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Photos Courtesy of the 1st (TS)(AV), 337th Regiment

TF Pegasus conducts an Aviation Rehearsal prior to an ATX simulation at Fort Rucker, Alabama.

29th Aviation Task Force Conducts Bosnia Simulation at Fort Rucker



Photo Courtesy of the 1st (TS)(AV), 337th Regiment.

Brigadier Virgil Packett addresses TF Pegasus at the final ATX AAR.

See Story on Page 5

First U.S. Army says good-bye to Lieutenant General Riggs

Lieutenant General Johnny M. Riggs, United States Army, has been reappointed to the grade of lieutenant general and assigned as the Director, Objective Force Task Force, Arlington, Virginia. Lieutenant General Riggs will return to First U.S. Army for a change of command ceremony at a future date. Major General Colby M. Broadwater, III will serve as Acting Commander, First U.S. Army. 



Lt. Gen. John M. Riggs



Maj. Gen. Colby M. Broadwater, III

Mississippi Guard Prepares For Bosnia Deployment

By Maj. Danny N. Blanton, Mississippi National Guard

Camp Shelby, MS – The sun begins to slide behind a wall of pine trees as a soldier dutifully stands guard at his post. Just as the serenity of the evening begins to subdue him, he is awakened by the rare approach of a non-military vehicle. Through the window of the vehicle a civilian extends an anti-tank mine in the soldier's direction. As if this weren't alarming enough, the soldier has no way to communicate with the Slavic-speaking occupants.

This might sound like the story line from an espionage novel, but it's actually just another day in the life of the approximately 500 soldiers of Task Force 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry, training at Camp Barnard for their upcoming peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Located at Camp Shelby, Camp Barnard is a replication of the typical base camps the soldiers will be occupying in Bosnia.

Task Force 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry, known also as "Task Force Rifles," is composed primarily of infantry and armor units from across the state. Usually trained to shoot large weapons with the intent to destroy their target, these Guardsmen are taking a unique approach to their latest calling.

"I believe this is the best preparation we could get for the mission we're about to undertake," said Sgt. Twain Ducksworth of B Company, 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry, based in Poplarville. "It's very intense."

During their weekend training, soldiers will occupy the base camp on Friday night and live there until they depart on Sunday afternoon.

Complete with mine fields, roving patrols, and civilian protesters, Camp Barnard offers soldiers a realistic look into their upcoming mission. The base camp is set up to help soldiers become familiar with weapons storage site inspections, patrolling techniques, and civilian-military interaction.

Staff Sgt. Allen Avery of 3rd Brigade, 87th Division (Training Support), who are responsible for training and evaluating the task force, said the base camp offers soldiers a unique advantage their predecessors had not received.

"What they're offering the soldiers here is an established base camp ready for them to move into and begin training," Avery explained. "All the training associated with their mission is also already set up. They can begin training immediately, free from outside distractions. It's really very unique."

National Guard officials in Mississippi have also announced plans to offer the training opportunities associated with Camp Barnard to National Guard units from other states who have been tasked with future Bosnia or Kosovo missions.

Guardsmen from units in the cities of Tupelo, McComb, Natchez, Brookhaven, Tylertown, Mendenhall, Poplarville, Bay St. Louis, Booneville, Oxford and others are in the midst of a rigorous eight-month training schedule before they mobilize at Fort Benning, Georgia, in August and finally depart for Eastern Europe in mid-September. They are expected to return to Mississippi and to reserve status in April 2002.

The Task Force will be mobilized under a Presidential Select Reserve Call-up not to exceed 270 days. 

Command Sergeant Major's Message



**Command Sergeant Major
Jeffrey J. Mellinger
First U.S. Army**

Since my arrival to First Army nearly three months ago, I have visited numerous units, soldiers and events. On the whole, I am very pleased with the individual soldiers, energy, focus and individual/unit discipline. But there are several key areas I would ask each of you to look at as you go about the business of being soldiers and leaders. Each of us has the responsibility to enforce standards and policy, and we do not pick and choose those regulations and policies we enforce.

Soldier Preparation for Training. Recently, I had the chance to observe part of the class taught at Fort Jackson by trainers from the 5th Bde, 87th Div (TS). The course was well-run, and had more than competent instruction. My concern with this and other courses is not with content, but rather with individual soldier preparation prior to attending. I heard students ask instructors to explain an AA, a LD/LC, and "fratricide." The courses are designed to teach the candidates how to properly plan, brief, execute and conduct AARs on lane training. They are not there to teach basic Army maneuver terminology, control measures, or briefing techniques. While students may understandably not have all the tools in their box when they arrive, having none is inexcusable. Leaders are charged with training their soldiers, and soldiers have a self-development responsibility. Let's ensure that we are doing the necessary preparation on our soldiers before we send them to O/C-T training, in order to maximize the time spent there.

