



The Eagle

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Army Performance
Improvement Criteria

WIIFM?

by LuAnne Fantasia
Huntsville, Ala.

APIC. What's in it for me?
For starters, it eliminates work...work or tasks that add no value toward the mission.

Everything the command and staff worked toward at their recent strategic planning offsite was based on the concept of the Army Performance Improvement Criteria. APIC is a *greened* version of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Criteria for Performance Excellence; in short, how the national or corporate process can be applied to a military organization.

"I'm a fan of APIC because I witnessed its application and success at Fort Bliss, [Texas]" said Lt. Gen. John Costello. "The APIC ensures we can adapt to the changes necessary to get the command working together," the commanding general added.

To keep doubts about the concept at bay, Costello said APIC is not a fad, not just a passing idea, and not just an attempt at an Armywide award or recognition.

"We are not efficiently organized, but we are not going to reorganize now," he said. "We are going to fix what we have." He said the command leadership will focus on identifying customers and understanding how what we do on a day-to-day basis impacts on everyone in the command.

"My job is to get us all rowing in the same (and right) direction," Costello said.

Major change and meaningful sustained results in an organization can take from three to five years, depending on the size of the organization. APIC offers a strategic planning blueprint for that change. The first step to that process was a recent command assessment questionnaire, in which employees and customers participated.

Remember that questionnaire?

Nelson McKown, of the office for strategic planning and analysis, discussed the survey at the offsite.

"We'll use this feedback to analyze the command's situation, but the survey is only a jumping-off point." He said the questionnaire included about 200 internal and external stakeholders, and asked opinions on issues from *What do you consider to be the main mission of SMDC?* to *Are*

(See APIC, page 3)



Lt. Gen. John Costello (front) and Command Sgt. Maj. Frank Mantia rolled up their sleeves to work with the rest of the command and staff at last month's offsite.

Command gets its collective act together

"If every person in the command is not represented at this offsite, I have made a mistake." (Lt. Gen. John Costello)

Story & photo by LuAnne Fantasia
Huntsville, Ala.

The opening volley of the command and staff strategic planning offsite last month was candid but professional, friendly but serious.

"We have 18 months to get a strategic plan to the commanding general for him to take to the POM," said Carolyn Thompson, director of the command's newly formed element for strategic planning and analysis.

She speaks of the Program Objective Memorandum, where Army leadership makes its five-year plan for spending resources.

"It is extremely important for us to know what we're doing and why. We have to articulate that and defend our personnel and our dollars," she added, "and we have got to get back to our customer focus."

Conglomerate or command?

Lt. Gen. John Costello's intention for the offsite was a broad, coordinated overview of the planning process to develop a strategic plan for the command; to discuss mission, vision and goals; set strategic objectives; and identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

"Any investment we make toward an ultimate strategic plan, whether time, dollar or intellect, is well worth it," Costello said, "because currently we are more a conglomerate than a command."

He said the diversity of SMDC can

be overwhelming. "I have been peripherally involved with and aware of the command for a number of years, but a person has to be in it to fully appreciate the magnitude of all you do."

Costello pointed out that the diverse command is a technical and tactical one, and said the Army doesn't fully understand, nor has it tapped into SMDC's potential.

"Some of that is our fault, but we are going to have to drag the Army into our future," he added. "To do that, we have to get our collective acts together; not compete with each other, and speak with one voice as one command."

SMDC is too diverse to have one focus, Costello said, "but we've got to challenge bureaucracy and eliminate redundancies. Our mission and vision statements need to be more than pages in a glossy book."

Toward that end, the next three days saw commanders and staff, officers as well as senior and junior enlisted soldiers, military and civilians painstakingly hashing over common goals, values and customer identification.

"If I have one person in the field not represented here at this offsite, then I have made a mistake," Costello told the group.

Why plan?

An old Sioux proverb says, "If you don't know where you're going, any path will take you there."

So why plan? Simple. According to

the facilitator for the offsite, organizations that plan perform better in the long run, and a strategic plan is an organization's spine and nerve center. The entire organization must put flesh on the skeleton by aligning its activities with the overall plan.

