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The Eagle

U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command

Volume 14, Number 10, November 2007

Army astronaut returns to Earth

By Elizabeth M. Lorge
Army News Service

WASHINGTON — Army Astronaut Col. Douglas Wheelock and the Discovery space shuttle crew safely landed at the Kennedy Space Center in Florida after a challenging 15-day mission shortly after 1 p.m. Eastern Standard Time Nov. 7.

According to NASA, the crew completed all of the major objectives for this mission, including installing the Harmony module in a temporary location at the end of the Unity node, relocating the Port 6 truss, and installing a spare main bus switching unit on a storage platform. Discovery also delivered a new crew member to the space station, Flight Engineer Dan Tani.

Although he was far from the Army's usual field of operations, Wheelock said, "it's just like a joint ops on the ground." He made the comment during a news teleconference Oct. 31 in which astronauts answered questions from reporters here at NASA headquarters, along with others in Florida, Texas, Paris and Moscow. Wheelock is one of four Army astronauts assigned to the Army NASA Detachment, a part of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command.

"Probably the most important thing I've



Army Astronaut Col. Douglas Wheelock shares the airlock with Astronaut Scott Parazynski, as the two mission specialists prepare for their Oct. 26 spacewalk, the first of the mission.

NASA photo

learned up here is the importance of teamwork," Wheelock said. "It was quite amazing yesterday when Scott and I were working outside and knew everyone was working real hard inside to get their tasks

done, as well as dozens of people on the ground in Houston who were helping us come up with solutions to the problem."

See *Astronaut* on page 5

53rd Signal Soldiers focus on safety

By Capt. Marcus White
Company Commander

FORT MEADE, Md. — Life is full of new beginnings. Some are unexpected and some are planned. Bravo Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, took the opportunity to launch a new beginning during the first week of fiscal year 2008 with a unit Safety Stand-Down.

Taking a page out of a maneuver division's training schedule, and modifying it to support the unit's 24-hour, seven-day-a-week mission, Bravo Company spent Oct. 2-4 immersed in safety.

The Bravo Company Soldiers received a thorough understanding of safety in many forms, from workplace safety to vehicle safety to suicide prevention, thanks to the company safety team, Fort Meade's Chaplain's Office, Fire Department and Army Substance Abuse Program Office, and the Anne Arundel

Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) organization.

The unit's safety team presented two classes to the group: personal vehicle maintenance and electrical safety.

Sgt. John Wischmeier, who happens to also be a certified mechanic, gave the personal vehicle maintenance class. Wischmeier used the unit's government vehicles to demonstrate many helpful tips to his fellow Soldiers, such as tire care, fluid levels and many other do-it-yourself items.

"I never knew about the sticker on the side of the door that had vehicle information," stated Spc. Thomas Baylis. "I am like an automotive dummy, so the class was very informative."

Sgt. Zachary Strausser taught the electrical safety class. Strausser is the unit's alternate safety noncommissioned officer. His safety class centered around the famous

"Airman Larry" safety video in which doctors discuss in both graphic detail and imagery the injuries sustained by an Airman who was in an electrical accident. The video was so explicit that a few Soldiers had to excuse themselves from the room. Spc. William Langford, who had seen the video prior to the Safety Stand-Down, remarked "It gets me every time."

Chaplain (Maj.) William Killough from the Fort Meade Chaplain's Office presented a very good class on suicide prevention. Killough really connected with the Soldiers by speaking of his personal experiences with those who had attempted suicide or had been diagnosed as suicidal.

He also helped to personalize the subject for the Soldiers by having those present discuss some experiences or involvement with someone who was suicidal or attempted suicide.

Capt. Michael Doll from the

Fort Meade Fire Department gave a class on fire safety while Timothy Knox from the Fort Meade Army Substance Abuse Program Office delivered a standard substance abuse awareness class to the Soldiers. Doll spoke primarily about how to determine the correct type of fire extinguisher to use for different types of fires.

"Some of the types of fire extinguishers were not familiar to me. It was good to know about the different labels on them as well," stated Langford.

Doll also showed the Soldiers the proper way to extinguish a fire through video instruction.

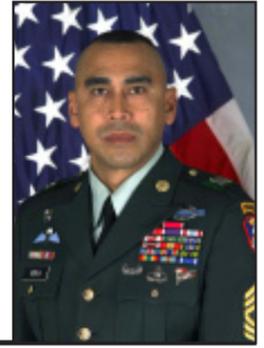
Perhaps the most riveting presentation was MADD representatives Jerry and Paula Celentano's drunken driving class. In December 2001, Jerry and Paula's 19-year-old daughter Lisa became one of the approximately 17,000

See *Stand-Down* on page 9

The Command Corner



Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell
Commanding General



CSM Ralph C. Borja
Command Sergeant Major

Last month we celebrated the 50th anniversary of SMDC/ARSTRAT and its predecessors. There were activities and celebrations and some nostalgic trips down memory lane looking at where we have been as a command. I mentioned in my remarks at the celebratory dinner that commemorating significant milestones are important because it allows us to look back at where we've been so that we then know where we are going. Now we are looking forward and reviewing our vision and our goals. As members of SMDC/ARSTRAT, I want to share with you my thoughts on the way ahead for the command.

Vision

The vision for the command remains the same: provide dominant space and missile defense capabilities for the Army and plan and integrate those capabilities in support of U.S. Strategic Command and the geographic combatant commanders.

While the vision remains constant, the focus and the goals to support the vision will shift somewhat to remain relevant to our primary customer — the warfighter. The environment in which we operate is dynamic, and we will adjust as it changes.

My intent is to focus our efforts in our core competencies, which are: develop, operate and integrate space and missile defense capabilities that support Army and Joint forces; and develop technologies that contribute to our core mission areas, as well as seeking innovative applications of these technologies that directly contribute to the ongoing war effort. We will continue to be bold in developing new technologies. However, we must be equally bold to stop efforts where progress is not keeping up with anticipated need. President John F. Kennedy announced, in 1961, a national goal to land an American on the moon before the end of that decade. If he had not set a goal, it's reasonable to assume we might still be looking at space exploration with longing. In similar fashion, we should allow reasonable time to determine if new technologies that we pursue provide value-added while understanding that time and resources are not unlimited.

Space

There are two thrusts in the space arena. One is to ensure our forces understand how to leverage space-based capabilities to the fullest. The other is to influence the Department of Defense's development and fielding of future space capabilities. Our focus in space capability development will be on delivering responsive capability to ground commanders. An immediate opportunity has presented itself with the stand-up of the Operationally Responsive Space office. We will work in close coordination with the ORS office to identify concepts and systems that would best support ground operations.

An important initiative for the command is to ensure an expanded, persistent space operations officer presence in organizations that develop space capabilities and in combat organizations that rely on space enabled products and capabilities. We are assigning Army Space Soldiers at every echelon of Army formations down to division level, and we need to explore the need to go to the brigade level. The space professionals will ensure our ground commanders understand the capabilities and limitations of space systems and how the

See **Vision** on page 3

As I continue my command visits in CONUS and throughout the globe, I recently had the opportunity to visit Delta Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, in Camp Roberts, Calif. First Sgt. Mark Gerht and Capt. James Lacovara provided an outstanding organizational brief and provided a tour of the battalion's facilities, living quarters and communications site. These warriors, noncommissioned officers and officers are doing a phenomenal job, and I commend them for their commitment, hard work and dedication in being the first in our command to control and operate the communications payload of the Defense Satellite Communications System and Wideband Global SATCOM.

The SMDC/ARSTRAT NCO and Soldier of the Year (Sgt. Patrick Mann and Sgt. Marty Jensen) accompanied me to observe the space shuttle launch last month at Cape Canaveral, Fla. They both stated this was a professionally rewarding experience they'll never forget. We were able to support one of SMDC's own, Col. Douglas Wheelock, by attending a reception in his honor the evening before his shuttle mission to space.

The visit to the 53rd Signal Battalion and to see Col. Wheelock launch into space simply underscores the tremendous commitment of our Soldiers to the nation. It is especially gratifying to highlight their accomplishments as we celebrate Veterans Day this month.

In commemoration of this special day in honor of our veterans I ask that you look around you — my guess is that you are probably standing or sitting next to a veteran. They are mostly indistinguishable from the outside, except maybe for the way they walk and the way they hold their heads up high ... just who are these veterans?

America's veterans take on many shapes and many sizes; they are male, and they are female; they have infinitely varied backgrounds; they are young and old ... and older. They are our parents, our grandparents, our brothers, our sisters and our neighbors. They are leaders in our communities and our corporations.

Veterans tend to have similar traits: they exude confidence and are not afraid of responsibility. They are our neighbors who volunteer their time to help the youth of America; they are our young returning veterans who fill vital positions with law enforcement, in the medical profession, and who teach in our schools. They also head some of the nation's largest corporations.

This pride is evident in the veterans I meet as I travel through airports and into the community. Veterans will come up and start talking about their service and experiences they had when they wore the uniform. It is hard to explain to those who have never served in uniform, but once you become a veteran it is a life-long bond with every veteran who ever served. That bond stretches back to the birth of our country.

Therefore, it is absolutely proper and fitting that we set aside this special day to commemorate the continuing service of our nation's veterans. We are able to enjoy the blessings of liberty because of the sacrifices of veterans who fought throughout our nation's history: at Lexington, at Normandy, at Heartbreak Ridge, in the Ia Drang Valley, in the streets of Baghdad and the rugged mountains of Afghanistan.