Physical fitness and health. Three recent fatalities, all indications pointing to heart problems, remind us all of our continual need to emphasize basic principles of physical fitness -- healthy diet, good exercise habits, and the need for routine physical exams. Also, it is also important that soldiers and leaders enforce the weight and physical ability standards that sets the United States Army apart as a disciplined organization. Do yourself a favor and take care of you. We need you around!

Appearance and dress. Fundamental to all soldiers is the requirement to maintain the Army standards in appearance and dress. These requirements involve everything from keeping our hair cut to discarding old worn out (unserviceable) uniforms. We must take pride in our daily appearance and dress both in Garrison and in the field. Additionally, a basic tenet of the noncommissioned officer is that we make on-the-spot corrections on all soldiers we observe needing correcting. Period. General military authority is granted in and charged by the Manual for Courts-Martial, and is the authority by which we do our jobs. Why then do so many NCOs below us miss the soldiers we see that need to put their hair up, put on headgear, take hands out of pockets, put on helmets while driving tactical vehicles in the field, etc? Make corrections as needed.

Weather. It's summer time. And it's getting hot. Hydration takes several days, not several drinks. Remind your soldiers to start drinking water several days ahead of training, and to regularly drink water as they train, conduct PT, etc. Heat injury prevention is everyone's responsibility!

On a more positive note, more than 100 Active Component soldiers in First Army were selected for promotion to MSG. Our selection rates across the board exceeded Army averages.

I had the opportunity to spend a couple days with the 28th Infantry Division. On 20 May, the division conducted a memorial ceremony in Boalsburg PA, the home of Memorial Day. What a tremendous job they did! The ceremony was well-run, the soldiers looked great, and you'd have to be made of stone not to feel a swell of pride throughout the entire program. Well done!

Annual training is in full swing. Thanks for being out there day in and day out. We need you, your uncompromising leadership, and your vision. Thanks for all you do! 



HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

14 June 2001 - 226th Army Birthday

"1901: Reforming the Army — 2001: Transforming the Army"

ARMY BIRTHDAY 2001



226 years ago, the Continental Army formed with the goal of ending tyranny and winning our freedom. Since the end of the Revolution, American soldiers, imbued with the spirit of the original patriots, have pledged their allegiance to our Nation through their sacrifices in uniform.

Today, all our forces—heavy and light, Active, Guard, and Reserve—share the heritage of the Continental Army. Whether standing a dangerous watch in Korea, safeguarding schoolchildren in Bosnia, or fighting wildfires in Idaho, you are the finest men and women the Nation has to offer. The thousands of you on point around the globe ensure the freedom our forefathers fought and died for, and do the tough jobs that maintain our American way of life. In the remotest corners of the world, you command respect because you are American Soldiers.

The key to The Army's success has always been both its reverence for the traditions that make our Nation great and its flexibility and willingness to change. Our Army is transforming to an Objective Force that will meet the challenges of the 21st Century. This new Force will be as lethal and survivable as our heavy forces, but also as responsive and deployable as our light forces. Our transformation will thus ensure that The Army remains the best fighting force in the world: unchallenged and unparalleled.

On this, the first Army birthday of the new millennium, as a tangible symbol of our transformation, our unity, and our commitment to excellence as The Army, we will begin wearing the black beret. The color black represents the heritage of both our heavy and our light formations. It is the black of night that hid Washington as he crossed the Delaware and the black of the grease that kept our tanks on track in Operation Desert Storm. The Army flash commemorates our heritage as an Army, bearing both the colors of George Washington's Continental Army at the time of the deciding victory of the Revolution, as well as the 13 white stars of our Nation's 13 original colonies.

You represent what is most noble about our Nation: liberty, freedom and unity. As the symbol of our transformed Army, you are, and will continue to be, respected by your allies, feared by your opponents, and esteemed by the American people. Your courage, dedication to duty, and selfless service to the Nation will remain the hallmark you, the Soldiers of the United States Army, carry into the 21st Century.

/signed/
Eric K. Shinseki
General, United States Army
Chief of Staff

/signed/
Joseph W. Westphal
Acting Secretary of the Army

29th Aviation Task Force Conducts Bosnia Simulation at Fort Rucker

Story By CPT Jayson Altieri,

Fort Rucker, Alabama - Officers and NCOs from the 1st Battalion (Training Support)(Aviation), 337th Regiment, 4th Training Support Brigade recently supported the 29th Division's Aviation Task Force Pegasus' participation in an Army Aviation Center Warfighting Simulation Exercise at Fort Rucker, Alabama.