"You'll like this," said Lt. Col. Steve Prangley, "because everything rolls uphill—to command level—on this one!" Prangley is assigned to the strategic systems division at the U.S. Army Forces Command in Atlanta. As team leader for that command, he coordinates its strategic management system.

Prangley explained that SMDC's major subordinate elements will have subordinate strategic plans that will be consistent with the corporate, or command, strategic plan.

"It's some hard work ahead, but when you fit your individual strategic plans into the corporate plan, then you become a true organization opposed to a conglomerate," Prangley stressed.

Who is *our* customer? Where are we now and where do we want to be? How will we get there? Who does what? These are a sampling of the questions the command and staff will ask within their elements over the next year, to seek input from their individual staffs and use that input to build their strategic plan.

The offsite included breakout workshops; brainstorming sessions to

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GUEST COLUMN

(Air Force Lt. Gen. Lester Lyles is our guest columnist this month. Lyles is the director of the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization.)

We share a great pride to be involved in a defense program that is so important to our nation. Congress and the administration, reflecting the concerns of the American people, have made it clear they are serious about missile defense, both in terms of the threat to our homeland and to our theater forces and allies.

Secretary Cohen has emphasized that the threat is real, and it is rapidly growing. In recognition of this, we've put money into the budget for national missile defense in order to support a

deployment decision.

Similarly, we have been working on our theater missile defense programs for several years, particularly in earnest after Operation Desert Storm.

What has changed over the last year is the growing urgency to deliver the capability to counter the growing missile threat—the threat clearly represented by systems like the North Korean No Dong and Iranian Shihab III.

We need to make sure that we developers have the capability to negate those threats.

I am confident that we are fully able to do this. We have the right talent on the job at your command and in our

contractors' plants to make it happen. We at BMDO, SMDC and our program offices comprise a team that can overcome our toughest challenges, exceed our most ambitious expectations, and contribute flawless pieces of defense systems to the well-being of our world . . . but only if we work together.

One of the clear outcomes from last month's BMDO and SMDC leadership off-site meeting was the realization that we need to focus and emphasize our efforts as one unified team. Our mission is clear. Our jobs are vitally important. And I'm looking forward to the future and the success of our joint missile defense team.



Lt. Gen. Lester Lyles
Director, BMDO

Command's values same as Army's

by LuAnne Fantasia
Huntsville, Ala.

"Why are the command's set of values different from the Army's?", Lt. Gen. John Costello asked his command and staff members at the offsite last month. "We are, after all, a major Army command. We're an Army unit."

"With your consent," Costello said to the group, "I'd like to roll our values into those of the Army's."

There were no objections. In fact, a show of hands made the vote unanimous.

Here is SMDC's (and the Army's) set of values:

- *Loyalty*
- *Duty*
- *Respect*
- *Selfless Service*
- *Honor*
- *Integrity*
- *Personal Courage*



Sgt. Daniel Hernandez (left) and Col. Ron Ouellette participated in the staff and command's offsite last month in Texas.

John Glenn: 'I have held a real job!'

(Editor's note: Some people truly do not understand why military personnel do what they do for a living. This exchange between Senator John Glenn and one of his Senate counterparts is worth reading. Not only is it an impressive impromptu speech, but it's also a good example of one man's explanation of why men and women in the Uniformed Services do what they do for a living...and an example of what those who have never served think of the military.)

When his Senate counterpart asked Senator John Glenn, "How can you run for Senate when you've never held a real job?", Glenn's response was:

"I served 23 years in the United States Marine Corps. I served through two wars. I flew 149 missions. My plane was hit by anti-aircraft fire on 12 different occasions.

I was in the space program. It wasn't my checkbook; it was my *life* on the line. It was not a 9-to-5 job where I took time off to take the daily cash receipts to the bank.

I ask you to go with me—as I went the other day—to a Veterans Hospital and look at those men with their mangled bodies in the eye and tell them they didn't hold a job. Go with me to the space program and go as I have gone to the widows and orphans of Ed White and Gus Grissom and Roger Chaffee and look those kids in the eye and tell them that their dad didn't hold a job.