As we celebrate the holiday we should remember that more than 150,000 Soldiers are deployed in harms way in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM and OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM. Those men and women aren't just strangers in uniform — they are your

See **Veterans** on page 3

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What We Think

The Eagle asks:
Thinking back on all the Thanksgiving celebrations you've been through, tell us about your best one.



Michael Calhoun
 Administrative Assistant
 Public Affairs Office
 Phoenix Services
 Huntsville, Ala.

My mother passed away in 1996, and my most memorable Thanksgiving since her passing was back in 1997. At the time, I was stationed in Vicenza, Italy. That Thanksgiving was special because Master Sgt. Cheryl Vonner decided to cook a good old fashioned Thanksgiving dinner for all the unaccompanied senior NCOs working with her on the G-4 staff. She actually prepared all the traditional dishes and desserts that we had grown accustomed to having during Thanksgiving. She went out of her way and prepared one of the best Thanksgiving dinners I've had since my mother passed away.



LaJeannia J. Lacey
 Records Administrator
 G-1
 Huntsville, Ala.

I am so blessed to have many fond Thanksgiving memories of fun times with my family. I remember that as a child after my Grand-Daddy said the grace, thanking God for all He'd done for us and for His provision, my mother, aunts, uncles and I sang "Bless This House" accompanied by my cousins and uncle playing trumpet, saxophone, and drums while I played piano. Our combination set a soaring and majestic tone and had quite an emotional impact on our older relatives. I always looked forward to my Ma'Dea's oyster cornbread dressing and my aunt's Cajun bread pudding. Our house was filled with relatives — young and old — as we celebrated our African American, Creole and Native American heritage.



Capt. Alyssa Aarhaus
 1st Space Battalion, HHC
 Commander
 Colorado Springs, Colo.

My favorite Thanksgiving memory is the first year I brought my city-raised husband to my parent's Idaho farm. My dad and brothers made him help slaughter a turkey my family raised. The turkey ended up being 40 pounds and was charred by the oven burners since it took up the entire oven.



Pat Shifflett
 USAKA Resource Manager
 G-8
 Huntsville, Ala.

Many Thanksgiving celebrations with all the family have been great. However, Thanksgiving spent in Germany was the most meaningful. My husband was in a German hospital, and my coworker invited me to share Thanksgiving with her family. We also took my husband a delicious plate of food to the hospital of which was a real treat from the hospital food. Inviting someone who is away from family to share Thanksgiving dinner will always be a priority for me.



Master Sgt. Keese Pond
 1st Space Battalion
 S3 Operations
 Colorado Springs, Colo.

Thanksgiving has always been a big thing for my family. It is a time for family to gather and just enjoy each other's company. When my family was stationed overseas, we usually had a lot of Soldiers and their families at my house. Since my station at Fort Polk through my station here, I have been frying at least one turkey every year. That is where you will usually find me on Thanksgiving morning.

Vision — continued from page 2

systems can enable their operations. Additionally, we will assign space professionals in Department of Defense organizations that shape the course that space capability development and fielding will take in the future so that we can insert Army needs early in the developmental cycle.

Missile Defense

SMDC/ARSTRAT and the Missile Defense Agency are working together to form a partnership that makes sense in the context of mission accomplishment. We must be willing and able to transform our organization to ensure we can execute the missile defense research and development needed to field advanced

missile defense systems for our Army and the Joint warfighter.

Our initiatives for the short and mid-term will focus on developing partnerships with other organizations (Research, Development and Engineering Centers, national and service laboratories, and allies) with interests and investments in missile defense systems. This provides opportunities to engage new partners in defense and new partners in industry.

People

Developing space and missile defense technologies and capabilities requires human talent. Our people make it happen — SMDC/ARSTRAT people. They include the Soldiers, civilians, contractors, and the Families who support them. In order to keep pace with warfighter needs, we

need to aggressively recruit, train and maintain a military and civilian workforce with unequaled space and missile defense talent.

The best way to retain our quality workforce is to provide them with good leadership. This includes training them, counseling them, treating them with dignity and respect, and expecting them to meet our standards. We may not be able to provide every individual/Family with the best in housing, or each organization with the best in facilities, but we can provide them with the best leadership and care. Our Soldiers and civilians are the centerpiece of the SMDC/ARSTRAT formation!

I believe our future is one wrapped with promise and opportunity. Each of you will be part of our success.

SECURE THE HIGH GROUND!

Veterans — continued from page 2

neighbors. They are the Soldiers who just graduated from high school; they are the volunteers who help out in local churches, in local schools, and in local communities. They are the brave warriors you see on the nightly news fighting a determined enemy in a far away land. Soon, they too will become proud

veterans.

This month, I ask that as we commemorate Veterans Day we do more than just take the day off, we should take the day on — make a difference in your community.

Take care and safe travels.

ON POINT!

1st Space Brigade implements '5S'

By David Crouch, SMDC/ARSTRAT
Lean Six Sigma Team

On Oct. 1-4, 2007, the SMDC/ARSTRAT Lean Team, along with Lean Six Sigma Green Belt candidate Maj. Antoinette Fletcher, the 1st Space Brigade S4, sponsored a "5S" event in the shipping and receiving warehouse at the SMDC/ARSTRAT headquarters building on Peterson Air Force Base in Colorado Springs, Colo.

In addition to Fletcher, seven other people from the 1st Space Brigade took part in this event. As with all LSS efforts, the goal was to improve the efficiency, speed and effectiveness of work processes. During the event, there was no interruption of support to the headquarters and the many SMDC/ARSTRAT elements deployed around the world.

"The shipping and receiving warehouse has been conducting daily business for years despite the continuous problems of not having enough space to store items, not having enough space to receive, and not enough space to prepare packages for shipment, but those that have been managing the warehouse have been doing an awesome job of making it work," Fletcher said. "They understand the mission behind the warehouse is to support the warfighter, so failing at getting things where they need to be, when they need to be there, is not an option. Our biggest task has not been getting items out of the warehouse but making the warehouse run more effectively and efficiently. Lean Six Sigma has helped us solve most of those problems by enlightening us on more effective ways of managing the stock that comes in and out of the warehouse daily, as well as providing us with tools for managing and tracking the hundreds of packages we may receive in a week's time."

"5S" is an LSS term that stands for "Sort, Straighten, Sweep, Schedule and

Sustain."

In the "Sort" phase, each item in the warehouse was marked either for retention in the area, storage somewhere else (usually by issuing it to the end user), or disposal.

In the "Straighten" phase (sometimes called "Simplify"), actions were taken to find and label a logical place for each item to be retained in the warehouse, to identify end-users and transfer or ship items to them, and to turn in or otherwise dispose of unnecessary items. Areas for incoming items, outgoing items, turn-ins, and tools were marked on the floor of the warehouse. Four truckloads of useless items (mostly old pallets, used cardboard boxes, and other used packing materials) were taken to dumpsters or recycled. Many other items were identified as excess, and turn-in documents were prepared. These items were turned in to the Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office or to the Fort Carson Central Issue Facility, as appropriate.

"Sweep" (sometimes called "Shine") means keeping the work area neat and clean. Warehouses naturally collect dust and dirt, and the team spent a lot of time pushing brooms, wiping surfaces, taking out trash, and arranging work areas to maximize the efficiency of the warehouse operation. As one team member noted, "it needed to be done. The processes were in place, but not drawn out on the floor. This sort of formalizes everything. The visual communication that we've added makes it easier for everybody else to know what's going on."

The fourth phase, "Schedule," is used to maintain the first three phases. A message board was developed and posted showing the daily, weekly, and monthly activities required to sustain the changes that were made during the event, as well as the current 5S score and the score's trend over the past several weeks. This will give both employees and managers an

"at-a-glance" update on how well things are going. The score went from 0.6 on Tuesday morning to 3.0 (on a 5.0-point scale) on Thursday afternoon.

The final phase, "Sustain," involves using the schedule to practice and repeat the new processes until they become embedded in the operation — simply the way things are done.

Through team discussion and analysis, the four main work processes carried out in the Shipping and Receiving warehouse were identified as Receiving, Large Item Shipping, Small Item Shipping, and Turn-In. The team then developed high-level process maps for posting prominently in the area so that anyone who came into the warehouse could see them and better understand what is involved in each.

"It's a lot better than it was when I first got here. Fifteen months ago, we had stuff for turn-in stacked fifteen feet high," said Lt. Col. Patrick Lozier, 1st Space Brigade executive officer, as he toured the warehouse area following the 5S event. "This thing has come a long way in fifteen months. There has been significant improvement from even six months ago. We had so much stuff that needed to be turned in."

When she stopped by the warehouse, Pam Porter, a budget analyst in the 1st Space Brigade S4, said, "Wow! Did you take some before and after pictures? I was stunned when I walked in there. We had a potluck in that area a couple of weeks ago, and it's a lot cleaner now. The visual you get is very impressive. I think they'll have an easier time doing their work now."

As she closed the event and thanked the team, Fletcher stated, "This event has been well worth the hard work and time invested. It is definitely my intent as well as my team's intent to take the lessons learned and apply them toward continuous management of the shipping and receiving warehouse."

