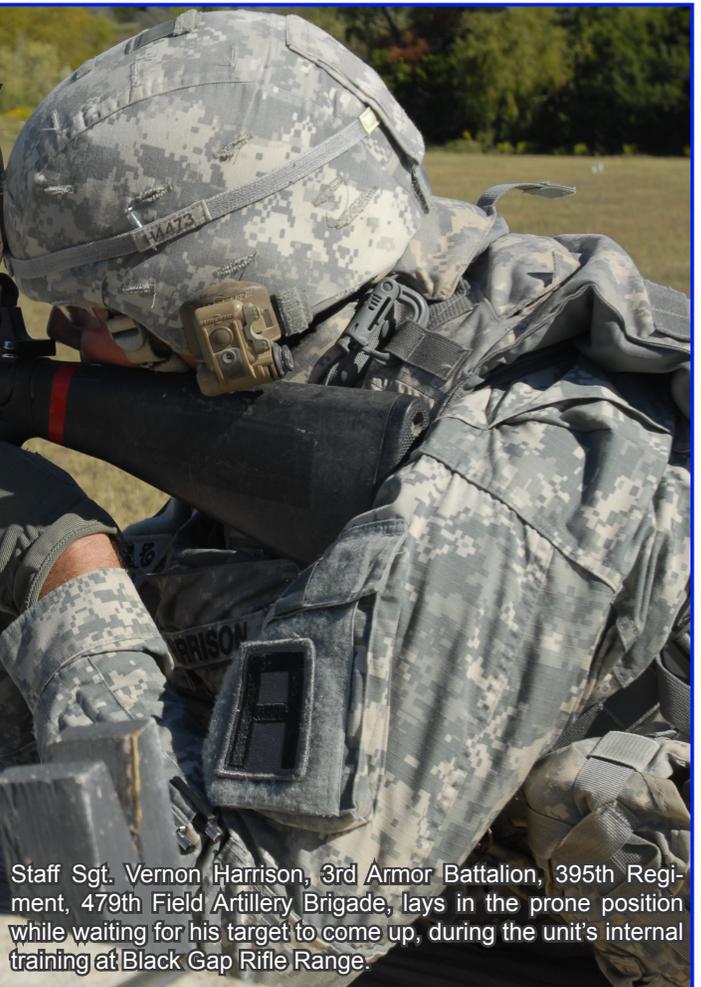
FORT HOOD, Texas — Soldiers with the 479th Field Artillery Brigade's 3rd Armor Battalion, 395th Regiment conducted an M16 range for their observer/controller trainers and staff.

"It is very important that we conduct internal training when a deploying unit is not on our platform," said Sgt. 1st Class Harold Jolivet. "This gives us an opportunity to refresh our

skills with the training and be able to recognize what the deploying Soldiers need assistance on when firing their weapon."

Staff Sgt. James Grant started the training by conducting the primary marksmanship instruction. "We went over the basic fundamentals ensuring that each Soldier maintains a steady position, aiming, trigger squeeze, and that they remember to control their breathing," said Grant.

"Normally we have to fire at the paper targets. We haven't fired at transition targets in a while," said Staff Sgt. Vernon Harrison. "This training was fun."



Staff Sgt. Vernon Harrison, 3rd Armor Battalion, 395th Regiment, 479th Field Artillery Brigade, lays in the prone position while waiting for his target to come up, during the unit's internal training at Black Gap Rifle Range.

Age no barrier for 5th Armored Brigade

3 Soldiers over 40 conquer Air Assault course

By Staff Sgt. April Melton and Maj. Jason Fetterolf
5th AR BDE, DIV West Public Affairs

FORT BLISS, Texas – The Army's Air Assault School training carries the reputation of being one of the most physically and mentally demanding available anywhere. A handful of the 298 students decided to take on the challenge despite the fact they were over 40 years old - the age at which most think more about retiring than perspiring.

Eleven days later, 142 Soldiers, airmen and cadets coming from units on post as well as from across the U.S. were awarded the Air Assault badge and the 2B Additional Skill Identifier on Noel Field here.

Although the training is mandatory for some, a group of 13 volunteer 5th Armored Brigade Soldiers were among the graduates and three Soldiers in this group - ages 41, 44 and 50 - proved age is only a number.

Day Zero

Service members are not considered Air Assault students until after successful completion of Zero Day, the first day of the course, which requires students to complete a grueling obstacle course, two-mile run, and an inspection of equipment prior to continuing.

"It's a chance to see if I can still hang with the young guys. Plus, I think it inspires them," said Sgt. 1st Class William Neumann, 50, a Soldier with 21 years in the Army assigned to the 3rd Battalion, 361st Combat Support Regiment, "Mountain Warrior," 5th Armored Brigade.

The Air Assault School trains Soldiers to conduct airborne helicopter operations. During the course, students learn aircraft orientation, sling load operations, and proper rappelling techniques.