The 29th Division, Virginia/Maryland National Guard is deploying an Aviation Task Force to Bosnia this summer in support of Stabilization Force (SFOR) 10 and The Multi-National Division-North (MND-N) mission. The Aviation Task Force, Commanded by LTC Paul Kelly, is deploying one UH-60 Company from the Virginia National Guard, Richmond, Virginia; two OH58D Troops from the 4th Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, Fort Polk, Louisiana; and a support package from both Maryland and Virginia Guard for a six month rotation. The 1st Battalion, 5th Bde, 85th(TS)(AV) from Fort Knox is supporting the mobilization with Observer Controller/Trainers support for the mobilization.

The Aviation Task Force Deployed to Fort Rucker from 20 - 29 April to conduct a simulated peacekeeping exercise to train key leaders on SFOR specific battle command and military decision making process skills to key leaders. The Aviation Testbed (AVTB) and Aviation Warfighter Simulation Center (AWSC) provided the simulators and facilities for the exercise. The exercise was designed to take key leaders from the "crawl" stage to a "walk-run" operations tempo.

The ten day exercise involves two days of fire coordination exercise to include Joint Air Attack Teams and six days of exercise planning taking a Task Force through graduated response scenarios to include the potential use of lethal fires. In addition the exercise provided an opportunity for the Aviation Task Force to validate Tactical Standard Operating Procedures. The entire exercise is conducted in an operational environment through a virtual simulation of Bosnia.

The OC/Ts from the 1st (TS)(AV) Battalion evaluated the Task Force on Attack, Cavalry, and Utility Helicopter ARTEP Tasks. Hasty Attacks, Air Movements, Reconnaissance, Security Operations, and application of the Rules of Engagement were evaluated as part of this exercise. During the exercise, 1st Battalion

Commander LTC Robert Sova, conducted After Action Reviews to provide immediate feed back to the Task Force.

Task Force Pegasus received high marks for their performance during the exercise. The Task Force is scheduled to deploy in June to the Joint Readiness Training Center, Fort Polk, Louisiana to conduct a Mission Readiness Exercise as the CAPSTONE exercise for Bosnia. CPT Altieri is a member of the 1st Battalion(TS), 85th Division (TS), Fort Knox, Kentucky. 

U.S. welcomes Royal Marines for training. Steps taken to assure livestock disease not transmitted

Story by Tom Mani

Photos by Ken Perrotte

MDW News Service

Fort A.P. Hill, Va.— British marines will train at Military District of Washington's premier training facilities from late April through June.

A contingent of nearly 800 Royal Marines unable to use training facilities in England as that country works to eradicate an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, will deploy with only personal gear, individual weapons, light machine guns and communications equipment. Additional precautions will be taken as well, including "a very stringent inspection by the U.S. Department of Agriculture," the garrison public affairs office for the 76,000-acre post announced in its press release.

"We're happy to help our allies," said Lt. Col. John E. Dumoulin Jr., Fort AP Hill commander. "The Royal Marines were here last year for training and they were a superb group with which to work."

Rather than a commando group like last year, this contingent this year is entering the "post-basic" phase of their training. A cadre of some 200 officers and enlisted marines of the Commando Training Centre will school the trainees in advanced combat skills training, including individual and crew-served weapons training and communications. 

[Read Complete Story](#)

http://www.mdw.army.mil/news/US_welcomes_Royal_Marines_for_training.html

Soldier receives coveted Army Aviation Bronze Order of St. Michael

Fort Knox, Kentucky - The Army Aviation Association of America's (AAAA) Flying Tiger Chapter awarded CW3 Russell O Stark, an Aviation Observer Controller/Trainer (OC/T) with the 1st Battalion (Training Support)(Aviation), 337th Regiment, 4th Training Support Brigade, the coveted Army Aviation Bronze Order of St. Michael at a recent Battalion ceremony.

CW3 Stark was presented the award by LTC Robert Sova, 1st Battalion Commander, for his contributions to the Army and Army Aviation. CW3 Stark, who has been assigned to the 1st Battalion since May 2000, conducts evaluations and training with Reserve and National Guard Aviation Cargo and Utility Helicopter units assigned to the First Army Area of Responsibility.



Established in 1990 as a joint venture between the AAAA and the U. S. Army Aviation Center, the Order of Saint Michael recognizes individuals who have contributed significantly to the promotion of Army Aviation in ways that stand out in the eyes of the recipients seniors and peers. The individual must also demonstrate the highest standards of integrity and moral character, display an outstanding degree of professional competence and serve the United States Army with distinction.