Past, present commanders look to the future of SMDC

Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell, commanding general for the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/ U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command is surrounded by past commanders of the command. Campbell discussed space, ground-based missile defense, future warfare and other topics of interest plus the way ahead for SMDC with former SMDC commanders on Oct. 4. L-R: retired Lt. Gen. Donald M. Lionetti, commanding 1992-1994; retired Lt. Gen. Robert D. Hammond, commanding 1988-1992; retired Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Cosumano, commanding 2001-2003; Campbell, SMDC's current commanding general; retired Maj. Gen. Eugene Fox, commanding 1983-1986; retired Maj. Gen. Grayson D. Tate Jr., commanding 1979-1982; retired Lt. Gen. Edward G. Anderson III, commanding 1996-1998; and retired Lt. Gen. Larry J. Dodgen, commanding 2003-2006.



Photo by Diane Schumacher

Astronaut
continued from page 1

While moving the Port 6 truss, the crew discovered a torn solar array, which was designed to help provide power to the space station.

Wheelock and Mission Specialist Scott Parazynski repaired the torn array during a spacewalk Nov. 3, Wheelock's third and the mission's fourth.

Parazynski cut a snagged wire from the array and installed homemade stabilizers designed to strengthen and stabilize the structure. Wheelock helped from the truss by keeping an eye on the distance between Parazynski and the array. The process took about three and a half hours. Derek Hassman, the lead

space-station flight director, said the operation was "one of the most satisfying days that I've ever had in mission control."

Despite the challenges, which included finding a small hole in his gloves after returning from the Oct. 30 spacewalk, the mission has been exciting for Wheelock. He said the

views were breathtaking, although getting used to moving around in space was challenging because it was hard to relax enough to move freely.

"This is the ultimate high ground," Wheelock said, "so I figure that this is the place for a Soldier to be."

(NASA status reports contributed to this article.)



Astronauts Douglas Wheelock (left) and Scott Parazynski, both STS-120 mission specialists, float near the galley on the mid-deck of Space Shuttle Discovery while docked with the International Space Station.



During the mission's third spacewalk, Wheelock and Parazynski (out of frame) installed the Port 6 truss segment with its set of solar arrays to its permanent home, installed a spare main bus switching unit on a stowage platform, and performed a few get-ahead tasks.



Attired in his Extravehicular Mobility Unit (EMU) spacesuit, Wheelock, STS-120 mission specialist, is pictured in the Quest Airlock of the International Space Station as the mission's first spacewalk draws to a close.



While anchored to a foot restraint on the end of the Orbiter Boom Sensor System (OBSS), Astronaut Scott Parazynski (left), STS-120 mission specialist, participates in the mission's fourth session of extra-vehicular activity (EVA) while Space Shuttle Discovery is docked with the International Space Station. During the seven-hour, 19-minute spacewalk, Parazynski cut a snagged wire and installed homemade stabilizers designed to strengthen the damaged solar array's structure and stability in the vicinity of the damage. Astronaut Douglas Wheelock (right), mission specialist, assisted from the truss by keeping an eye on the distance between Parazynski and the array. Once the repair was complete, flight controllers on the ground successfully completed deployment of the array.

Safety

Thanksgiving Safety Tips

SMDC/ARSTRAT Safety Office

Driving Safety

Unfortunately, alcohol incidents and driving related hazards increase during the holiday weekend. Crash statistics identify the Wednesday before through the Monday following Thanksgiving as the highest motorist accident period throughout the United States for the entire year. These accidents are mainly due to human error and environmental conditions. Following these few simple rules will greatly increase your chances of avoiding accidents and returning to work safely after the holidays:

- Wear your seatbelt and require all occupants in your vehicle to wear theirs.
- Pre-plan your trip to allow plenty of time for travel and rest.
- Be responsible and proactive. Prior to enjoying nightlife attractions, identify your buddy and a designated driver for the night. Ensure your house guests don't drink and drive.
- Obey traffic laws and drive defensively. Be more aware when driving at or just after dusk, deer are most active this time of year (deer hunting season).
- Complete Travel Risks Planning System (TRiPS) if your plans include traveling during this holiday weekend (<https://cra.army.mil> - last item under program quick links).

Cooking Safety

The stats are grim: every day 200,000 Americans get sick from food-related illnesses, and since Thanksgiving is one of our major food holidays, the chances for food illness are high. The guidelines are basically the common sense stuff: don't defrost the turkey at room temperature, wash everything that gets raw turkey juice on it, and the big one: don't cook the stuffing inside the bird. It's also important to cook the turkey to an internal temperature of 180 degrees Fahrenheit to kill all of the bacteria.

In the event of a burn, run cool tap water over the affected area to soothe the skin. Then, cover the burn with a sterile dressing or clean cloth. This will greatly reduce the chance of infection. If the burn is severe and blistering occurs, seek medical attention or call 9-1-1 for assistance.

Fire Safety

On Thanksgiving Day, fire incidence increases. This increase is troubling as it applies mostly to cooking fires in the family home. Each year, nearly 4,300 fires in the United States occur on Thanksgiving Day causing on average 15 fatalities, about 50 injuries, and nearly \$27 million in property damage. Of these fires, 1,450 are in residential structures that claim about 15 lives, 41 injuries, and cause an estimated \$21 million in damage.

On Thanksgiving Day, the incidence of vehicle and other fires decline; however, the number of residential structure fires increases from 23 percent to 36 percent of the daily average. Thanksgiving Day residential structure fires tend to cause

more property damage and claim more lives, but do not injure as many people as residential fires occurring on the average day.



Causes

Cooking is the leading cause of residential structure fires on Thanksgiving Day and is responsible for more fires than the following four leading causes combined. For the average day (both in general and for November specifically), the leading cause of structure fires is cooking, but other causes play more dominant roles. For example, incendiary/suspicious fires are much more common on the average day than on Thanksgiving.

Food left unattended is the leading factor in the ignition of residential cooking fires on Thanksgiving Day. As with cooking fires in general, the preponderance (83 percent) of Thanksgiving Day residential structure fires are the result of incidents involving stoves and ovens.

Thanksgiving Day has more than double the number of residential cooking fires than an average day. The day after Thanksgiving traditionally has a substantial decrease in such fires, perhaps because people eat leftovers rather than cook.

Not surprisingly, cooking is the leading cause of residential structure fire injuries on Thanksgiving, followed by open flame, electrical distribution, and appliances. In contrast, the leading causes of residential fire fatalities on Thanksgiving are smoking and cooking (nearly 46 percent each), followed by arson (nine percent).

While the comforting glow of candles around the home may invoke the warm holiday spirit, they are a significant fire hazard. If you choose to set the mood with candles, never leave them burning unattended. Take extra care to supervise children (and pets) if candles grace your holiday table and extinguish them when you leave the room, even for a minute.



'Tis the season – for colds and flu

How many times a day, do you wash your hands? Mom was right: You need to wash your hands more often. It is just not enough to rinse under some lukewarm water.

Infectious diseases are the third leading cause of death in the United States. Hand washing is the most important means of preventing the spread of infection. The Food and Drug Administration recommends that hand sanitizers not be used in place of soap and water but only as an adjunct.

Here's how to clean hands properly:

1. Remove rings and bracelets.
2. Wet hands using a stream of warm running water. Excessively hot water is harder on the skin, dries the skin, and is too uncomfortable to wash with for the recommended amount of time. Because cold water prevents soap from lathering properly, soil and germs may not be washed away.
3. Use soap (any kind). Dispensers deliver the proper amount of soap, while protecting the rest from contamination. Use the right cleanser for the task. Use a nickel-size amount of general-purpose cleanser or a quarter-size quantity of anti-microbial cleansers. Follow the instructions on the label.
4. Lather thoroughly. Scrub hands, including the wrists, palms, backs, fingers and under the fingernails for total of at least 20 seconds.
5. Rinse thoroughly. Dry hands completely with a paper towel. Leaving soap residue on the skin and incomplete drying contribute to dermatitis.
6. Repeat steps 2-5 if hands are particularly dirty or greasy.
7. Use a paper towel to turn off the faucet without re-contaminating hands.
8. Use hand cream after washing and during the day to restore the skin's natural oils, keeping it resilient. Skin conditioning agents (emollients) soften and smooth skin. Moisturizers reduce shedding of dry skin flakes and inhibit the growth of micro-organisms.

It is recommended that you follow this routine before you prepare or eat food; treat a cut or wound; tend to someone who is sick; or insert or remove contact lenses. Also wash after you go to the bathroom or handle uncooked foods.

Hand Sanitizer: apply about a teaspoon (dime size) of the sanitizer in palm of hand - spread thoroughly by briskly rubbing hands together until dry. Remember, hand sanitizers do not replace soap and water.

Police drop in on Delta Company

By Elizabeth Precht
Unit reporter

CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. — “Educating my Soldiers is a priority,” said 1st Sgt. Mark Gehrt, Delta Company, 53rd Signal Battalion. “I want to see them make smart decisions for their futures.”

To prove this, 53rd Signal Battalion Executive Officer, 1st Lt. Clint Rutter coordinated a special event to educate the company’s Soldiers. Two officers from both the Paso Robles Police Department and California Highway Patrol visited Delta Company to inform the Soldiers on the consequences and fines associated with driving under the influence (DUI).