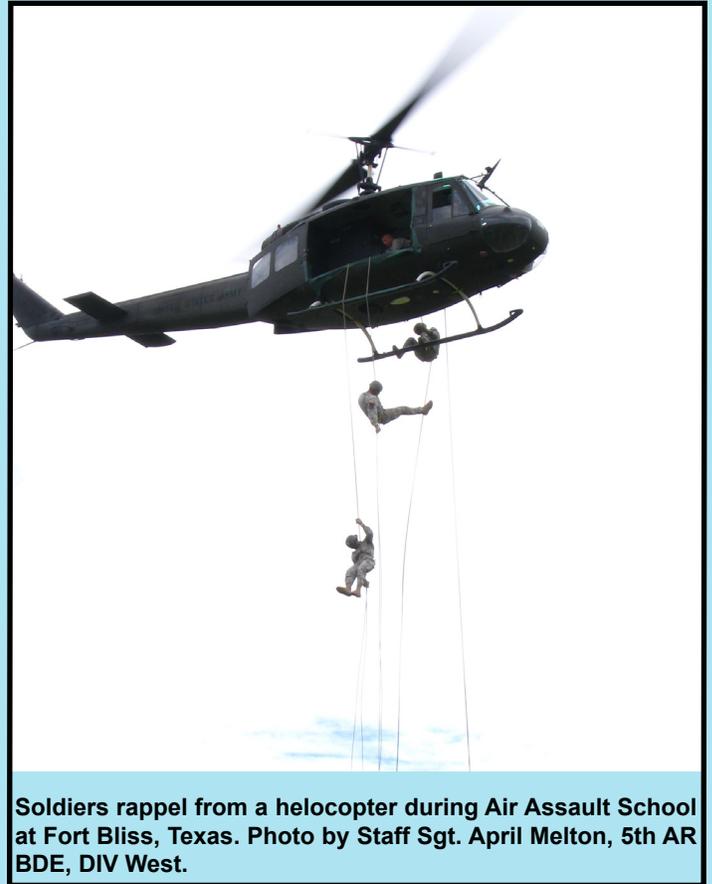
"Sling load was the reason for taking the course," said Class Leader 1st Lt. Jesse Kittel, 3rd Bn, 361st CS Regt. "We are not training infantry units right now but if we were, we would need to know this stuff in order to teach it."

Although focused on teaching airborne helicopter operations, the course allowed for other unanticipated valuable lessons, particularly due to the interplay between the younger and older students in the class.

Attention to detail is key

"I received a better understanding of today's young Soldiers and what their concerns and desires are as far as career opportunities and living conditions (go). I appreciate that we have some good young leaders and that the future of the Army is bright," explained 41 year-old Maj. Derek Uehla, executive officer, 3rd Bn, 361st CS Regt.

Open to both males and females, the course combines helicopter insertion techniques, physical training, and tedious



Soldiers rappel from a helicopter during Air Assault School at Fort Bliss, Texas. Photo by Staff Sgt. April Melton, 5th AR BDE, DIV West.

packing lists; one missing item could cause the student to fail the school immediately.

"We prepared and inspected loads. Attention to detail is very important. Equipment can be damaged or personnel can be killed," said Staff Sgt. Jose Leal, 1st Bn, 361st Regt., "Redhawk," 5th AR Bde.

As a culminating training event, students must also complete a 12-mile road march with weapon and combat-loaded rucksack within three hours in order to graduate.

"It's what I needed. It's a challenging change of pace after long hours of static training. It really helped me check where I am physically," said Cpl. David Morera, Charlie Team, Task Force Outlaw, 5th AR Bde.

Forty-four year-old Sgt. 1st Class Edward Broadnax, observer controller/trainer, 1st Bn, 362nd Air Defense Artillery Regt., "Renegades," 5th AR Bde. finished the road march in 2 hours, 15 minutes, the fastest time, far ahead of his classmates, often running the course as sweat streamed down his body while chanting "Air Assault, Air Assault."

Broadnax was one of four honor graduates recognized at the graduation ceremony.

With the brigades 72 percent course retention rate, compared to the overall class retention rate of 48 percent, 5th AR Bde Soldiers have come to be known as some of the Army's premier trainers, and quite possibly the most unrivaled competitors - where age certainly knows no limit.



Demobilization focuses on Soldier care

Story and photo by Sgt. Belynda Faulkner
177 AR BDE, DIV East Public Affairs

CAMP SHELBY, Miss. – The 177th Armored Brigade, the Camp Shelby Medical Task Force and Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center installation, are conducting demobilization operations for the returning 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Louisiana National Guard.

This joint effort, directed by First Army Division East, will ensure every Soldier returning home is given individual care during the demobilization process. This process provides information on veteran affairs benefits, legal assistance and TRICARE allowances, with special emphasis on any medical and or behavioral health issues the Soldiers may face.

According to the Army's Health Promotion, Risk Reduction, Suicide Prevention report in 2010 the number of suicides and attempted suicides were at a record high during fiscal year 2009. In the report Gen. Peter W. Chiarelli, vice chief of staff of the U.S. Army, called the numbers of suicides tragic.

"These are not just statistics; they are our Soldiers. They are Soldiers who may be stressed, feel isolated, become dependent on drugs or just need more time to recover," Chiarelli said. He added the military is seeing an increase in Soldiers seeking behavioral health care, a clear indication that the effort to emphasize behavioral health is working.

With this in mind the 177th AR Bde. is ensuring that each returning individual Soldier is receiving the care they are entitled to.

"We recognize and appreciate the sacrifice's these Soldiers have made," said Sgt. 1st Class Scott Gunther, non commissioned officer in charge of patient services, medical task force Camp Shelby Miss. "We follow up on every Soldier, we stay in touch with their command to ensure that any issues they have are being addressed and they receive the care they need. We don't just check the block."

Amanda Vibelius has been a civilian member of the medical task force at Camp Shelby for almost six years.