Go with me on Memorial Day, and stand in Arlington National Cemetery, where I have more friends than I'd like

to count - and watch those waving flags, and you stand there, and you think about this nation, and you tell me that those people didn't have a job.

I'll tell you, you should be on your knees every day of your life thanking God that there were some men - SOME MEN - who held a job. And they required a dedication to purpose and a love of country and a dedication to duty that was more important than life itself. And their self-sacrifice is what made this country possible.

I have held a job! What about you?"

The Eagle ...

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Command

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determine priority issues and the command's common direction; lectures on applying the Baldrige Criteria to SMDC, and managing change within an organization; setting strategic objectives; and lively (sometimes painful) large group discussions on the command mission, vision and goals.

According to Prangley, the top two reasons plans fail are lack of commitment by leaders, and poor accountability.

"When you leave here, the work is just beginning," Prangley said. "Your challenge is to determine your element's customer—some of you have paying customers, some have service customers—and put your plan into action.

"Come up with measurable outcomes and objectives, whereby your organization can be held accountable as it impacts on SMDC," he said.

When Col. Gary McMillen, commander of USAKA, asked if (for example) costs could be a

measurable objective in [Kwajalein's] case, Prangley answered, "Absolutely. Whether costs, value, delivery, etc., is important to your success in customer satisfaction, that is your strategic objective."

1 x 1 = 3

Call it synergy. Call it cooperation. Prangley emphasized the importance of teamwork to the command and staff within their respective elements. He said teams offer better ideas and a broader perspective; the ability to break out of boxes and move across boundaries; communication, commitment, ownership, and coordination.

"And teams get the job done," he added.

Costello said, "You gotta be with me on this. Provide a positive leadership to your workforce because someone in your ranks has the answer.

"Although I understand reality, doing someone

else's job is not the way to do business," he added.

He simplified the term *decentralization of decisions*. "Managers with confidence in their workforce let their workforce make decisions."

You don't raise a child overnight, and sometimes you don't develop a five- to seven-year plan as quickly as first thought.

"We were 60 percent successful in reaching our goals for this offsite," Costello said. "Celebrate that success and work to improve the rest."

Costello said he would not sacrifice participation, dialogue and input in order to force march the original goals of the offsite. Members of the command and staff were given tasks to complete before reconvening in the near future.

"You have educated each other these three days, and the diversity of this command was driven home to me even more so while I was here with you," Costello said.

Commitment to others is part of the strategic plan

BMDO is one of our customers

by LuAnne Fantasia
Huntsville, Ala.

In an ongoing effort toward smarter business between the command and the Ballistic Missile Defense Organization, a small group of SMDC's senior staff and command left their offsite last month and traveled straight to the BMDO offsite in Colorado Springs, Colo.

"It was a successful offsite with leaders from both organizations discussing better cooperation between the two," said Brig. Gen. Steven Flohr, SMDC's deputy commanding general. "We primarily focused on technology and business operations."

With a forward movement toward doing business smarter and more efficiently through the concepts of APIC, Flohr said the two commands made some strides.

"We looked at technical planning and execution, and ways to better coordinate technical programs that support the acquisition program," he said. "And, we made some decisions about how we do business with each other, including planning, management, funding and reporting."

He said that both generals, Army Lt. Gen. John Costello and Air Force Lt. Gen. Lester Lyles—SMDC and BMDO, respectively—made a commitment toward better cooperation between their organizations, and they made specific recommendations for improvements. For example, SMDC will have more input and participation in the future in BMDO's technology roadmaps, Flohr said.

"For example, the SMDC Battle Lab's Advanced Research Center and BMDO's joint national test facility will agree on missions and complementary capabilities together," he said. "Also, contracting and acquisition executive responsibilities will be examined in follow-up actions by both commands."

In general, members of both staffs felt the offsite was a worthwhile investment in time and look forward to the energized progress that will result from it, according to Flohr.

"This is what our command's new element for strategic planning and analysis is all about," he said, "...to develop and assess a strategic plan, and to track us, to make sure that our follow-through on recommended changes is sound and solid."