The legend of Saint Michael defeating the dragon exemplifies the bravery and gallantry associated with the aviation soldier and the boldness and swiftness of aviation on the battlefield. As a brave warrior and protector, Saint Michael is the embodiment of courage and justice and is appropriate symbol of excellence in Army Aviation.

CW3 Stark's AAAA Citation reads as follows: "CW3 Stark is recommended for AAAA Bronze Order of St. Michael for exceptionally service to the Army Aviation Branch from October 1990 to June 2001 while serving in key positions throughout the Army. CW3 Stark contributed immeasurably to the combat readiness of combat units through his experience and tactical experience. He successfully supported Aviation units throughout Alaska and CONUS and assisted in the deployment of units to Bosnia, Korea, and Kuwait. His experience as a CH-47 Instructor pilot resulted in the successful training of over 500 aviators. He provided key guidance during one Regimental TAM, four Company IDTs, two Gunnery evaluations, and numerous Staff Assistance Visits. Chief Warrant Officer Stark's dedication and professionalism assisted in the bonding of Reserve and Active units into One Team, One Flight." 

Deployable "digital campus" matures, ready to go

by Jim Caldwell

FORT MONROE, Va. -- A new digital "Deployed Training Campus" can be shipped to anywhere in the world, set up in about three hours by two people and ready to help train soldiers via the Internet and a two-way video and voice system.

"This prototype supports the Army's concept of training soldiers in the environment they're going to fight in," said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Charlie Bos, chief of the Deployed Training Branch within Training and Doctrine Command's Deputy Chief of Staff for Training organization.

"They can be trained on their critical tasks and remain proficient."

Older versions of the training system, which were built basically using equipment in the Army inventory, are being used in the Sinai, Kosovo, Bosnia and Germany. The new system was built for the Army for about \$400,000. 

Read the complete story

<http://www.dtic.mil/armylink/news/May2001/a20010518deploytng.html>

Around the World

Bridging The Drina

Story and photos By Spc. T. S. Jarmusz

Eagle Base

In the quiet riverfront town of Kuslat, in the eastern Republic of Srpska, the unmistakable sound of gunfire could be heard echoing throughout the valley. Soldiers at work in the town looked up toward the wooded hillside, smiled, and continued working. There was no trouble, just the townsfolk firing weapons in celebration of two newly rebuilt bridges over the Drina River.

The second bridge was completed May 23. Members of the 648th Engineer Battalion and the Bosnian Serb 55th Reconnaissance Detachment, the 'Drina Wolves,' also had good reason to celebrate. After six days of four-hour drives and toiling under the hot afternoon sun, the bridge renovation mission was complete.

"This mission was significant, because for the first time, we were working side-by-side with Bosnian Serbian soldiers," said 2nd Lt. David Henderson, leader of 1st Platoon, Company C, 648th, an Army National Guard unit from Douglas, Ga.



A Bosnian Serb soldier toils in the afternoon heat during a bridge-reconstruction project over the Drina River.



American and Bosnian Serb forces team up to rebuild two heavily-damaged bridges.

Interestingly enough, the Bosnian Serb soldiers working on the bridges were not engineers. They were a special forces unit, assigned the unusual task of assisting with the bridges' repair. They were giving back what the war had taken, according to 2nd Lt. Henderson.

In spite of the differences in language and background, the 648th Engineers and Drina Wolves came together as a team. The Bosnian Serb requirement for higher headquarters approval of interviews prevented the soldiers from speaking with media. But the American and Bosnian Serb troops were able to speak to each other through the language of comradery, using gestures and hand signals when interpreters were busy. "I am used to working with anyone that's willing to work, and these guys were willing to work," said Sgt. John E. Richardson, a squad leader's driver with the 648th. "We all filled in where we were needed."

The bridge was rebuilt because it posed a danger to the local populace, according to the engineers.

"There were some big holes in those bridges. Civilians took chances every time they drove across them," said 2nd Lt. Henderson. You could easily get stuck or damage a vehicle trying it, he said. 

Safety

Be Prepared

WHAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT TORNADO SAFETY

What is a tornado? Tornadoes are nature's most violent--and erratic--storms. A tornado can travel for miles along the ground, lift, and suddenly change direction and strike again. There is little you can do to protect your home or workplace from the strength of tornado winds, but there are actions you can take to better protect yourself and family.

SOME FACTS ABOUT TORNADOES:

In general, tornadoes develop from severe thunderstorms. Usually the weather is hot, humid and unsettled. Most strike between 3 and 7 p.m. during April, May and June. However, a tornado can strike at any time, and in any month. These twisters occur in every state, but they occur most frequently in the Southern, Midwestern, and the Plains states.