“It’s my responsibility to arm the public with information,” said California Highway Patrol Officer Chris Fisher. “This is a great way to do that.”

Fisher provided Soldiers with pamphlets, literature and plenty of facts on alcohol abuse and financial repercussions.

The information given was a valuable asset to the Soldier community.

Officer Mark Hatch, Paso Robles Police Department motorcycle patrol officer, explained in depth the stress, financial burden and community service people can plan on if they get caught driving under the influence. Both briefs were extremely informative, and Soldiers were afforded an opportunity to participate in a Patrol Ride-along in the future. Hatch explained, “The Ride-along Program allows you to see from an officer’s perspective what really is going on in your community.”

With all questions answered by the police, the Soldiers in attendance felt they had received some pertinent information about drinking and driving and other offenses that

could result in a ticket or even jail time.

“I’ve always had some questions that have been vague in what the actual right answer was. I’m glad we had the opportunity to ask some of those questions and

get straight, honest answers,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Avila.

Spc. Roy Morales added, “meeting with CHP and Paso PD officers was a great way to show the realities of decisions and the consequences thereafter.”



Photo by 1st Lt. Clint Rutter

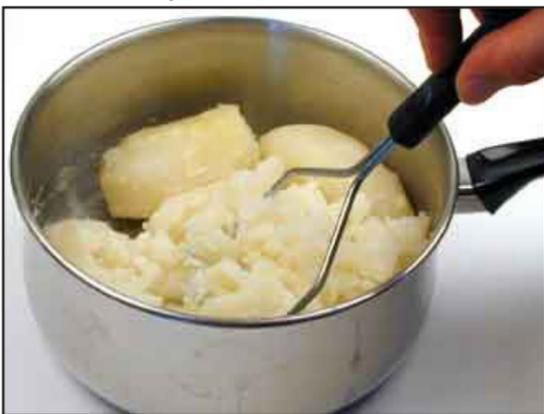
Delta Company Soldiers receive a visit from Paso Robles Police Department Officer Mark Hatch, who educated the Soldiers on the cost of driving under the influence.

Thanksgiving safety a must for Soldiers, Families

By Capt. George M. Edwards Jr.
100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD)
Safety Officer

Every fall, military families across the globe prepare for the onset of cold weather, buy school supplies, and send off the young’uns to school to learn the three R’s — read’n, rit’n and rithmatic. The fall season also brings Harvest Festivals, Fall Festivals and Halloween. But the biggest event of the fall season is Thanksgiving.

Thanksgiving is the time that we Americans set aside to give thanks for the bounty that has been bestowed upon us throughout the year. It is a time for the gathering of families and friends. It is a time to reflect on how good we Americans really have it in this life. Thanksgiving is also a time when we often let our guard down to safety considerations.



Children want to be involved in every aspect of the Thanksgiving preparations. Whether it’s making a turkey, baking a pie or mashing potatoes — children want to help. It can be frustrating at times dealing with children in the kitchen, running around the house, and consistently asking for something to drink or snack on. With a few precautions in place, we can make children a part of the festivities and give them something to be proud of so that they can sit at the dinner table and say, “I made that!”

Children love to be involved with cooking, especially if dad is also involved.



Setting out plates and silverware is a great job for children, but the older a child gets, the more the child wants to be involved. The first thing to consider is the child’s height. Adults tend to forget what the stove looks like from the vantage point of a child. Ensure you have a stool of the proper height so your child isn’t looking up at a dangerous pot of boiling water. Take time to show your child all available tools in the kitchen and how to use them. Make sure your child uses oven mitts to prevent burns.

The best way to get a child involved is in preparing food away from the stove. Mashing potatoes is an excellent way to involve a child yet keep him or her away from the hot stove.

In my home, we get the children involved in making “no-bake” cookies, gelatin molds and instant pie mixes. We



also have safety knives the children can use to cut vegetables and such while reducing the danger of a too-sharp edge.



My wife can make a heck of a cheesecake, but a child who has made an instant cheesecake will gravitate toward what they accomplished, making short work of the child-made desserts and leaving the “high quality” desserts for the adults. (Not that there’s an ulterior motive to the preceding advice!)

Involving children in the cooking and preparation of Thanksgiving dinner can be a rewarding and bonding experience for both parent and child if a few precautions are made. Plan your preparations so there is a place for your child to lend a hand, utilize the right tool for the job, maintain close supervision, and make sure you have time to involve your children. Any time a job is rushed, there is a greater potential of hazardous action by adult and child both, so take your time, involve your children, and be safe. By doing so you may find yourself bonding a little closer to your child and a good time will be had by all.

Alaska GMD Soldier assists in saving life on plane

By Capt. Tim Brower, Unit reporter

FORT GREELY, Alaska — “Have stethoscope, will travel” might be Staff Sgt. Eric Maschmeier’s new motto after his medical skills and handy equipment helped save a man’s life aboard an airplane.

Maschmeier, a medical NCO assigned to the 49th Missile Defense Battalion (Ground-based Midcourse Defense) here, was traveling onboard Alaska Airlines Flight 388 from Fairbanks to Seattle Sept. 30, a Sunday. Suddenly, one of the first-class passengers, a heavy-set, middle-aged man, stood up from his seat. He turned to his seatmate, told him that he was having difficulty breathing, and moved into the aisle. He then clutched his chest and fell over, unconscious.

The flight attendant was unable to revive him and immediately put out a call on the aircraft intercom asking for any medical professionals to identify themselves. Maschmeier and a medical doctor, Marc Johnson, responded. Over the course of the next 15 minutes, they worked to stabilize the unconscious passenger. Maschmeier opened his luggage and provided a stethoscope and blood pressure cuff. Although his experience with this type of incident was limited, he was calm, professional, and swift. “When it happens, it happens quickly and all the training comes back to you,” Maschmeier commented.

While the doctor got on the radio with Mayo Clinic medical consultants,

Maschmeier took serial blood pressures and monitored the patient’s pulse. These minute-by-minute information updates enabled the physician to make assessments of the patient’s condition. This was critical, because no one had any idea of what the medical problem was, and decisions had to be made emergently to determine if loss of life was imminent. According to Johnson, the patient’s life was in Maschmeier’s hands.

Maschmeier directed passengers to search the patient’s luggage for medications — confirming that the patient was a smoker. He interviewed passengers seated around the patient to determine his behavior in flight before the incident. Maschmeier conferred with the flight crew to determine if the patient had exhibited symptoms before boarding and asked other first-class passengers to record vital signs and report additional symptoms as they occurred. Maschmeier relayed this information to Johnson, all while attempting to rouse the unresponsive patient. Maschmeier’s calm, quiet and low-key manner in managing an unconscious, unresponsive, patient with a low blood pressure provided reassurance to the passengers and flight crew of Flight 388.

Ultimately, because the patient was unresponsive, sweating heavily, and maintained a low blood pressure, the aircraft diverted to Juneau, Alaska. Paramedics revived the patient and transported him to an emergency room for evaluation and treatment.



Photo By Sgt. Jack W. Carlson III

Staff Sgt. Eric Maschmeier, health officer for the 49th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD), listens to a patient’s breathing while on duty at Fort Greely, Alaska. He recently used the same stethoscope to assist in saving a man’s life aboard an airplane.

Describing the event, Maschmeier says, “It was my first emergency experience at 35,000 feet.”

Echo Company Soldiers prepare for the future

By Sgt. Vicente Gonzalez, Unit reporter

FORT BUCKNER, OKINAWA, Japan — The GSCCE or Global Satellite Configuration and Command Element is one of the most complex hardware subsystems in the Wideband SATCOM (Satellite Communication) Operations Center. Recently, the Soldiers of Echo Company here worked on the next step toward being fully prepared and mission capable on the Wideband Global Satellite (WGS) fleet of satellites by completing the GSCCE new equipment training (NET).

The new GSCCE subsystem allows WSOC payload controllers to quickly and efficiently monitor the health and welfare of all aspects of the spacecraft’s performance in near real time.

Because of the great complexity of the GSCCE subsystem, Soldiers needed to learn the entire GSCCE/WGS package. This provides Soldiers an opportunity to be extremely well rounded in the world of WGS. This well-roundedness is very important for Soldiers who will be interacting with WGS everyday. The in-depth training allows the GSCCE operator to have an understanding of why they are doing what they are doing. Without this understanding, Soldiers/GSCCE operators will be doing nothing more than clicking a mouse without knowing what they’re doing.

Thanks to the expert training from Boeing personnel, Echo Company Soldiers will understand how the WGS and GSCCE work together. They will be able to more effectively troubleshoot (should the need arise), and they will be able to provide better and more constructive information to the Air Force personnel in charge of WGS platform control.

The NET classes were two iterations of four-week classes. This allowed Echo Company to train as many Soldiers as possible on the GSCCE software and hardware. While in the NET class, the Soldiers were given intensive blocks of instruction on all aspects of the WGS Satellite and on the intricacies of the GSCCE subsystem. The instructors for this NET class came from Boeing and could all be considered experts in their respective fields of expertise. The Boeing instructors delivered a curriculum that included the structure of the WGS spacecraft and its detailed functionality as well of every nuance of the GSCCE software.

The WGS is built on a platform that is very similar to the platforms on some commercial satellites. The GSCCE is also based on software and hardware currently in use on a variety of commercial applications. While in the Army, working with WGS, Soldiers will no doubt be gaining valuable job skills for the future.