APIC

(continued from page 1)

you satisfied with the quality of SMDC work?

McKown said the feedback gives a good picture of what the command is doing right and where it is broken. He explained critical success factors, core competencies and priority issues before participants broke into small groups for workshops on those factors.

The command's critical success factors are areas external to the command at which we must excel in order to win our market, such as technical development in a tech-based support area. Core competencies are internal capabilities that give the organization an ongoing competitive edge, and

priority issues are usually evident after a review of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, according to McKown.

"This is not easy to do but it's the only way to set strategic objectives," he said.

Costello reassured the groups, "Some of you feel we are fighting for our life with Army leadership. I don't see it that way at all. Army leadership does have an appreciation for theater and missile defense and space capabilities.

"We just need a plan to market our competencies as well as our importance for the future," he said.

Let the Jeopardy games begin!



Jim Clark (left) and the highly-competitive Juanita Sales challenge the answer to a question related to black history during last month's jeopardy games. Question? Sojourner Truth's given name? Answer: Isabella Baumfree.



Glen Green and Patricia Hampton ponder the answer to a question on black history during last month's jeopardy games. Question? Frederick Douglass fought for the ratification of this amendment guaranteeing all citizens the right to vote, regardless of their race. Answer: The 15th amendment.

Photos by LuAnne Fantasia



Photos by Marco

Dottie White—1998 World Champion for Women's Black Belt Fighting in North America—lands a side kick with sparring partner Debra Blaxton during a black belt-level training session.

Dottie kicks her way to the top

Takes \$10,000 in Tough Woman Battle

by **Marco Morales**
Huntsville, Ala.

Dottie White took a \$10,000 first prize in the *Tough Women's* full-contact competition Feb. 26 in Bay St. Louis, Miss.

White is a management assistant in the Civilian Personnel Division office at the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command here.

Having to scrap through four, single-elimination fights, White endured three, one-minute full-contact rounds with each opponent in the *Tough Women's* competition.

"Probably the toughest part of this was having to fight opponents back-to-back," White said, adding, "That's where my training and stamina paid off." She is normally a light middle-weight fighter.

In her third fight, White said she defeated her 5'8", 340-pound opponent. "I was hit pretty hard on the head," White said. "I sustained bruises to my cheek bone and knuckles but, other than that, I came out okay."

White said she was interviewed by various national and local media after the competition and was also asked about possibly going professional.

"Although I appreciate all of the fanfare, I don't

think going professional is right for me at this time," she said.

Last November, in Atlanta, Ga., White, 29, competed in over 20 tournaments sponsored by the North American Sport Karate Association which led to her title victory as the light middle-weight 1998 World Champion for Women's Black Belt Fighting in North America. She currently has a 3rd degree black belt in Tae Kwon Do.

Some people say that looks are deceiving and, judging from her small and lean frame, warm and friendly smile, most people would think of her as the girl-next-door, whose quiet demeanor wouldn't pose a physical threat to anyone or anything.

Initially influenced by her brother-in-law to try the martial arts experience when she was 20, White's preparation for competing in tournaments reflects personal dedication and discipline.

"When I first started I thought maybe I was too old and clumsy," she said. "My self-confidence was so low that I avoided eye contact with people."

Then she was introduced to Wilburn King, owner and instructor of King's Southern Karate Studio in Decatur, Ala. King, who has applied the Army's standard adage to teaching, has taught White to *be all she can be* in martial arts.

"Through martial arts training I have overcome my shyness and have also gained a great deal of strength and self confidence, thanks to my instructor," White said.

Her training warm-up session includes doing some 200 side-straddle hops, 75 push-ups, several rigorous abdomen crunches and a series of stretching exercises.

Besides doing additional weight training to polish her speed and strength, she spars with her peers to perfect the various Karate forms she will eventually have to use to defend herself in competition.

"I work out at King's studio for two hours, three nights a week without fail," White said. "I have to be sick, or something really important has to keep me from training."

One of White's co-workers described her attitude at work.