The average path width is between 300 and 400 yards, ranging from a few feet to over a mile. The average path length(the distance a tornado travels)is about two miles. Some tornadoes travel only a few yards--others over 200 miles.

Tornadoes usually move from southwest to northeast, they can move in any direction and change course suddenly. The speed of a tornado ranges from near zero to over 80 m.p.h. The average speed is about 35 m.p.h. Wind speeds range from 100 to 300 m.p.h. Wind speeds of 500 m.p.h. have been estimated in some instances.

There is no way to stop a tornado -- but there are steps you can take to improve your chances of survival. Emergency supplies should include:

- Portable, battery-powered radio
- Flashlight
- Batteries
- Water, stored in airtight plastic containers
- Food (canned or dry)
- Tools (wrenches to shut off utilities, pliers, roll of heavy-duty plastic, nails, hammer,etc.)
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Fire extinguisher (ABC type)
- Can opener, spoons, etc.

STORE your emergency supplies and a list of all your valuables in the basement or other safe spot. Water and food supplies should be sufficient to last several days.

STOCK A FIRST - AID KIT

- Be sure to include:
- First-aid handbook
- Assorted bandages and dressing
- Aspirin and prescription medicines
- Thermometer
- Scissors and tweezers
- Adhesive tape and safety pins
- Antiseptic and sterilized gauze pads and rolls of gauze

LISTEN FOR NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE BULLETINS. They warn you when threatening weather has been spotted.

BE ALERT FOR TORNADO WEATHER

REMEMBER . . .
TORNADOES STRIKE FAST! 

Vincent Zebertas,
Safety & Occupational Health Manager

THOMAS E. WHITE BECOMES SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

Thomas E. White became the 18th Secretary of the Army today after being nominated by President George W. Bush on May 1, 2001, and confirmed by the Senate on May 24. At his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee, White identified four objectives he will pursue as Secretary of the Army in support of the President and the Secretary of Defense. White said: "The first objective is to invest in people. We must attract, develop and retain America's best and brightest. We must provide for the quality of life and well being of soldiers, Department of Defense civilians, veterans, and their families. . . . In short, there is no more important investment than our investment in people - it is an imperative."

"The second objective is to assure readiness," White said. "Assuring readiness today means a full commitment to modernizing our equipment and weapons to maintain the qualitative edge afforded by advances in technology, re-capitalizing the systems we need in the near and mid term, fully integrating the active and reserve components, fully manning our combat and support units, and managing the mission cycle of units to improve the operational and personnel tempo of our people and systems. . . . I am committed to readiness in the broadest sense."

"The third objective," said White, "is to transform the entire Army. Transformation encompasses every aspect of our Army. It is more than just an Interim Armored Vehicle, or a beret, or a Future Combat System. Every aspect of the Army (doctrine, organization, training, leadership, materiel and equipment, recruiting and advertising, acquisition, infrastructure, and much more (must all change together in a holistic manner."

"The final objective is adopting sound business practices. . . . We must share the burden of achieving the military capabilities America needs and do so in an affordable manner. To that end I will take a hard look at opportunities for increased outsourcing and privatization of non-core functions," White stated to the committee.

The Secretary of the Army is the United States Army's senior civilian, responsible by statute for all matters relating to Army manpower, personnel, reserve affairs, installations, environmental issues, weapons systems and equipment acquisition, communications and financial management.

Before his appointment as Secretary of the Army, White was the vice chairman of Enron Energy Services, the Enron Corporation subsidiary responsible for providing energy outsource solutions to commercial and industrial customers throughout the United States. He was also responsible for the Enron Engineering and Construction Company, which managed an extensive construction portfolio with domestic and international projects.

White began his service to the nation in 1967 when he graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point and was commissioned as an Armor officer. His distinguished career included two tours in Vietnam, command of the 1st Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, and, later, command of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. He culminated his military career in 1990 with the rank of brigadier general. His decorations and badges include: the Distinguished Service Medal, the Silver Star, the Distinguished Flying Cross, the Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device with three oak leaf clusters, the Army Aviator Badge, the Combat Infantryman Badge, the Parachutist Badge and the Ranger Tab.

For more information, contact the U.S. Army Public Affairs Office at (703) 697-7550.

Read Secretary White's Bio

www.hqda.army.mil/secretary/biography.htm 

First In Deed Links

To further assist and inform you, we have added the following links to important First Army web pages and others.

[First Army Phone Directory](#)

[FORSCOM Home Page](#)

[US Army Home Page](#)

[US Army Reserve Home Page](#)

[-US Army Reserve Command](#)

[National Guard Homepage](#)

[TRICARE](#)

Rumsfeld 'Wrapping Brain' Around Defense

By Jim Garamone, American Forces Press Service
Washington

"We've got to wrap our brains around it" is an expression Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld often uses.