"I love working here; I am honored to be working with such great men and women," said Vibelius. "These Soldiers go overseas and they deal with so much. When they come back they remember me, and they tell me they appreciate what I do...it's just humbling."

The medical task force at Camp Shelby is able to assist 350 to 400 Soldiers per day. This tremendous effort by the Soldiers and civilians is impressive by any standard, and appreciated by returning Soldiers.

"I appreciate how hard they work," said Spc. Christopher Pinder, light wheel vehicle mechanic, 256th IBCT, from West Monroe, La. "It takes patience because demobilization is a slow process. I really feel that the medical care providers are paying attention to everyone."



Soldiers from the 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Louisiana Army National Guard, watch Christmas movies as they wait to be seen by a dental provider. The 177th Armored Brigade is conducting demobilization operations for the returning 256th, helping to ensure each returning Soldier receives quality care.

Pinder went on to say that is it important to be honest with the providers for the system to work the right way.

"I mean I just got back and I am going to be home with my family in time for Christmas," Pinder said while smiling.

Col. William Prior, Commander 177th Armored Brigade has taken the return and the demobilization of the 256th IBCT so close to the holidays into consideration.

"The 177th Armored Brigade and Camp Shelby will assist them in completing their mobilization by conducting demobilization operations to standard while ensuring that Soldiers can enjoy the Christmas holiday," said Prior. "We will do that by granting a four day pass to those individuals who are not complete with demobilization by December 23rd."

Prior added that if Soldiers choose not to go home during that time the dining facility will be serving a traditional Christmas meal. He also encouraged them to take part in holiday activities in the Hattiesburg area.

"In the end, we will take care of these Soldiers by conducting quality demobilization activities that are focused on individual Soldier care and simultaneously allowing them to have a memorable Christmas."

The 177th AR Bde. trains, coaches and mentors Soldiers, Airmen and Sailors in support of our nation's overseas contingency operations. The majority of the work at the 177th is with mobilized Army reserve component forces, although they also train active forces. The brigade is stationed at Camp Shelby's Joint Forces Training Center, which is one of the most active mobilization training centers in the U.S. Army.

Exercise preps 36th ID for Iraq

By W. Wayne Marlow
First Army Public Affairs

JOINT BASE LEWIS-McCHORD, Wash. -- The 36th Infantry Division, Texas Army National Guard, got tested at what its commander called the "graduate level" during an exercise here.

The exercise, "Unified Endeavor V," allowed the unit to build on previous exercises and prepare for its deployment to Iraq. The 36th ID headquarters element will be part of stability operations as the focus continues to shift to Iraqi control.

Over the last year and a half, 36th ID Soldiers have drilled during a series of exercises and been to schools, live fires, cultural awareness training, and much more.

"We had an embed program with the 1st Infantry Division in February," said the 36th Commander, Maj. Gen. Eddy Spurgin. "We would send four to five Soldiers at a time to Basra to embed with the 1st ID to learn what they were doing."

A command post exercise in conjunction with First Army also helped the 36th get ready. "First Army did an outstanding job of running the exercise for us," Spurgin said. "They facilitated, coached, and mentored our staff and we learned the basics before we came here."

"Once we got here, we had total integrations with the whole

team," added Command Sgt. Maj. Wilson Early, the 36th's senior enlisted Soldier.

Besides staff integration, other areas of focus were refining battle drills and learning information and stability operations. The bulk of 36th's mission in Iraq will be focused on completing the turnover to Iraqi control. "We're going to help close this out and make sure it's done correctly," Early said.

According to Spurgin, 45 percent of the unit has combat experience, and another advantage is that duties often undertaken by Guard units will be replicated in theatre. "As a National Guard division headquarters, we probably have some advantages in conducting stability operations because we have Soldiers with good civil skill sets," he said.

The unit had over a year's notice about the deployment, a key item, according to Spurgin and Early.

"That helped us to identify all schools we needed to send Soldiers to, especially low-density MOS's that take a long time to complete," Spurgin said.

"It's very realistic," Spurgin said. "It's going to be very similar." For instance, on key leader engagements, "They actually use Iraqis and we use interpreters."

Col. Paul Ambrose, First Army Division West training officer, said the 36th is ready for its mission.

"We've had plenty of opportunities to see how they're doing," he said. "It's clear the energy they put into it for 18 months in seven different exercises." 

158th Brigade tackles Agribusiness mission

By Lilliana Aleman Roman
DIV East Public Affairs

Camp Atterbury, Ind. - The 158th Infantry Brigade has taken on an unusual mission – training three of the newly created Agribusiness Development Teams from Tennessee, Indiana, and Texas. Each unit is composed of three sections: Headquarters, Security Forces, and the Agribusiness team.

While the ADT's security forces trained on improvised explosive device simulation training exercises, squad live fire, and urban operations, the Agricultural teams received their training at the Purdue University Beck Agricultural Center. This program, between the Army National Guard and Purdue University, coordinated by Kevin McNamara, Ph.D., Professor of the Department of Agricultural Economics at Purdue University, was developed to provide information focused on Afghanistan's livestock, horticulture, agriculture, apiculture, and economy.

One might think it is presumptuous for the U. S. government to teach Afghan farmers how to take care of their own land, but McNamara has an answer for this.