"Dottie is a wonderful person who will help any person – military or civilian," said Paula Brumlow, management analyst, SMDC. "She doesn't let her victories in Karate tournaments go to her head."

Another part of White's job in the command is to monitor and streamline personnel management actions for more than 700 Army civilian employees. "She's a hard worker and accomplishes her duties extremely well," Brumlow said.

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White said her mentor and trainer, Wilburn King, applies the Army's standard adage by teaching her to *be all she can be* in martial arts.



White (right) spars with her peers to perfect the various Karate forms she uses to defend herself in competitions.

...again!!

Don't think going professional is a possibility for me at this time.

Dottie White
World Champion
Women's Black Belt Fighting

White said, "Karate involves respect, discipline, honor, spirit, heart and self-confidence. I try to incorporate these virtues in everything I do – every day." Although I lost six fights last year I'd like to try to win the ASKA undefeated world championship title.

There's a different side to this quiet warrior. Behind all those crescent and roundhouse kicks and spinning bellows that accompany each of her firm

and accurate blocks, punches and attacks, White's creative and mellow side emerges.

"I enjoy doing pencil sketches and going to movies and just spending time with my family," she said. "While I was competing in Atlanta I was offered a chance to participate in a Florida-based television production called 'Mortal Combat'. I don't know if I'd be good at acting, but I would like to give it a try."

Waterfalls and frogs and butterflies and sloths ...

by Pres Lockridge
Kwajalein Atoll

For several weeks, John Beckler's sixth-grade life sciences class had studied the native environments of plants and animals, the nature of the particular habitat that was conducive for their life and growth, as well as their relationships with the human beings that shared their habitats.

Beckler's students decided to culminate their studies by developing a tropical habitat with the flora and fauna found in a rain forest in the Amazon basin. On the day of construction, parents and family members were invited to help.

"With all the dads here, it was like having support from our own Army Corps of Engineers," Beckler said. They constructed a tropical rain forest with



Photo by Larry Allen

John Beckler's sixth-grade students apply the finishing touches to their creative tropical rain forest habitat.

trees, ferns, shrubs, flowers, animals, birds, and insects, and waterfalls—with accompanying rain forest sounds. Coconut palms, fan palms, pandanus, and banana trees were included. Tree trunks were made from carpet roll tubes covered with craft paper and palm fronds made of craft paper, reinforced with metal ribs. Animals included snakes, frogs,

sloths, and turtles. And, what would a rain forest be without waterfalls, parrots, butterflies and spiders (complete with webs)?

The Kwajalein Atoll Preschool students as well as students from the other George Seitz Elementary School grades will view the rain forest during the following weeks.

The giant never sleeps on this island

by Pres Lockridge
Kwajalein Atoll

It's hard to hide from a 470-ton radar antenna.

Within 15 minutes of control room alarms activating—notifying radar operations personnel that a missile launch has occurred—Altair radar technicians scurry to their stations and initiate a scan that acquires and tracks a new foreign launch.

Altair, one of Kwajalein Missile Range's highly sophisticated deep-space and near-Earth radars, is vital to the space surveillance network of the U.S. Space Command. It is the first ground sensor to acquire and track

missiles, most of them launched from several Asian countries. Altair successfully detects and begins tracking 60 to 100 percent of new foreign launches within 11 to 25 minutes after launch.

Altair and other Kwajalein radars have visibility of most Russian launches and all Chinese and Japanese launches when, for example, burns last from near-Earth to deep-space orbit, about 20 minutes after launch. Without Altair's coverage, the space surveillance network would spend many hours trying to locate newly launched payloads.

The Altair radar is involved in most domestic and cooperative launch

programs, including the Space Shuttle. When not tracking new foreign or domestic launches, Altair spends 128 hours each week tracking satellites for the U.S. Space Command in Colorado Springs, Colo., in support of their requirements to maintain a catalog of all man-made objects in space—more than 40,000 space objects are tracked annually.

It is one of 20 sensors that contribute to the space surveillance network, directed by the space control center at the Cheyenne Mountain complex in Colorado Springs. Currently there are more than 8,000 resident space objects being tracked by the network. Of those, more than 1,600 are in deep

space orbits with periods of visibility greater than 225 minutes. Altair provides data on virtually every activity that takes place in space.