The expression means taking more than just a cursory look at a problem. It means looking at an idea or concept from all angles and checking out the consequences of action or change. It's the key behind the strategic review he is conducting for President Bush, he said.

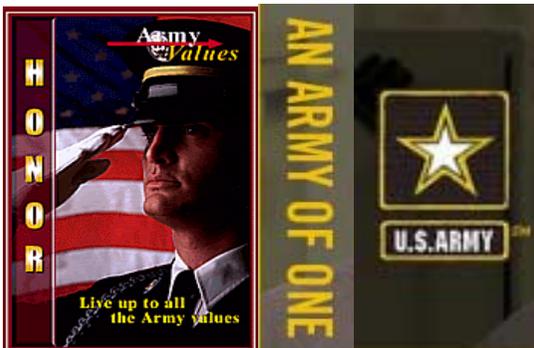
"Change is hard for people," he said during an interview with American Forces Information Service. "The only thing harder than change is the apprehension that changes may come.

"We've gone through a period where people are anticipating change and there's a great deal of speculation about what it might be." He said the review, which will feed into the Quadrennial Defense Review, is looking at complicated issues that are "not the kinds of things that one changes lightly."

During the campaign and in his first months in office, President Bush has told military personnel that he will work to improve their pay, housing and benefits.

"He has indicated during his visits ... that he believes the housing should be appropriate for the men and women and feels that a great deal of it is not appropriate and that the government of the United States has not been a good steward," Rumsfeld said. "(President Bush feels) we haven't put ourselves on a path where we can be comfortable that we're treating the men and women of the armed services in a way that reflects the importance of their service to our country. 

"See full story <http://www.defenselink.mil/news>



Comprehensive TRICARE Information Now Available on the Web and By Phone

The most comprehensive and up-to-date TRICARE information is available on the TRICARE Web. For those beneficiaries whose questions cannot be answered by the TRICARE Web site, there are new TRICARE toll-free telephone numbers to TRICARE representatives with answers on TRICARE For Life, the TRICARE Senior Pharmacy Program, and TRICARE Prime Remote for active duty and their family members. These new telephone numbers will greatly expand TRICARE's ability to provide accurate information.

One of the best features of the new information technology center is the "warm hand-off." When beneficiaries reach a TRICARE Information Center representative, they are not disconnected until they have their questions answered, or they have been connected to another person who can help them. There are no telephone recordings or directories to sort through.

The toll-free telephone numbers for these TRICARE programs are:

- Senior Pharmacy Program 1-877-DOD-MEDS (1-877-363-6337)
- TRICARE For Life program 1-888-DOD-LIFE (1-888-363-5433)
- TRICARE Prime Remote for active duty and their family members program 1-888-DOD-CARE (1-888-363-2273).

Accessing the TRICARE Web site, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and using the tools available, such as "Frequently Asked Questions" beneficiaries can get the answers they need when they need them.

Hours of operation for the telephone information center are Monday through Friday 7 a.m. - 11 p.m., Saturday 9 a.m. - 8 p.m., and Sunday 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. ET. 

Early Morning blaze damages First U.S. Army's Headquarters Building

Story By Gayle Johnson

Photos by CPT Madden, Fort Gillem Fire Department

An early-morning fire caused extensive damage to First U.S. Army's headquarters building located on Fort Gillem, Forest Park, Georgia. Fort Gillem firefighters responded within three minutes to the 5:37 a.m. alarm. They found one room engulfed in smoke and another burning. With additional assistance from the Forest Park Fire Department, the fire was out 15 minutes later.

The blaze destroyed the offices occupied by First U.S. Army Public Affairs (PAO) and Staff Judge Advocate (SJA). The remainder of the building's south wing received heavy smoke and water damage. The entire building was uninhabitable May 17 and 18. On Monday, personnel in the affected areas were relocated within the building. At this time, the fire is classified as electrical. 



Software Problem Affects Some Service Members' Pay

Special to American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, June 1, 2001 -- Some soldiers, airmen and sailors will find less money in their paychecks for awhile, thanks to a software glitch that overpaid them since January, Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials said. The officials noted the error underwithheld the Social Security contributions of some 5,600 active duty soldiers, 9,000 sailors and 1,000 airmen. The error has been fixed, but the affected members owe the government money. About 8,100 of the service members owe less than \$120 and should have seen the debt deducted from their end-of-month pay for May, officials said. They noted that members who owe more than \$120 will see partial deductions in their mid-June, July and August paychecks. The DFAS officials said about 150 service members overpaid Social Security because of the software error and should have received refunds in their end-of-month pay for May. DFAS has been working with the services' military pay offices to alert affected service members, officials said. Paymasters are working with troops on a case-by-case basis to minimize financial hardships, they added. Social Security contributions appear on a service member's leave and earnings statement as FICA (Federal Insurance Contribution Act) Taxes. For more information, Navy members can contact their local disbursing office, and Army and Air Force members their local finance office. 