"When the Soviets occupied Afghanistan they destroyed the infrastructure for agriculture," said McNamara. "They destroyed the irrigation system, they cut down fruit trees, they planted land mines in fields; they destroyed growth."

McNamara added that by 2002, Afghanistan had been in

'The ADTs are small units with a very critical mission.'

- Col. John L. Smith

158th Infantry Brigade commander

conflict for 30 years. When their education systems stopped, they lost all their educated people resulting in psychological and economical damage.

McNamara, who has focused his research on Afghanistan for the last seven years also went there as a volunteer for the Peace Corps in 1972.

"Eighty percent of the population is made up of farmers who are very poor and have one to two acres of land and maybe fifteen people living on that," said McNamara. "Their income is very low, so what the ADTs are doing is really targeting those people to help them improve productivity which will increase their income." The activities that the ADTs are focused on, he said, is just what's needed to begin pulling Afghans out of poverty.

Regardless of their job, every Soldier in the ADTs trained on individual and collective combat tactics. Col. John L. Smith, 158th Infantry Brigade Commander, could not be more thrilled to take on such a remarkable mission. 

Division West leaders gain from C-IED training

Story and photos by Sgt. Erica N. Cain
479th FA BDE, DIV West Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas — Division West's brigade commanders and command sergeants major, along with their counter-improvised explosive device master trainers, gained a deeper understanding of C-IED

driving to deliver supplies. The scenarios resembled actual attacks Soldiers could encounter during deployment.

When the convoy entered a mock town, civilians approached the Soldiers and attempted to sell fruits and vegetables and other goods. Some of the Soldiers dismounted the vehicles and posted guard

Soldiers with the 479th Field Artillery Brigade's 1st Engineer Battalion, 395th Regiment interact with civilians during a counter-improvised explosive device training demonstration.



techniques after viewing a demonstration by Soldiers of the 479th Field Artillery Brigade's 1st Engineer Battalion, 395th Regiment.

"One benefit of this conference was that the command groups ... were able to exchange information and ideas about their IED training and make recommendations on how to improve the lanes training here at Fort Hood," said Lt. Col. Jason Smallfield, commander of the 1-395th.

The C-IED lanes training consisted of six events in which the 1-395th Soldiers demonstrated the proper techniques to react to IEDs whether passing through a town or

while others interacted with the civilians before an explosion killed one civilian and wounded a Soldier. The Soldiers reacted and moved out of the town.

The Soldiers also reacted to IEDs placed on roads and in abandoned vehicles, demonstrating how they train deploying Soldiers to react in these situations.

"Getting people out on the lanes was more beneficial versus having to sit through a PowerPoint presentation," Smallfield said. "This type of conference is held approximately every six months, and the outcome is getting better each time."

The purpose of the conference was for all of Division West's Enduring Mobiliza-

Right: Master Sgt. Bruce Haines, second from right, speaks with civilians during a counter-improvised explosive device training demonstration at Fort Hood, Texas.



tion Training Centers to train according to the First Army standard, said Command Sgt. Maj. Giovanni P. Fuentes, 1-395th command sergeant major, but command groups must adjust training according to varying conditions and missions of deploying units.

Each conference participant received an observer/controller trainer binder, a lanes

training binder and visual aids created by 1-395 Soldiers to use as reference guides on their training platforms.

This is a “journey, not a destination,” Smallfield said. “We will have to continue to work together to stay updated and improve our training.”



Soldiers with the 479th Field Artillery Brigade’s 1st Engineer Battalion, 395th Regiment react to an improvised explosive device during a convoy exercise.

Division West recognizes Reservists

Stoty and photo by Michael M. Novogradac
DIV West Public Affairs

JOINT BASE LEWIS-McCHORD, Wash. — While preparing them for battle, First Army Division West trainers get a chance to see some of the unique struggles reserve component Soldiers face when they deploy.

Before reporting to his current assignment, Lt. Col. Steven Rosson saw his fair share of duty in combat zones as an active duty Soldier, serving first as a brigade intelligence officer with the 3rd Infantry Division during the initial invasion of Iraq in 2003 and then from 2004 to 2006 with back-to-back 3rd ID assignments as a brigade intelligence officer and the special troops battalion executive officer.

In his current position as Division West's director of intelligence, Rosson took the lead for planning and executing the military intelligence training of the Nebraska Army National Guard's 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade from Omaha during the unit's culminating training event.

Difficult Job

"Before coming to this job I would have never had full knowledge of how difficult it is to be a reserve component Soldier, especially in a mobilization process like this," Rosson said.

"Their families are taken care of not unlike an active duty unit," he said. "The unit established Family Readiness Groups, just like active duty units. They have a structure for their Families, so when they are activated on a federal status, they have the same systems."

Noticing that the 67th BfSB did things like publish a Family newsletter, and hearing that the brigade commander visited all his units and conducted town hall meetings with the Families, Rosson saw firsthand how well his reserve component brethren prepared for deployment.

"They are well-armed with information, and they have a clear understanding of how well [Soldiers] are trained and prepped," he said. "And with a good information flow back and forth, I'm confident their Families are taken care of."

Rosson said the 67th BfSB also had a "Boss Lift" in which employers from Nebraska and other states went to Washington to see their Soldiers, to meet the unit commander and to see the training Soldiers go through. Boss Lifts essentially educate employers about the importance of what Soldiers do.