Photos by Sgt. Jack W. Carlson III

Sgt. Russell Craig, weapons operator, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, screams (simulated) in agony as emergency response personnel remove other injured Soldiers from a wrecked vehicle during a Mass Casualty Exercise recently held on Fort Greely, Alaska. Exercises like this are used to test first responders on a multitude of various situations. Soldiers and civilians often participate to help increase the realism of exercises.



As the days get shorter in the higher latitudes, the opportunity to see the aurora borealis increases. Seen here on Fort Greely, Alaska, (latitude 64) Specialists Stephen Bearor and Joseph Ten Eyck, military police officers, 49th Missile Defense Battalion, pause while patrolling the Missile Defense Complex to see an amazing display of the northern lights recently.

Delta Company celebrates military appreciation day

By Spc. Elizabeth Precht
Unit reporter

CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. — Imagine sitting in the grandstands at the state fairgrounds and looking up into the clear blue sky. Suddenly a small dot appears in the distant blue. You don't recognize it right away, but as the music starts to play the spot gets bigger and you realize it's a person skydiving. As this skydiver approaches the ground he pulls a cord and a sandbag drops below him deploying a 60-foot American flag. The skydiver continues to fall, now with a huge American flag billowing beneath him. Then, over the loud speaker, the song "Proud to be an American" by Lee Greenwood starts to play bringing tears and amazement to those privileged to witness the momentous event.

The very image described above came about courtesy of 1st Lt. Clint Rutter and Sgt. David Hansen both from Delta Company 53rd Signal Battalion, who arranged and executed a multi-service flag ceremony to celebrate military appreciation day at the California Mid-State Fair on Aug. 4. Just before the start of the rodeo finals, Soldiers from Delta Company stood in formation in the middle of the arena anxiously waiting for the skydiver to reach the ground. As the diver



Photo by 1st Lt. Clint Rutter

Delta Company Soldiers participate in a multi-service flag ceremony as part of the California Mid-State Fair Military Appreciation Day on Aug. 4.

approached, the Soldiers broke formation to create a landing strip to guide him in. Seconds before he touched the ground, the Soldiers collapsed around him to grab an edge of the flag. They then stretched it out and held it high as the national anthem was sung. The flag was then gathered, and the Soldiers exited the

arena amidst a thunderous applause from the people in the stands.

Delta Company 53rd Signal Battalion has been part of this ceremony for several years, and each year it's always spectacular and seems to be better than the one before. It is definitely a must see for anyone who gets the chance.

Delta Company Soldiers show commitment to Army

By Staff Sgt. Jason Avila
Unit reporter

CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. — With constant interaction and influence from civilian contractors, it's not often you hear the word reenlistment without laughter following.

Despite one of the highest Selective Reenlistment Bonuses (SRB's) in the Army, the temptation for civilian life is still very enticing. Soldiers in the satellite control world almost never see reenlistment as a serious option.

In the past, Soldiers who were selected to become controllers would stay controllers for the majority of their initial enlistment, if not their whole enlistment.

The Soldiers and noncommissioned officers of Delta Company have decided to take control, not just of satellites but of their careers.

Delta Company continues to

lead by example. With five more reenlistments under Delta Company's belt, their Soldiers continue to prove they are Army Strong.

Master Sgt. Alfred Martinez reenlisted indefinitely at the needs of the Army and has since received orders to Hawaii to take a first sergeant position.

Sgt. Robert Fletcher jumped at the opportunity to be proactive in his career, taking the overseas option and reenlisting for six years. He will also be heading to Hawaii.

Sgt. Kevin Beck stepped up next to reenlist for five more years and has since received orders to Korea.

Also headed on orders to Korea is Sgt. Sheldon Fogerty who reenlisted for another three years.

Finally, with the 1st Space Brigade Commander, Col. Timothy Coffin, in town visiting, Sgt. Salvador Cota made



Photo by 1st Lt. Clint Rutter

1st Space Brigade Commander, Col. Timothy Coffin performs the reenlistment ceremony for Sgt. Salvador Cota who will soon head to Korea to continue his commitment to the Army.

his career decision more memorable by having Coffin perform the reenlistment. Cota made a commitment for

an additional six years and will also be headed on orders to Korea. Delta Company Soldiers are definitely Army Strong!

Stand-Down

continued from page 1

people who are injured or killed by a drunken driver each year. They brought to the table a sober reminder that those involved in the accident are not the only victims.

The couple began their presentation with Paula speaking about Lisa and telling the story of the night of the accident. After telling the Soldiers the story of her daughter's death, Paula showed a blown-up photograph of the mangled minivan Lisa rode in the night of the accident and said, "This is what happy hour really looks like."

The visual combined with Paula's

words created an instant and deep impact felt among all in attendance.

After Paula concluded, she brought Jerry out to present the Soldiers with a father's perspective on the incident and impact of drunken driving fatalities. Jerry also noted the average individual will drive about 80 times impaired before receiving his first drunken driving offense.

Jerry said, "It is the innocent people who pay for [drunken driving]. It's not fair." He reminded attendees that there is no excuse for driving after consuming alcohol. There are too many fail-safes to include bars that offer taxi vouchers or patrons a ride home, advanced planning and friends.

In Bravo Company, the unit has a safety card with emergency numbers in case plans and friends fail a Soldier and a "Get Home Safe" program that ensures if a Soldier contacts the continuously manned operations floor in need of a ride, a phone tree will be used to locate a ride for the Soldier.

At the end of the day, the Soldiers are left with specific lessons to take with them and apply to their professional and personal lives. Whatever the lessons may be, Bravo Company will not simply keep safety to just another training event, but will begin each day with a new understanding and respect for safety in their everyday lives.

From the eyes of warriors

By Sgt. Patrick Mann and
Sgt. Martin Jensen,
Charlie Company,
53rd Signal Battalion

LANDSTUHL, Germany — The saying, “work hard, play hard” has been around for a long time and has been used by countless groups and people. It may not, however, be any truer than it was for us as the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command’s Soldier and NCO of the Year.

The hard work was not even close to over after we were selected to represent SMDC/ARSTRAT in the Sergeant Major of the Army’s Best Warrior competition in October at Fort Lee, Va. As we prepared for the Best Warrior Competition, there was plenty of hard work. It started months earlier with countless hours of PT [physical training], land navigation, Army Warrior Tasks, weapons, and of course studying regulations and manuals.

The sergeants major of SMDC had some top-rate, challenging training arranged for us at the operational headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colo. We spent two weeks in September at Fort Carson, Peterson Air Force Base, and the Air Force Academy training on anything and everything that might be thrown at us during the competition in Fort Lee. We

Commentary

spent three days at the range qualifying with the M4 from the foxhole, prone, kneeling and standing positions.

We covered dozens of miles in full battle rattle practicing day and night land navigation, both with and without the PLGR [Precise Lightweight GPS Receiver]. We practiced our Modern Army Combatives in addition to regular morning PT. On the weekends, we’d take all our gear and a 35-pound rucksack and head off for a ruckmarch through the Garden of the Gods. There was also extensive training on chemical, biological, radiation and nuclear attacks, improvised explosive devices, urban warfare, and the EST 2000 was used to help us practice our escalation of force and rules of engagement. We also had the M249, M240B, M2, and M9 readily available to practice disassembly, assembly and functions check. As to be expected from a world class organization such as SMDC/ARSTRAT, the teams in Colorado Springs did an incredible job.

So we’ve talked about working hard, but what about playing hard. This really began the moment we were announced as the winners of the SMDC/ARSTRAT competition. We were given hundreds of dollars



Photo by Joe Ramirez

From left, 2007 SMDC/ARSTRAT Soldier of the Year Sgt. Martin A. Jensen, Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph C. Borja, Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell and 2007 SMDC/ARSTRAT Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Sgt. Patrick J. Mann cut the cake, decorated with the SMDC/ARSTRAT 50th anniversary logo, following the Uncasing Ceremony on Redstone Arsenal, Ala., June 26.

of gift certificates and traveler’s checks, numerous coins and plaques, an ACU [Army camouflage uniform] assault pack, complete set of dress blues, and even an official Army NCO sword.

Our first duty as the 2007 Soldier and NCO of Year was to attend the uncasing of the colors at Redstone Arsenal, Ala. This was our first opportunity to see the outstanding team at Redstone and get a VIP tour of the Von Braun Complex. Just a short month later and we were back in Huntsville for the 2007 Space and Missile Defense Conference. The week began with a four-person best ball tournament where the SMDC/ARSTRAT Commanding General Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell, Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph C. Borja, 1st Space Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin McGovern, and Sgt. Mann shot a very respectful nine under par and just missed a top three finish.

After competing in the Best Warrior Competition in October, we again had the opportunity to relax and have some fun in Washington, D.C., during the Association of the U.S. Army Conference. The first thing on our agenda was a Potomac River Cruise. The fully catered, three-hour cruise was a salute to some of America’s Wounded Warriors with about 15 Soldiers from Walter Reed Hospital able to attend. We were lucky enough to have our family with us, and they were able to enjoy the cruise along with Command Sgt. Maj. Borja and his wife.