I returned from a visit to several CONUS installations, and I was reminded again of how little many of our soldiers appear to know about our transition next month to the black beret.

Sometimes, I think I'm alone in talking about this. I would ask that each of you read this, pass it along to as many fellow leaders as possible and then get out and start talking about the beret and what's right for the Army.

In recent months, it has become increasingly apparent that opinions on the beret are nearly as numerous as the myths and misconceptions surrounding both the beret's history and our reasons for switching to it.

I've made it a point to talk about the beret with nearly every group of soldiers I've spoken with in my travels. Typically, I've asked for a show of hands from people who think the black beret is a bad idea. As a rule, about 20-30 percent of the soldiers raise their hands.

Then, nearly every group has shared some good-natured laughs with me as we take a look at what soldiers **really** know about the topic.

"What kind of units wore the black beret from 1973-1979," I begin asking the soldiers who raised their hands.

"What was the first unit in the Army authorized to wear black berets?"

"True or false -- Rangers wore berets in World War II?"

"True or false - soldiers graduating from Ranger School are awarded a Ranger tab and a black beret?"

"What is the only course in the Army where soldiers are awarded berets upon graduation?"

"How many years has the Army talked about putting every soldier in a black beret?"

I think it safe to say that less than 20 percent of the soldiers who raised their hands can answer even one of these questions. Beginning as early as 1924, I tell these groups, armor units in the British Army began wearing black berets for a few very simple reasons. For one thing, the color hid the grease spots tankers often left on their hats when putting them on and taking them off as they worked on their vehicles. Also, the beret allowed

tank crewmen to comfortably wear radio headsets and push their faces against the tank's telescopic sights.

Although historians say a few Ranger units unofficially wore black berets during the early 1950s and again during the Vietnam War, the Center of Military History can find no photos or documentation indicating World War II Rangers were ever authorized to wear berets of any color.

The headgear did not become an official part of the Ranger uniform for another 25 years. In 1975, the Army authorized two newly formed ranger battalions to wear black berets - one year after both armor and cavalry units around the Army began wearing black berets

Many soldiers say, "oh yeah," when I remind them that our Opposing Force units at the National Training Center, Joint Readiness Training Center and Combat Maneuver Training Center have worn black berets for years. Further, more than a few eyebrows go up when I explain to soldiers that armor and cavalry units throughout the Army were authorized black berets from 1973-1979.

A few months back, one old cavalryman even told me that when Chief of Staff Gen. Bernard Rogers decided in 1979 that only special operations and airborne units would be authorized berets, tankers in his unit objected to the decision and burned "their" black berets in protest.

It is also interesting to note how many soldiers believe that Ranger and Airborne School graduates receive either black or maroon berets upon completing their respective courses. Further, very few soldiers realize that Special Forces Qualification Course graduates are the only troops in the Army awarded a beret and tab when they complete their school. Thus far in talking to literally thousands of soldiers about the black beret, only one person - a sergeant at Fort Gordon, Ga. - knew that the Army's leadership had considered transitioning the entire force to black berets for more than a dozen years. Each time, the decision was deferred because of other priorities. During his first year as Chief of Staff, Gen. Eric Shinseki concentrated on building up momentum for our ongoing transformation. Only in his second year as chief did he decide the time was right for us to wear black berets.

(cont.) **'Beret'**



At the end of my beret quiz, I ask soldiers to tell me what they know about the Army and our ongoing transformation. I'm proud to say most of us show a better grasp of transformation than we do the history of the black beret. I explain it, Gen. Shinseki's intent with transformation is to prepare the Army for the diverse missions our country is now asking us to perform.

Prior to Desert Storm, Saddam Hussein overran Kuwait in a matter of days and stopped his forces at the border just north of oil-rich eastern Saudi Arabia. Mysteriously, he then sat and watched for six months as we reinforced our rapid deploying airborne units. In the end, the mass of our assembled combat power allowed us to achieve a quick, decisive victory.

For the foreseeable future, there will remain in the world a number of countries and leaders who will think it wise to challenge the United States, our interests and our allies. And, I tell soldiers, I think it's a sure bet that most of these folks watch CNN. Nobody will ever know for certain why Saddam stopped when he had our forces outgunned and outnumbered. Far more certain is the fact that the next dictator to challenge us won't repeat Saddam's mistakes. When future foes mobilize their forces, they will likely move quickly while hoping they can achieve their objectives before we can deploy our forces.