"I've learned it is a very difficult process to be a Guard or Reserve Soldier," Rosson said. "Much of this pre-mobilization training takes them away – sometimes for weeks and weeks at a time – and then

they return to their jobs for a few weeks, and then they have even more training.

Difficult for Families

"It is a very difficult thing for their Families to manage and for employers to manage, so it's important that the employers get to come out here and see firsthand what their [Soldiers] do and how important a mission it truly is."

As well, Soldiers gain the understanding that employers make a commitment to national security by hiring employees who also serve in the Guard or Reserve.

"They are going to lose these Soldiers for a little over a year and then they're going to return back to their civilian employment," Rosson said. "That is a strong commitment for employers to make, and it is very important that we have the support of the employers for the benefit of the Soldiers. If not, it puts the Soldiers in a precarious position of trying to balance their civilian employment and also worry about their mission."

Since the beginning of the operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, nearly 700,000 Reserve Component Soldiers have been mobilized, at a rate of about 75,000 per year.

Working closely with the Army National Guard and Army Reserve, Division West has trained more than 1,500 units and more than 85,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines since October 2007. 

Below: Col. Philip Stemple, left, commander of the Nebraska Army National Guard's 67th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, and Sgt. Garth Behlen of First Army Division West's 191st Infantry Brigade Public Affairs Office go through a media interview scenario as part of the unit's culminating training event at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash.



First Army, Winn Hospital forge partnership



A partnership between the 188th Inf. Brigade and Winn Army Community Hospital is helping the unit with its demobilization.

Story and photo by Capt. Kurt Van Slooten 188th INF BDE PAO, DIV East

FORT STEWART, Ga. – The partnership between the 188th Infantry Brigade, Winn Army Community Hospital, the Fort Stewart Mobilization Operations Center and the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team began several months prior to the 53rd's return from the Middle East.

"First Army understands the unique challenges that face a demobilizing Soldier upon returning from combat, and has tasked the 188th with ensuring that the 53rd IBCT is demobilized to the First Army standard," said Col. Robert A. Warburg, 188th Inf. Bde. commander.

"We rely on the experienced and capable staff at Winn Army Community Hospital to provide the medical care for returning Citizen-Soldiers."

The 188th Inf. Bde. has remained in close contact with the 53rd IBCT while they were in theater to help facilitate the demobilization process. First Army has set a high standard to ensure demobilizing Soldiers are reintegrated back into their communities. Part of the reintegration process involves supplying the Soldiers with quality medical care to provide for their physical and mental health.

Providing medical services for demobilizing 53rd IBCT has created some challenges with 3rd Infantry Division redeploying at the same time, but Winn Army Community Hospital has stepped up to provide medical personnel for a second Soldier Readiness Processing site.

"We normally have one SRP team, but using a Mobilization Support Unit with 17 medics and three primary care providers we created a second SRP team," Col. Paul R. Cordts,

commander of Winn Army Community Hospital.

During an 11-day window in December, the hospital will provide up to 11 additional primary care providers from Winn Hospital and Tuttle Clinic to support the reintegration of large numbers of returning Soldiers. They also have surge teams on stand-by at Forts Gordon and Benning, both in Ga., that can be on the ground in 8 to 12 hours, if necessary.

"I want to make sure the Soldiers get the care they deserve," said Cordts. "All Soldiers' immediate medical needs will be attended to right here at Winn. Working with TRI-CARE, we are also addressing the needs of Soldiers who require follow-up care.

"Soldiers identified with behavioral health needs will depart with the date and time for an appointment with a specific provider back home. Soldiers with non-behavioral health needs will have an authorization for an appointment before leaving Fort Stewart, and IRR Soldiers who get referrals will have a Winn Hospital nurse case manager assigned to make sure their needs are met."

Cordts said that some of the 53rd Soldiers would enter into the Warrior Transition Unit at Fort Stewart and may stay or may be transitioned over to the Community Based WTU in Orlando so they can be closer to home. The important thing, said Cordts, is that they receive high quality care and are satisfied with the care they receive.

"The demobilization process is going very well," said Col. Todd R. Chace, state surgeon, Florida National Guard, "I am impressed by the level of energy being put forth for the demobilization. All the preparation for the demobilization and the support from the hospital has been excellent."



1-289 Soldiers tackle gas chamber

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Sebastian Bankston
479th FA BDE, DIV West Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas — The 1st Battalion, 289th Infantry Regiment, an Army Reserve battalion under the 479th Field Artillery Brigade from Houston, Texas, brought 57 Soldiers here to conduct annual training at the Fort Hood Combat Systems Nuclear Biological Chemical chamber.

NBC training was one of many challenges the Soldiers went through during AT. Lt. Col. Bobby Simmons, commander of 1st Bn., 289th Inf. Reg., said this is the first time in two years of his command that the reserve unit has conducted a two-week AT, with warrior tasks such as the gas chamber, combatives and land navigation.

“The purpose of today’s training is for the Soldiers to check the integrity of their protective masks and to rely on the training they received before arriving at Fort Hood,” said Staff Sgt. Derrick Callicutt, 1st Bn., 289th Inf. Regt. NBC noncommissioned officer.

“State your name and your social security number,” said Callicutt, as the Soldiers filed into the chamber. With their hands on the shoulders of the Soldiers in front of them, Soldiers then removed their protective masks, and responded to Callicutt’s command. After approximately three minutes, the Soldiers were released from the chamber, tearing up, coughing and gasping for air.