With the proliferation of tactical missiles around the world and with the increase in the number of missiles launching satellites into orbit, detection of new foreign launches at an early stage is critical to the security of the United States...so Altair does not sleep. It remains on 15-minute recall status, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. (*Altair is an acronym which stands for ARPA-Long-Range Tracking and Instrumentation Radar.*)

A big man... a small piece of Kwajalein history

by Sharon Watkins-Lang
Huntsville, Ala.



Army photo

Marine Lt. Col. Aquilla James "Jimmie" Dyess is the only person known to receive both the highest military and civilian awards; the Congressional Medal of Honor and the Carnegie Medal, respectively.

February 2—to most of us it is Groundhog Day. In the history of the command, however, this date marks the end of the World War II battle for Roi-Namur. Fifty-five years have passed since the Kwajalein Atoll served as a stepping stone in the Allied advance across the Pacific.

Many men fought and died in this battle, and this is the story of one of them. Lt. Col. Aquilla James Dyess, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, was among those who died in this battle. Born in Augusta, Ga., in 1909, his life represents the core values of not only the Army, but the military as a whole—courage, honor, integrity....

Described by his commander as a true marine, Dyess died Feb. 2, 1944, leading his battalion in a flanking action against the last enemy position on Namur. The day before, Dyess had led a halftrack and his men

through enemy lines to save wounded Marines in a patrol pinned down by heavy machine gun fire. For these actions, he was posthumously awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor.

His citation reads, "undaunted by severe fire from automatic Japanese weapons, [he] launched a powerful final attack ..., unhesitatingly posting himself between the opposing lines to point out objectives and avenues of approach and personally leading the advancing troops."

Sixteen years earlier, as a 19-year-old Clemson University student, Dyess was credited with saving a young woman from drowning. While vacationing in Charleston, S.C. in 1928, Dyess and a friend swam through rough seas to rescue a woman caught by the ebbing tide. According to local newspaper accounts, 30 minutes elapsed before the trio made it back to shore, where Dyess assisted in the resuscitation of the victim. For his actions, Dyess

was awarded the Carnegie Medal; presented each year to honor civilians who voluntarily and knowingly risk their own lives to save or attempt to save the life of another person.

Dyess is the only person known to receive both the highest military award for bravery—the Congressional Medal of Honor, and the highest civilian award—the Carnegie Medal.

Charlie Norwood, U.S. Representative, said during a recent dedication ceremony, "Duty and honor were more than just words. They were a way of life for Jimmie Dyess."

If interested in reading more about the World War II history of USAKA and Dyess, a new book has recently been published. A Hero Among Heroes: Jimmie Dyess and the Fourth Marine Division, was written by Air Force Retired Maj. Gen. Perry Smith.

(*Historian Sharon Watkins-Lang works in the command's Historical Office, Huntsville, Ala.*)

Matrix

(This is the first in a series of articles to inform matrix personnel of job openings and SMDC management concerns.)

On Feb. 2, SMDC's Sensors Directorate conducted a matrix management meeting to discuss issues and problem areas and came up with the following observations:

Matrix personnel deserve the chance to move to new job opportunities. In the current environment, employees have to find their own replacement if they want to move on. Quite often, they are not even permitted to rotate to other positions. To guarantee fairness for all, job rotation procedures and standards should be equal for all matrix personnel and also simplified to allow for career advancements through professional development in a variety of projects. Even the Acquisition Corps requires job rotations every five years to guarantee career progression. Employees who refuse to rotate should be required to sign a statement acknowledging that such refusal might hinder their career advancements.

The Missile Defense and Space Technology Center management is working to improve its matrix program. Among the areas being considered are complete listings of open matrix positions, improved coordination with MDSTC and PEO manager identification of skill levels and skill mix and a matrix database with technical position and location.

Position openings, matrix problems and comments for the matrix network news should be directed to Karl Fastenrath, SMDC-TC-PA, 955-4877.