To be ready for that kind of showdown and to better prepare us for missions like those in Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo, Gen. Shinseki is transforming the Army into a force that's more agile, deployable and lethal. It may be something of oversimplification, but I tell soldiers that - in the end - transformation will result in heavy units that are more deployable and agile and light units that are more lethal and survivable. The result will be warfighting formations that can deploy about as fast as today's light units but pack a lot more firepower and mobility. So, as we move toward that goal, I ask groups to name the one uniform item that could logically symbolize that transformation . . . one item that has, over the years, been associated with both heavy armor units as well as the best light infantry unit in the world.

Bingo . . . the light starts to come on as they connect the intent and importance of transformation with the diverse and historic heritage of the black beret. Change is never easy, I tell soldiers, and I understand that. It's especially difficult in an organization as large and grounded in history and tradition as the Army. But, I also understand that we must change if we are to be ready for the challenges that await us in this new century.

I tell people that, for the most part, our military has done a poor job of envisioning and preparing for the next war. Typically, we have trained and equipped our military based on what was true in the last war while failing to see the coming of a different conflict that was often less than a decade or two away.

These mistakes have been costly - they have been paid for in the lives of our soldiers as we have often lost early battles in a number of wars. It is a testament to the greatness of our country and our military that we learned quickly in these conflicts and adjusted our equipment, training and tactics and achieved victory in the end. But, it makes sense to me to begin changing with the world and design formations that are better suited for future conflicts. Not only could this make the difference in these yet-to-be battles, but it might let us avoid them entirely as future enemies gauge our capabilities and decide their best course of action is to avoid a fight with us at all costs.

The last question I typically ask soldiers is, "how many of you have ever celebrated the Army's birthday?" Sadly, I would tell you that maybe 25 percent of them indicate that they have.

That, I tell them, is about to change. In the future, we're going to take pride in the Army's heritage to the point that if there's two soldiers in a fighting position on June 14, I expect them to put a match in a piece of MRE pound cake, blow it out and then sing "Happy Birthday" to the Army.

In recent years, the Army has been the silent man of the Defense Department as we have quietly gone about doing our nation's business without calling a lot of attention to ourselves and our accomplishments. There's something to be said for modesty, but I tell our soldiers we deserve to flex occasionally and tell people who we are, where we've been and where we're going.

I would hope that these thoughts would add a bit to soldiers' understanding of both the Army's transformation and the change to the black beret.

Thank you for listening and have a great Army day.

SMA Jack L. Tilley 

2001 Soldier Show Theme: "One"



WHAT IS IT? The U.S. Army Soldier Show is an 80-minute live Broadway-style musical review showcasing the talents of active duty soldiers who are selected by audition from throughout the Army. They are amateur artists who have a passion for music, dance and performing. They are truck drivers, personnel specialists, medics, tank crew members, electronics repair specialists, and infantry soldiers. The show is put together in six weeks, then tours for six months. It's a side of the Army and soldiers you've never seen before.



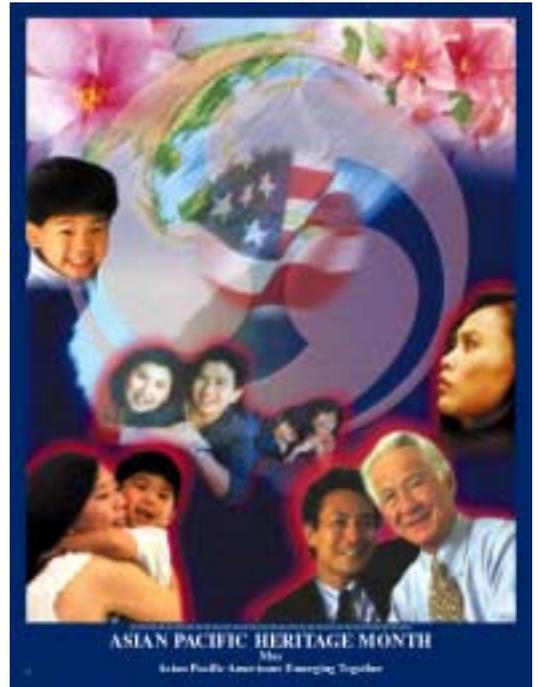
Check for a scheduled performance in your area.

http://trol.redstone.army.mil/mwr/soldiers_show/01/

May 2001



President Bush places a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery, Va., during a Memorial Day service, May 28, 2001. Photo by Jim Garamone.



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