Chlorobenzylidene malononitrile, also known as CS gas, was heated in the NBC chamber for the training exercise. CS gas caused a burning sensation but did not have a lasting effect on the Soldiers.

Command Sgt. Maj. Shelton Riggins participated in the



Staff Sgt. Derrick Callicutt, left, and Sgt. Rene Hernandez, members of the Army Reserve’s 1st Battalion, 289th Infantry Regiment from Houston demonstrate how to properly don the protective mask during a briefing at the Combat Systems Nuclear Biological Chemical Chamber at Fort Hood.

training alongside his Soldiers. As one of the oldest Soldiers in the battalion, Riggins said it is always important for him to participate in everything he requires his Soldiers to do.

“It was important that I go through the training with them, that I lead the way,” said Riggins. “It was challenging. I hadn’t been in there since my last deployment. I knew it might be challenging, but I wanted to go through and lead the way.”



Capt. Chad Fox, center, and 1st Lt. Israel Sanchez, right, both members of the Army Reserve’s 1st Battalion, 289th Infantry Regiment from Houston, Texas, react to CS gas exposure.

Soldiers build bonds at marriage retreat

22 Bayonet Brigade couples attend event

Story and photos by Capt. Marvin J. Baker
120th INF BDE PAO, DIV West

FORT HOOD, Texas — For many Soldiers, their greatest joys and deepest heartaches surround what is happening in their families. Soldiers want to develop strong relationships with their spouses and children. The Army helps Soldiers attain the joy that comes from that by teaching relationship skills in its chaplain-led and Army-funded Strong Bonds Marriage Enrichment Program.

Soldiers in the 120th Infantry Brigade recently strengthened these skills during a Strong Bonds Marriage Enrichment Retreat at Horseshoe Bay Resort near Marble Falls, Texas.

Sgt. Levi and Sidney Irvin were married June 25. They said they decided to attend the retreat because they heard it was a great experience and realized that proactive pre- and post-marital counseling is important to the longevity of their relationship.

“The retreat helps bring out issues that we might not normally discuss at home,” Sidney said. “If we have someone acting as a trainer, teaching skills like the Speaker-Listener exercise, we can see how to communicate better with each other. We are hoping the training can help us become stronger and keep us resilient if my husband deploys.” Chaplain (Capt.) Steven Pace, 120th Inf. Bde.

chaplain and Strong Bonds Retreat coordinator, told the couples communication is one of the most important keys to developing a marriage strong enough to endure the unique challenges of family life in the military.

Master Sgt. Jessie and Lisa Hicks have been married 20 years, and for the past seven years, they have endured their own unique challenges.

“For the past seven years, I have been away from

home most of the time. This year, I have been home for only 50 days,” Jessie said.

Lisa added, “It’s hard to keep from feeling like we are living two separate lives. It’s hard to focus on how we support each other instead of focusing on the separation,” Lisa said. When the Hicks get a chance to visit



Twenty-two couples participate in the 120th Infantry Brigade Strong Bonds Marriage Enrichment retreat at Horseshoe Bay Resort near Marble Falls, Texas.

each other, they make sure they are able to focus on the essentials of their relationship, they said.

The biggest thing is showing and telling the other how much they love each other, Lisa said.

Jessie will retire from the Army within the next year and will rejoin his family in Tuttle, Okla. “I am looking forward to Jessie coming home for good,” Lisa said. “I know the transition period for his return will be difficult. I think the retreat will help us re-open communication skills we didn’t use during his deployments.”

Most couples said learning the communication techniques were valuable, but what they all enjoyed was the most valuable commodity — time with each other.





166th Aviation trains Hawaii Army National Guard

Story and photos by Spc. Carl Havlik
166th AVN BDE, DIV West Public Affairs

FORT HOOD, Texas — First Army Division West's 166th Aviation Brigade trained the Hawaii Army National Guard's Company B, 1st Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment at Longhorn Airfield for the unit's deployment to Afghanistan.

The training included a personnel recovery lane training exercise, which teaches crew members what to do if their aircraft goes down in a hostile environment.

"They utilize a lot of skills while running this lane," said Staff Sgt. Jacob Long, a trainer for 1st Battalion, 383rd Combat Support/Combat Service Support, 166th Avn. Bde.

"Lanes training requires Soldiers to use skills they might not have used in a while, or ever, Long said.

"It's not at all what we expected," said Sgt. William LaGrave, a crew chief for 1st Bn., 171st Avn. Regt., who lived in Temple, Texas, about eight years ago. "Normally when you walk a lane, it's just that, it's artificial. This was fun."



Above: A Hawaii Army National Guard Soldier gives first aid to another during the personnel recovery lane training exercise conducted by First Army Division West's 166th Aviation Brigade at Shorthorn Airstrip on North Fort Hood, Texas.

Below: Hawaii Army National Guard Soldiers scan for enemy forces during the personnel recovery lane.



Vietnam veteran trains for Iraq rotation



Chief Warrant Officer 5 Stephen Sanderson of the Vermont Army National Guard's Company C, 3rd Battalion, 126th Medical Evacuation Regiment, lands a Blackhawk during an environmental training exercise at Double Eagle, N.M. The unit is being trained by First Army Division West's 166th Aviation Brigade for a deployment to Iraq.

**Story and photo by Spc. Carl Havlik
166th AVN BDE, DIV West Public Affairs**

FORT HOOD, Texas - "I've done the jungle, not the desert," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Stephen Sanderson.