Tuesday evening was spent moving amongst the various hospitality suites sponsored by the numerous AUSA vendors. Throughout the night, Command Sgt. Maj. Borja introduced us to many of his friends and contemporaries. The culmination of the week was Wednesday night during the George C. Marshall dinner. Just before the dinner, we pinned on our VIP passes and walked the conference floor with Command Sgt. Maj. Borja, walking away with some of the best loot the AUSA conference had to offer.

Only 10 days after our time

in D.C., we were off again, this time to the Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral, Fla., to view the Space Shuttle Discovery launch. Once again we were able to link up with our families and Command Sgt. Maj. Borja for the activities. We were again given VIP passes, this time to tour the visitor center and museums, attend mission briefings from NASA officials, and view the launch. The night before the launch, we were invited by Army Astronaut Col. Doug Wheelock to a reception in his name. It was a fun and festive evening as hundreds of people celebrated the achievements of this distinguished SMDC/ARSTRAT officer.

The next day was the much anticipated launch. We loaded the bus around 8:30 a.m. and headed out to our prime viewing location at Banana Creek. As the clock hit 10 seconds the crowd joined in and began counting down. At T-0, you could see the flames bursting out of the solid rocket boosters and the shuttle began to lift off the pad as hundreds of spectators cheered and yelled. Shortly after lift off, the sound waves finally made it across the water and shook everyone to their core as they watched in awe. The shuttle was actually in view for about a minute and half, but at the same time it seemed to go by in a split second and take an eternity.

This latest trip seemed to epitomize the entire experience that came with winning the titles of SMDC/ARSTRAT Soldier and NCO of the Year. There were monumental challenges that were met and overcome as well as amazing once in a lifetime opportunities given and taken.

All in all, it was an incredible journey that will not soon be forgotten. And, much like the shuttle launch, it seemed to take forever while simultaneously passing in the blink of an eye. It was an experience that helped to define the lives and futures of these two very fortunate Soldiers who would not trade it for the world.

(See related article on page 22.)



Photo by Debbie Odom, NASA

Out of clouds of smoke and steam, space shuttle Discovery hurtles toward space on the 23rd assembly mission to the International Space Station as Mann and Jensen watch from their “prime viewing location at Banana Creek.”

117th Space Battalion's new colors flown on STS-117 Atlantis

By Maj. Laura D. Kenney, 100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD) PAO

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo.—Military units are traditionally fiercely proud of their colors – the banners they carry into battle, the flags that lead the way and that men have died for rather than surrender. The history of the flag is what makes it. But one of Colorado's youngest Army National Guard units now carries a flag that, although its history is short, has a unique claim to fame few such banners own – that of being flown in space, and presented to the unit by the astronaut who took it 5.8 million miles.

The 117th Space Battalion, which, until the ceremony Oct. 20, was known as the 193rd Space Battalion, is a Colorado National Guard unit assigned to the U.S. Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command. The very first and only Army Guard unit with a space mission, the then 193rd was activated in September 2001 at Peterson Air Force Base here. The unit gained a new name as it was formally transitioned to permanent status.

The re-designation ceremony took place on a bright blue, windy day – the sky almost the same shade as Astronaut Patrick Forrester's blue flight (space) suit. Forrester, a retired Army colonel but still an active astronaut, was more than happy to carry the unit's new colors on a voyage into space, especially as it was, appropriately, aboard the STS-117 Atlantis.

"Of course it's an exciting thing, being an astronaut. But I have to tell you, I was pretty excited and very proud to be asked to carry the flag of an Army unit that's done such great things, into Space. It gave me the opportunity to brag about you guys and tell your story for 5.8 million miles (distance the shuttle flew) and it's an honor to bring the flag back to you. I'm glad to be able to thank you personally for everything that you do," said Forrester.

"Everything that (they) do," includes numerous deployments of small detachments of the battalion to the Iraqi and Afghanistan theaters of operation. The groups of Soldiers constitute Army Space Support Teams and Commercial Exploitation Teams. Those teams variously provide space support through



Photos by Sharon L. Hartman

Command Sgt. Maj. Timothy Ward, 117th Space Bn., unfurls colors flown millions of miles in space with the assistance of Col. Robert Balster, Commander, 89th Troop Command, Colorado National Guard. The flag of the newly designated 117th Space Bn. was flown on shuttle mission, STS-117 Atlantis, and was presented to the unit by Army Astronaut Col. (Ret.) Patrick Forrester.

imagery, space weather, fly-throughs and contribute space situational awareness to commanders in the field.

Forrester, who has performed two spacewalks totaling over eleven hours on earlier missions, was unable to bring the flag outside the shuttle on this particular trip, but it flew on the space deck and made a visit to the International Space Station, adding to its travel luster.

The credit for the great idea to have the 117th's flag flown on the shuttle bearing the same designation belongs to the battalion commander, Lt. Col. Donald Laucirica, according to his executive officer, Maj. Brian Gary, who organized the ceremony and acted as commander of troops.

"The battalion commander heard about the upcoming flight with the same designation as our unit from a visiting astronaut, checked it out, and called up Col. Forrester. Obviously, he said yes," said Gary with a smile.

The colors were ceremoniously unfurled by the battalion's Command Sgt. Maj.

Timothy Ward and its Colorado National Guard brigade commander, 89th Troop Command's Col. Robert Balster.

The Adjutant General of the State of Colorado, Air Force Maj. Gen. H. Michael Edwards, opened the ceremony with an exuberant —

"What a great day for the state of Colorado! We have the very first National Guard mission in space, and these Soldiers make sure that information is flowing to our warfighters far more swiftly than was possible in the past. I appreciate the sacrifices you have made in volunteering for these missions in harm's way."

The battalion, which has a dual chain of command that includes both state National Guard and Active Army, was praised by its SMDC/ARSTRAT brigade commander, 1st Space Brigade's Col. Timothy Coffin.

"From the green fields of Lexington and Concord to, now, the depths of space – what an impact the National Guard has had on the safeguarding of our nation!" said Coffin.

Laucirica closed the ceremony. "Today, we are a fully recognized asset of the Colorado National Guard and of the Army. Teams from this battalion have served in the War on Terror, and helped fellow citizens during and after Hurricane Katrina. We can trace our lineage back to the cavalry – and it's a great day for the Space Cowboys!"

Col. Michael Yowell, the first commander of the battalion and current commander of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (Ground-based Midcourse Defense), explained the nickname.

"That was a nickname we've had for the 193rd/117th since we started. Kinda like the Minuteman, but the Cowboy is more Western (hence Coloradoan) and the Cowboy often was a lone figure in the vast expanse of the west who relied upon his skills and wits to survive, often under harsh conditions."

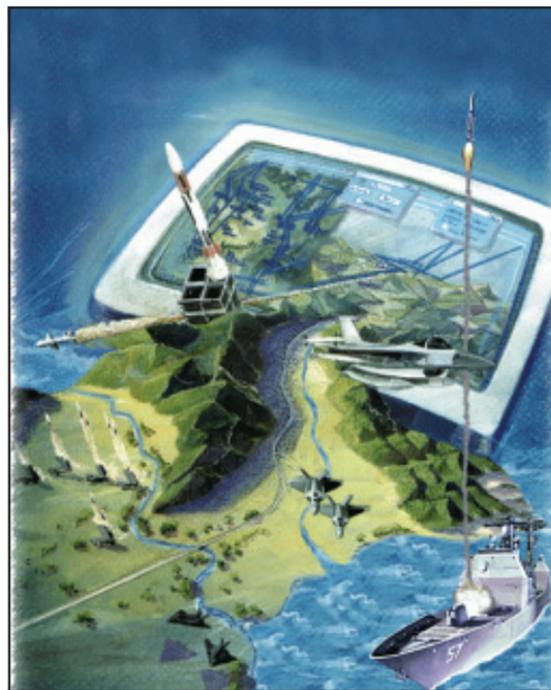
Afterward, there were cake and refreshments to celebrate the "birthday" of the new unit. Forrester gave a briefing, open to the public, on the STS-117 Atlantis flight and kindly agreed to pose for photographs with eager children and adults.

The day that started with a journey 120 nautical miles up ended on a high note in the Colorado Rockies.



Army Astronaut Col. (Ret.) Patrick Forrester (reflection from framed glass) admires the colors of the 117th Space Bn. he took into space with him on shuttle mission STS-117 Atlantis. The battalion's commander, Lt. Col. Don Laucirica, whose idea it was to garner such honors for his unit's colors, stands beside him.

From Concept to Combat — Celebrating 50 Years of Excellence



The Extended Air Defense Testbed, Extended Air Defense Simulation (EADSIM) and the Tactical Simulation Interface Unit (TSIU) represent the simulation technology developed by the command which has establish training environments relevant to the missile defense missions. EADSIM, for example, is a command and control analytic model of air and missile warfare (e.g. fixed- and rotary-wing aircraft, tactical ballistic and cruise missiles) used for scenarios ranging from few-on-few to many-on-many. The TSIU meanwhile is a two-way link between simulations and automated command and control (C2) workstations in the tactical operations center.



The civilian world has also benefited from space and missile defense research and development. The Tactical Operations Center software for example was incorporated into emergency preparedness systems, the Ground Antenna Transmit and Receive (GATR) system delivered satellite communications following Hurricane Katrina, and the Spectral Operations Research Center provided imagery in the aftermath of the 2004 tsunami and other natural disasters.