Contracting

Mark Lumer, contracting executive for the command, noted that, according to Army protest records, the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command is the only major Army Contracting Command that had no GAO [government accounting office] protests during fiscal year '98. Lumer said several of the smaller contracting commands (Information Systems Command, Intelligence and Security Command, and 8th Army-Korea) also reported no protests during the period.

"I believe this is a quality metric reflecting the expertise in the contracting and legal departments of the command," Lumer said. "Both are literally the best in the business."

Lumer said the command is now in its 42nd consecutive year of never having lost a protest—an achievement unmatched in the entire history of the United States Army.

SDIO commemorative dinner

March 23, 1983 President Ronald Reagan issued a challenge that was destined to change our world. Please join the director and former directors of the BMDO and SDIO at a reception and dinner, Tuesday, March 23, 1999, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott, Arlington, Va., to commemorate this

historic event. Business attire, \$65 per person, RSVP with check to: SDI Commemorative Dinner, 1745 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1101, Arlington, Va., 22202. Deadline for reservations is March 16. Any profit from this activity will be donated to the Alzheimer's Association in memory of Lt. Gen. George Monahan.

Army Emergency Relief

The Worldwide 1999 Army Emergency Relief Campaign is March 1, through May 15, 1999. Some areas in the command may begin their campaigns later than March 1, as determined by their local supporting installation.

For 57 years, AER has provided resources to help all commanders maintain a tradition of taking care of our soldiers and their families.

The ready access to AER money gives commanders the ability to translate that commitment into action. These ready resources are made possible by this annual campaign.

Each soldier and military retiree is offered the opportunity to contribute by allotment, and civilian employees may contribute by cash or check.

Points of contact throughout the command are Staff Sgt. Maloy, Arlington, Va.; Sgt. 1st Class Mazalewski, Huntsville, Ala.; Sgt. Wilson, Kwajalein; and Master Sgt. Ivory for ARSPACE. Watch for further information and campaign materials.

Acquisition workforce

Are you certified to perform the duties of your assigned acquisition position?

Certification is a management tool used to assure that you're qualified in areas of education, experience and training to perform the duties assigned you. Each acquisition position has a level of certification requirement and it's noted in Section I (third line down) of your Acquisition Civilian Record Brief ACRB. Usually grades GS-5 through GS-8 require a Level I certification. Grades GS-9 through GS-12 require a Level II certification, and Level III is reserved for GS-13 through SES. All acquisition workforce and acquisition corps personnel are required to meet the certification standards of their particular field and grade. Those who don't, have 18 months to do so. Department of Defense is becoming quite serious about certification.

Contact Maggie Dilworth to determine what courses you need to take and the process you need to follow for certification; (256) 955-2554; DSN 645-2554; <dilworthm@smdc.army.mil>

Technical Conference

The Association for Configuration and Data Management, or ACDM, will have its 4th Annual Technical Conference March 29 through April 1. This year's theme is "CDM: The new paradigm—thinking outside the box." The location is the Renaissance Waverly Hotel, Atlanta. Complete details can be found at <http://www.acdm.org>. If you have further

questions, call Brenda Kyle, (256) 955-1589, THAAD Project Office, Huntsville, Ala.

Legal

Legal Assistance personnel Armywide advise certain soldiers to receive a refund of insurance premiums paid to either Trans World Assurance Company, or TWAC; or American Fidelity Life Insurance Company, AFLI.

The United States sued TWAC and AFLI last April for deceptive and fraudulent trade practices by selling life insurance as an investment to employees and service members of the Department of Defense, the Coast Guard, Postal Workers, and other Federal employees. The investigation determined that neither company had registered with either the State of Washington or the Security and Exchange Commission to sell investments. Both companies failed to properly license their agents as financial planners, and both may have violated the Uniform Securities Act by selling life insurance (otherwise known as the "Flexible Dollar Builder") as an unregistered security or investment.

A December '98 settlement provides for the refund of insurance premiums to 215 service members, of which 112 are Army Personnel: 81 have been contacted, 31 soldiers have not.