Sanderson flew Army helicopters in Vietnam and is still flying today as a Blackhawk pilot for the Vermont Army National Guard's Company C, 3rd Battalion, 126th Medical Evacuation Regiment. He is in Texas preparing for a mission in Iraq which will be his final tour.

His unit is being trained at North Fort Hood by First Army Division West's 166th Aviation Brigade.

After enlisting in the Army in June 1969, Sanderson flew Huey helicopters for an assault company in Vietnam during his first tour. He is one of only a few Vietnam veterans - most of them pilots - to serve in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Sanderson believes that one of the biggest differences between the Vietnam War and current overseas contingency operations is the use of the draft to fill the U.S. military's ranks. In today's Army, every Soldier is a volunteer.

"This is the best-educated and motivated Army we have sent downrange," Sanderson said. "These Soldiers want to be here."

Army aviation has also changed a lot since the Vietnam War, he said.

"There are a lot of pre-flight checks that have to be done now. Back then, we got our mission, drew up a plan right there and that was it," Sanderson said.

Not only has mission planning changed since the 1970s, but so has the equipment. Blackhawk helicopters are a lot tougher and more technologically advanced than the Vietnam-era Huey. For instance, new Blackhawks are equipped with digitized control panels and gauges, unlike the Huey and older models of Blackhawks.

Sanderson recently celebrated both his 60th birthday and 40th anniversary of graduating from flight school. When asked why he continues to fly, he smiled and replied, "It's a privilege and an honor."



Arkansas Aviation Regiment completes aerial gunnery

Photo and Stories

By Spc. Carl Havlik

166th AVN BDE, DIV West Public Affairs



A crew member of Company B, 1st Battalion, 185th Aviation Regiment, Arkansas Army National Guard, surveys the terrain below in search of enemy targets Dec. 31st at Crittenger Range, North Fort Hood, Texas.

FORT HOOD, Texas —Soldiers with Company B, 1st Battalion, 185th Aviation Regiment, Arkansas Army National Guard, completed an aerial gunnery training exercise Dec. 31st at Crittenger Range, North Fort Hood training complex.

The exercise was observed by 1st Battalion, 351st Aviation Regiment, 166th Aviation Brigade. The 166th Avn. Bde. designed aerial gunnery which replicates flight profiles and threats encountered downrange using aircraft maneuver techniques to facilitate aircraft survival, which gives gunners the ability to provide sustained and accurate fire.

The required gunnery tables focus solely on door gunners and crew chiefs, leaving the pilots out of the equation. Lessons learned from Iraq and Afghanistan reveal the need for a coordinated effort between pilots and crews of non-attack aircraft to effectively provide suppressive or destructive fire.

Staff Sgt. Terry Evans, a door gunner for Co. B, was involved in an aerial combat situation during his first deployment.

“This exercise prepares you on what to do if you’re caught up in a situation like that,” Evans said. Co. B is attached to 1st Bn., 185th Avn. Regt., Mississippi Army National Guard. They will deploy, along with the California Army National Guard’s 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, to Iraq at the end of January for Operation New Dawn.



166th tackles new challenge

FORT HOOD, Texas - Never has the North Fort Hood training facility housed an aviation unit the size of the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, which came here to be prepped by the 166th Aviation Brigade. But the 166th was ready.

Maj. Dan Beadle, mobilization officer for the 166th, explained how North Fort Hood became the standard on which all aviation mobilizations are measured.

Reserve Component aviation mobilizations as we know it today started in 2006 with Texas’ 36th CAB, which was the first National Guard Aviation brigade mobilized at Fort Hood.

Shortly after that, the 3rd Bde, 75th Div., was redesignated as the 166th Avn. Bde. and transferred to Division West, First Army.

First Army and 166th were looking at different locations to establish an aviation center for excellence to mobilize aviation units. Having mobilized aviation units at Fort Sill, Okla., on a smaller scale, it was looked at as a definite option for continued use, and was used to mobilize the 28th and 34th CABs respectively.

However, First Army ultimately decided on Fort Hood as part of the Army’s plan to consolidate mobilization training centers and also because there were two semi-established training airstrips at North Fort Hood.



First Army helps 53rd IBCT demobilize

Story and photo by Sgt. Maj. Warren Byrd
First Army Public Affairs

FORT STEWART, Ga. – When soldiers are returning home from a deployment, they have a singular focus: get to their families – and fast. That urgency to see family is doubly heightened during the Christmas holiday.

Some Soldiers perceive the demobilization process, which can last up to two weeks, as perhaps the biggest obstacle in their quest to return to their loved ones. With that in mind, First Army partnered with Fort Stewart, the Army Installation Management Command, Medical Command and the Florida National Guard to streamline demobilization procedures here for Guard soldiers returning in December from a deployment to Southwest Asia.

Together, they more than halved the typical demobilization processing time.

The net result was a smooth return and eventual transition back to civilian life for members of the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, whose mission was to conduct escort and convoy security operations in Iraq and Kuwait in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn.

The almost 2,500 Soldiers landed at Hunter Army Airfield near Savannah, Ga., in nine separate Freedom Flights spread over two weeks, and were taken to nearby Fort Stewart for welcome home ceremonies and demobilization processing.