Soldiers from the 49th Missile Defense Battalion, 100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD), are deployed at Fort Greely, Alaska, defending the nation 24/7/365 against the threat posed by enemy missiles.



Using commercial off-the-shelf technology, the Interim Pager Alert Warning System (PAWS) alerted troops 2:18 minutes before the voice warning was received over TACSAT and 4:57 minutes before the estimated time of impact of the incoming tactical ballistic missile. The 32nd Army Air and Missile Defense Command deployed to Operation Desert Thunder equipped with the PAWS system.



Introduced in 1995, the Force Protection Tactical Operations Center (FP TOC) was designed to encompass the four pillars of Theater Missile Defense addressing the need to provide "overarching command and control capabilities for the theater missile defense fight." The mobile information center fuses data from a variety of sensors, satellite communications and imagery. The Army Theater Missile Defense Element FP TOC transferred to the Army Air and Missile Defense Command in Fort Bliss, Texas in November 1997.

Begun in 1996 as the Aerostat program, Elevated Netted Sensor (JLENS) System surveillance radar and the other a fire co first of 60 Rapid Aerostat Initial Deployment Freedom and Operation Enduring Freed supports surveillance, early warning, and updated in 2005 with the integration of the real-time data on hostile fire. Overwatch



The Zeus laser neutralization system was tested and exploded. The Zeus prototype deployed to neutralize mines and unexploded ordnance.

Space and Missile Defense — SMDC/ARSTRAT 1957-2007



The Joint Land Attack Cruise Missile Defense... will consist of two aerostats, one containing a control radar. In 2003, the JLENS team deployed the... (RAID) Systems in support of both Operation Iraqi... With a suspended sensor suite, the system... and reconnaissance missions. The system was... the Overwatch, which provides ground forces with... has also been mounted onto a HMMWV platform.



... designed to heat a target until the ordnance... to Afghanistan in March 2003 to neutralize land



The Future Operational Center Tactical Operations Center (FOC TOC) program began in 1999, incorporating requirements from the Army, other services, civil agencies and allied organizations. Composed of two HMMWVs with a modular command post — climate controlled domed tents and Battle Studios — and a support HMMWV, the FOC TOC demonstrates emerging technologies and concepts in a warfighter context. One such technology was the Advanced Warfare Environment (AWarE) software package. Operating in a Windows environment, AWarE is designed to help reduce the TOC footprint, enhancing software architecture of C4I systems, providing a single integrated battlespace picture for joint and combined Theater Air and Missile Defense operations and an unprecedented multi-dimensional view of the battlespace. AWarE is also a part of the 1st Air Force Joint Based Expeditionary Connectivity Center, 3rd Fleet Combat Information Center, and the Madison County, Ala., Emergency Operations Center.



Developed in response to deficiencies identified during Operation Desert Storm, the Joint Tactical Ground Station (JTGS) provides Army, Joint and coalition requirements for in-theater early warning. JTGS units, operated by the 1st Space Brigade, are deployed around the globe.

1957-2007 — SMDC/ARSTRAT Celebrates

53rd Signal Battalion — A battalion with dual histories

By Mark Hubbs, SMDC/ARSTRAT Historical Office

The 53rd Signal Battalion has two distinguished histories. How can a single battalion have two histories? The battalion was re-flagged as the 53rd Signal Battalion (SATCON) on Oct. 16, 2005. Although the battalion had inherited a proud lineage with the 53rd title, its parallel history as a satellite control organization extends back to the 1960s.

“We Control the High Ground”

The U.S. Army Signal Corps experimentation with space-based communications began in 1946 when a high-powered radar was used to bounce signals off the face of the moon. The Signal Corps remained an innovator in satellite design and launched its first communication satellite in December 1958, less than a year after America’s first satellite, Explorer I, was put into orbit. That first communication satellite, the Signal Corps Orbiting Relay Equipment (SCORE), stayed in orbit only 12 days but paved the way for more successful and powerful devices. The Army’s role in space communication evolved to development and manning of ground communications equipment that could “talk” to the satellites put in orbit by the U.S. Air Force.

The satellite control history of the battalion began in 1966, long before the organization became an Army battalion. In June of that year, the Department of Defense launched its first Defense Satellite Communication System (DSCS) satellites into orbit. This constellation of 26 satellites would be the first of three increasingly improved phases of the DSCS. The DSCS is a high-capacity super high frequency subsystem of the Defense Communication System. It provides worldwide secure voice and high data rate communications for command and control, crisis management, and intelligence data transfer. Its services are used by all branches of the military, the White House Communications Agency, the Diplomatic Telecommunications System and other NATO allies.

The ground communications segment of the DSCS was operated by U.S. Army Signal Corps Soldiers who manned several ground terminals in the continental United States, Europe and Asia. These separate detachments of Soldiers were assigned to the U.S. Army Information Systems Command (USAISC). On Oct. 1, 1990, in an effort to consolidate Army space assets, the Army DSCS mission was transferred to the fledgling U.S. Army Space Command (ARSPACE). Simultaneously, Army Auxiliary Satellite Control Terminals (ASCTs) and Ground Mobile Forces Satellite Communication Systems (GMFSC) were also transferred to ARSPACE. In total, more than 300 Signal Corps Soldiers were transferred to Military Satellite Control (MILSATCON) Directorate of ARSPACE as part of this realignment.

The next great milestone in the unit’s history came on May 1, 1995, when the MILSATCON Directorate was converted to a battalion organization — 1st Satellite Control (SATCON) Battalion. Each of the DSCS detachments were organized as companies with the battalion headquarters collocated with ARSPACE headquarters in Colorado Springs. This move marked a significant recognition of the

role played by space technology in the Army of today. The 1st SATCON was composed of Headquarters at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo.; Headquarters Company at Schriever Air Force Base, Colo.; A Company at Fort Detrick, Md.; B Company at Fort Meade, Md.; C Company at Landstuhl, Germany; D Company at Camp Roberts, Calif.; and E Company at Fort Buckner, Okinawa. 1st SATCON was the first battalion in the history of the Army with an operational mission directly tied to the control of space systems and capabilities. The new battalion was awarded the motto: “We control the high ground.”



First—Last—Always!

On Oct. 16, 2005, 1st Satellite Control Battalion was converted to a Modified Table of Organization and Equipment organization and was redesignated 53rd Signal Battalion (SATCON). With this change, Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Horne, deputy commanding general-operations noted that “the Army formally recognizes this unit’s operational warfighting mission. Soldiers in this battalion make vital communications happen for our civilian leaders and joint warfighters.” The old 53rd Signal Battalion had been inactivated at the end of its Vietnam War mission in 1971, but its lineage and honors were resurrected with this reactivation. The mission for the new 53rd remains unchanged from the 1st SATCON mission to provide 24/7 on-orbit command, control and communications of the DSCS constellation in support of tactical and strategic missions. An official unfurling ceremony of the colors and guidons occurred on Oct. 26, 2005.



The 53rd Signal Battalion was authorized by the Regular Army on Oct. 18, 1927, but the battalion was not activated until the eve of World War II. The battalion was activated at Camp Bowie, Texas, on June 1, 1941, and began the long train-up for deployment. The 53rd participated in “Operation Torch” in November 1942 and landed in North Africa as part of the II

Corp, 5th Army. It was the first Signal Battalion in the U.S. Army to go into combat in European/African Theater of operations. The battalion would support combat operations in Algeria and Tunisia before the end of the North Africa campaign. The 53rd went on to make the assault landings during the Sicily campaign and then spent the rest of World War II making the long push up the Italian peninsula. At war’s end the 53rd was in the Po River Valley of northern Italy. The battalion was inactivated at Leghorn, Italy, on Sept. 30, 1945. The 53rd received a Meritorious Unit Citation for its service during World War II.

The 53rd was brought back into service again on Sept. 21, 1954. During the intervening years the battalion served at several places including Fort Hood, Texas, and Fort Huachuca, Ariz. The Battalion was deployed to Germany during the Berlin Crisis from December 1961 until June 1963. Charlie and Delta Companies were deactivated at Fort Huachuca in August 1965. The remainder of the battalion was deployed from Fort Hood to the Republic of South Vietnam in May 1966. The 53rd was stationed at Long Binh and assigned to the II Field Force as a III Corps communication and combat photo unit.

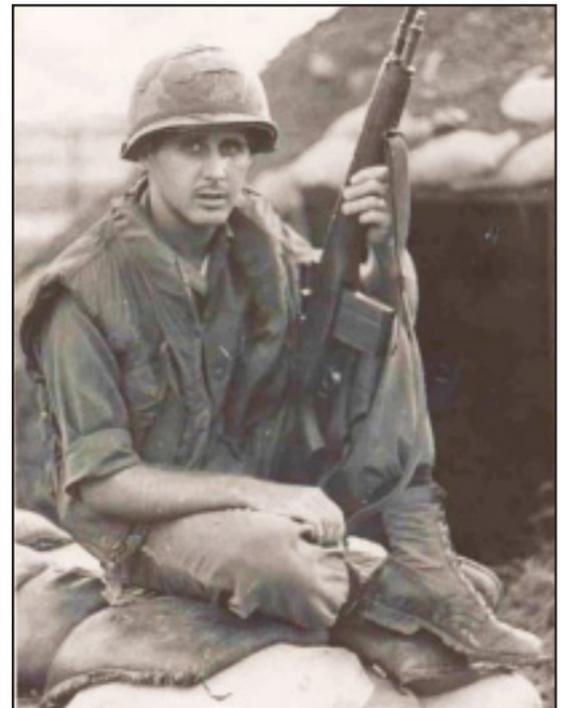


Photo courtesy of Roger Buterbaugh
Sgt. Roger Buterbaugh of the 53rd Signal Battalion mans a guard post at Long Binh.