According to the Settlement Agreement, the named military claimants are entitled to a refund of all insurance premiums paid to either AFLI or TWAC. Refund requests should reference the litigation and must be received by April 1, 1999 by the company from which the policy was purchased. Soldiers requesting refunds should send requests to the insurance company from which they purchased the policy. Their addresses are:

Trans World Assurance Company
885 South El Camino Real
San Mateo, Calif. 94402
(650) 348-2300

American Fidelity Life Insurance Company
Attn: Vicky Webb
4060 Barrancas Ave.
Pensacola, Fla. 32507
(850) 456-7401

Soldiers not under the settlement agreement seeking legal assistance (e.g., one who didn't purchase the policy while in Washington or did not receive a letter), should contact the insurance company that sold the policy to resolve the problem. If the company refuses, soldiers then contact the Insurance Commissioner from the state where the policy was purchased since other states are considering direct action against AFLI and TWAC.

Soldiers who receive or request refunds are asked to report the amount received to Ms. Len Savoy (email: SavoyL@hqda.army.mil) or (703) 696-1630.

Intelligence

Kidnappings at a local mall. Travelers having their kidneys removed. Terrorists in the men's room

will assault your children. Doom and horror where you least expect it.

Nothing is as it seems. What seems like a quiet day could really be only the calm surface of terrible things.

Many such reports have surfaced lately, mostly via E-mail. A *friend of a friend* reports that something terrible happened in a given town, at a given place. "It was even in the newspaper (or on television, or on the radio)". Reports like these spread like wildfire. One such report was picked up by a television station, run to ground, and found to be...bogus.

These stories are urban legends. They gain their credibility by invoking credible-sounding, well-known sources (which are never indicated by date, time, etc). They gain interest by appealing to unspoken fears of random violence, and of course vague fears of kidnapping, rape, even murder. They evoke and play upon the fear that people aren't safe anywhere (home, malls, etc.)

They are malicious because they create unwarranted fear when normal caution is more than sufficient. They are cruel because they conclude by saying, "if you love your wife or daughter, you will spread this warning." Such concerned warnings—and requests to forward them to others—are also indicators that these are probably phony. No one really knows who starts these but they get joy out of causing alarm in others.

The command has a way of checking these stories before they spread unwarranted fear. If you come across such a story, notify your Force Protection officer, who will research the story to determine if there is cause for concern. Then false stories can be squelched without causing unwarranted fears among personnel in the command. It eliminates our people from getting wrapped up in fruitless spreading of false stories.

There are legitimate safety and security advisories that must be passed to the command, and they need to come from valid sources. Let's not make the urban legend writers' job easier. Send in any story that concerns you to your force protection officials.

Send us your awards... your promotions... your hails... your farewells...

In the last reader survey of *The Eagle*, several people said they wanted to see more awards and recognitions in the paper.

We can't run photos of everyone, but for the past year we have printed the "Congratulations" column when names are submitted.

If you send an e-mail with your office's or division's awards, recognitions, promotions, hails and farewells, I will make sure all names are printed in the "Congratulations" column of the following issue. LuAnne Fantasia, fantasiL@SMDC.army.mil.



Photos by LuAnne Fantasia

Kwajalein's commander, Col. Gary McMillen, climbs out of a mock shuttle while visiting NASA Houston during the offsite.

SMDC to Houston Control...

...come in, please.



Left photo: Army Astronaut Maj. Tim Kopra, and Lt. Col. Ned Fleming, Geologic Science Officer and Executive Officer of the Army Detachment at NASA Houston, hosted members of the SMDC command and staff for a tour of the complex.

Middle photo: Staff Sgt. Karen Knight took time out from the operations center at the offsite to enjoy the NASA Houston tour. Knight is an administrative NCO in Arlington, Va.

Photo below: Army Astronaut Lt. Col. T.J. Creamer (left) said that Army training and experience provide an excellent background for applying to the astronaut program.

"The operationally aware individual who is articulate and who has a broad scope of joint efforts is usually an ideal candidate for the astronaut program," Creamer said.

Col. Ed France, the command's judge advocate officer, is pictured with Creamer in a mock section of the International Space Station at NASA Houston.