What's more impressive is that the entire process hardly skipped a beat, despite a break from the standard procedure of mobilizing and demobilizing units through the same installation. The 53rd, which was also responsible for base camp security training and force protection during deployment, mobilized through Fort Hood, Texas, in early March, but First Army agreed to a request by the Florida Guard for a site shift to Fort Stewart, closer to home for most of the unit's soldiers.

While it wasn't exactly an eleventh-hour change, the agencies involved shared a common goal – ensure a successful demobilization process that was soldier-focused. Teamwork translated to success.

"Everyone wholeheartedly agreed that we could work together to make this one of the best demobilizations possible," said Col. Robert Warburg, commander of the Stewart-based

188th Infantry Brigade, which spearheaded the operation for First Army. "We used the theme of 'Focused Soldier Care' as our pathway to success. Meeting that standard was our top priority.

"Demobilization was conducted to standard, not to a set time," Warburg said. "No soldier left the demobilization site until all his or her needs were satisfactorily validated and addressed."

Most soldiers completed the demobilization in approximately seven days or less. Some had additional needs that required more time at Fort Stewart. Regardless, 53rd soldiers overwhelmingly lauded the process.

"It's been extremely efficient," said Spc. Alexandra Moore, Alpha Company 2/116th Field Artillery, 53rd. "It was very smooth, from the time we got off the plane. I think they made a pretty good effort taking care of us. I liked how quick they got us through. It flowed like water.

"You will always get a few who complain, but, we're going back home in a few days, back to our loved ones, so I'm all smiles about this," said Moore, an Individual Ready Reserve soldier from Pismo Beach, Calif., who worked force protection missions while deployed. "I'm very

satisfied with the overall process. It's nice to know that I have an end date soon, and then I'll be sitting at home with my baby on my lap soon."

Warburg said that First Army tailored the process to ensure all soldiers' needs were addressed. First Army Division East worked closely with the 53rd IBCT and the Florida Joint Forces Headquarters to "assess, understand and prepare for individual soldier reintegration needs."

Special emphasis, he said, was placed on potential medical and behavioral health issues, as well as other potential challenges facing soldiers. Included was a pilot program for making the Periodic Health Assessment a standard part of all demobilization processes. Doing it at the demob site saved money and helped identify and address potential issues sooner than usual.

"Demobilization is a deliberate process that is driven by individual soldier requirements," said Maj. Gen. Mick Bednarek, First Army Division East commanding general. "It is done to standard and is not a function of cost or time. We do not rush soldiers through the process."



Chaplain (Maj.) David Clark, 188th Infantry Brigade, First Army, counsels Staff Sgt. Rex Davis, 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Florida National Guard, during demobilization processing at Fort Stewart,



Calif. Engineers adjust to cold, snow

By 1st Lt. Jeffrey Gruidl
181st INF BDE, DIV West Public Affairs

FORT McCOY, Wis. — California Army National Guard Soldiers from the 649th Engineer Company, based in Chico, Calif., conducted squad level movement training Dec. 17 at Fort McCoy, Wis., as part of their mobilization training for deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Although December at Fort McCoy is not a radical change for the 649th Soldiers, it did take some adjustment to training in two feet of snow and temperatures in the low teens.

The training requires dismounted squads to organize, prepare, and execute a combat operation under live-fire during day and night conditions.

Leaders must move a squad tactically and react to enemy contact with no fratricide or collateral damage. These squad operations support a wide range of counter-insurgency mission sets for all warfighter functions in preparation for deployment to Iraq or Afghanistan.



California Army National Guard Soldiers from the 649th Engineer Company, conduct squad level movement training Dec. 17 at Fort McCoy, Wis.



Blue Force Tracker helps cut fog of war

FORT McCOY, Wis. — The mission of 1st Battalion, 338th regiment, 181st Infantry Brigade, Blue Force Tracker team, is to provide unit commanders with trained BFT operators to assist with their unit's wartime mission.

In addition, they provide commanders with trained BFT operators during the unit's situational training exercise.

Noncommissioned officers from the BFT training team were extremely busy training mobilizing units at Ft. McCoy, Wis., in 2010.

For the year, the BFT team conducted approximately 100 classes training about 3,000 Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen with the training tailored to their respective missions.

The training comes in the form of a 40-hour certification course, a 2-day familiarization or a 1-day class conducted in support of the situational training exercise.



Sgt. 1st Class Rudy Rana from 1st Battalion, 338th Regiment, 181st Infantry Brigade, conducts a Blue Force Tracker training class, Dec. 2, for mobilizing Soldiers at Fort McCoy, Wis. Soldiers receive BFT training to send and receive text and imagery messages and reporting the locations of friendly forces, enemy forces and other battlefield conditions. (Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Biesen, 181st INF BDE, Division West)

To keep up with technology advances, Master Sgt. Daniel Biesen and Staff Sergeant Scott Else had the opportunity to attend the program of instruction

validation and verification for the joint capabilities BFT software release and upgrade in October at Fort Hood, Texas. The JCR upgrade will provide a common BFT platform for the Army and Marines to operate on and will bring a singular command and control information solution to Soldiers at the brigade level and below.

These improvements will feature modified software, a simplified database and the capability to deliver information over the air. Biesen and Else were the only two military members attending the conference attended by civilian training managers, Training and Doctrine Command representatives, and Northrop Grumman representatives.

According to Biesen, "This was a great opportunity for the BFT team to get some first-hand exposure to new software the 181st Inf. Bde. will be training mobilizing units on."