The 53rd also manned a radio relay station on a barren hilltop several miles from Long Binh. “Hill 837” was a remote, sporadically resupplied site that came under frequent mortar and small arms attacks. Men from the 53rd helped to defend the Long Binh perimeter during the Tet Offensives of 1968 and 1969 and provided radio/teletype teams to any II Field Force unit that was conducting combat operations. The 53rd served in Vietnam until 1970 when it was re-deployed to Fort Lewis, Wash. The battalion was inactivated on June 23, 1971, at Fort Lewis. Its Vietnam service was recognized with three Meritorious Unit Commendation streamers for the years spanning 1966 to 1970 with credit for participating in various military campaigns.

The battalion’s new designation, the 53rd Signal Battalion (SATCON), represents its dual history well. The 53rd’s name brings a proud heritage of service during World War II and the Vietnam War. The “SATCON” reminds us that the battalion led the Army as the first battalion with a space mission.

50 Years of Excellence in Space and Missile Defense

Missile defense becomes operational

By Sharon Watkins Lang
SMDC/ARSTRAT Historical Office

In the 1960s and 70s, the Safeguard System Manager oversaw all aspects of the missile defense program. The Safeguard System had top priority and a letter of instruction from the system manager was the go-ahead for a mission. The Corps of Engineers, Huntsville Division, for example, was created to design and construct the facilities needed to deploy the Sentinel and later Safeguard ballistic missile defense system. A similar letter was issued to the U.S. Army Air Defense Command or ARADCOM commander on July 21, 1970. With these instructions, ARADCOM was assigned operational responsibility for the site as it is deployed, developing user requirements, developing and defining doctrine, on-site training, managing site selection and conducting operational acceptance tests of tactical sites.¹ By the end of that fiscal year, 320 ARADCOM positions were devoted to the Safeguard mission.

Following a requirements assessment, ARADCOM, on Sept. 1, 1971, established two units — the U.S. Army Safeguard Command, Grand Forks, N.D., and the U.S. Army Surveillance Battalion, Grand Forks. The Safeguard Command, based at the Missile Site Radar, had the mission to “defend the continental United States from a ballistic missile attack; specifically, to establish an area defense for existing retaliatory missile sites.” The Surveillance Battalion, located at the Perimeter Acquisition Radar site, was tasked “to provide long range surveillance and early warning of a ballistic missile attack against the continental United States.” Created with zero strength, they were scheduled to be operational by Sept. 1, 1973.

The original authorized strength would be 684 (62 officers, 22 warrant officers, 432 enlisted and 168 civilians) for the command and 400 for the battalion (41 officers, 14 warrant officers, 209 enlisted and 136 civilians). These figures reflect in part, the desire to have seven-deep manning, with more than one person always available for each console position and preparations for an expanded deployment. In addition, the audible alarm was “not to be a substitute for operator vigilance and judgment” and console duty was not to exceed four hours.



Personnel strengths however were impacted by a number of outside elements. The Safeguard system manager preferred a five-deep manning plan. The Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty would ultimately limit the deployment to the one site in North Dakota. Finally fiscal constraints resulted in internal reorganizations. While each element was initially self-sufficient, the battalion would later depend upon the Safeguard Command for all non-tactical capabilities.

The ARADCOM assumed command of the Safeguard site on March 1, 1974, with an operations officer, command sergeant major and console operators and other school trained graduates providing filling positions as they arrived. As Army Spc. Dale Whitacre, a nuclear security specialist noted “there was such a limited number of personnel that we would find ourselves doing almost anything.”² Nevertheless in May 1974, the Safeguard Command successfully participated in its first NORAD exercise — AMALGAM FAIRPLAY 75-4, demonstrating that the system could be integrated into the larger network.

On Oct. 1, 1974, the Stanley R. Mickelsen Safeguard Complex was officially accepted by the Army, becoming the first new military installation in the United States since World War II. With Operation Green Mittens the process began to make the site fully operational. Convoys delivered the missile components, while the warheads were escorted to the sites and installed separately. Described by one correspondent as something “out of a James Bond movie,” the site obtained initial operating capability with 28 Sprint and eight Spartan missiles deployed on

April 1, 1975. The fully netted system was turned over to the commander in chief of the Continental Air Defense Command for operational control.

Once operational, there were five crews assigned to the Ballistic Missile Defense Operations Center at the Missile Site Radar. Frank Flavell, who served as the chief operations sergeant, explains that each crew consisted of a tactical director (lieutenant colonel), an assistant tactical director

(major), a missile officer (major), a maintenance officer (captain) an operations sergeant (staff sergeant or sergeant first class) and an exercise officer. With five crews, three would be in manning rotation, one would be off and the fifth would be in training. Flavell added, “I was amazed at the facilities and working conditions there. I had never had it so good.”³

The Stanley R. Mickelsen Safeguard Complex reached full operational capability, with 30 Spartan and 70 Sprint missiles on Sept. 28, 1975. Within months, however, Congress ordered the deactivation of the site and the command initiated Operation Rocking Horse, the removal of the warheads and missiles and inactivation of the site. On Aug. 31, 1976, the U.S. Army Safeguard Command was officially inactivated, its personnel and equipment transferred to the Ballistic Missile Defense Systems Command. These remaining employees oversaw the Missile Site Radar deactivation and the continuation of operations and subsequent transfer of the Perimeter Acquisition Radar.

On June 13, 2002, the United States withdrew from the ABM Treaty. Following this action, President George W. Bush remarked that “our task is to develop and deploy effective defenses against limited missile attacks.” He added “I am committed to deploying a missile defense system as soon as possible to protect the American people and our deployed forces against the growing missile threats we face. Because these threats also endanger our allies and friends around the world, it is essential that we work together to defend against them, an important task which the ABM Treaty prohibited.”

In response to this initiative, the command and the Army moved to achieve this mission. The 100th Ground-Based Midcourse Defense Brigade was activated on Oct. 16, 2003, in Colorado Springs, Colo. Nicknamed the Centennial in recognition of the unit’s Colorado ties, the 90-Soldier unit is composed of National Guard and active duty Soldiers. Two months later, the first class graduated from the Ground-based Midcourse Defense Operator Advanced Course, which qualified students for the fire control system and combat and recovery operations.

On Jan. 22, 2004, the brigade achieved another milestone with the activation of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion (GMD), Fort Greely, Alaska. Like the Safeguard units, the 110-Soldier battalion is composed largely of volunteers. Unlike the previous deployment, however, these Soldiers are from the Alaska National Guard. Their mission is to provide security and operational control over ground-based interceptors located in Alaska and to support test and development activities.

The GMD system encompasses the interceptor missiles emplaced at Fort Greely and Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif., fire control centers in Colorado and Alaska, and early warning radars located around the world. The Fort Greely site and the 49th achieved limited defense capability in September 2004. One year later, the brigade surpassed its predecessor as they conducted a Modified Table of Organization and Equipment Activation Ceremony.



U.S. Army photo

Barely legible, the sign attached to the carrier reads 100. There were 100 missiles deployed at the Safeguard site in North Dakota — 70 Sprint and 30 Spartan.

See *Operations* on page 17

Escape from Alcatraz, Part Deux

Commentary

By Sgt. Justin Tjernlund
Alpha Company, 53rd Signal Battalion

FORT DETRICK, Md. — “In my day we did it all with a snorkel and a pair of flippers.” That line from “*The Rock*,” along with others inspired me to do exactly what Sean Connery did in that movie, swim from Alcatraz.

For those who may not know, with good reason, this feat has an intimidating reputation. There have only been three prisoners to successfully escape from the prison, but none of them were believed to have made it to shore. The swim is one and a half miles through the San Francisco Bay, with currents as strong as five knots and tides that can pull a weak swimmer out to the ocean and away from safety. In fact, one competitor (Sara “Sally” Lowes of Houston, Texas) lost her life at this recent event.

Now an objective thought of my decision to do this would be — *What would compel you to do this?* I have been a swimmer since I was six and have managed to keep with it throughout my enlistment in the Army. I despise running with a passion, but I love to swim. When I finish a workout in the post swimming pool, I purposely do not shower so that the smell of chlorine stays on me. I started doing open water swimming over the last few years when I started doing triathlons, but until now, I have only swam in Lake Michigan or along the Atlantic coast in New York. This was a new challenge — swim or die. I was ready to take on this trial.

In an ironic twist, the week before the event happened to be Shark Week on the Discovery Channel. Usually, I would have enjoyed watching these, but this time it felt as if I was tempting fate. I often joked to my coworkers that at least I knew how my death would look on the Discovery Channel.

The morning of the race, I was faced with good news and bad news. The good news was that the water temperature was 61 degrees; I didn’t even need my wetsuit. Unfortunately the bad news outweighed the good. I was faced with a head wind, extremely choppy water and a morning fog so thick I could barely see the San Francisco skyline through it. Add to that the inevitability of my goggles fogging up, and it would be the equivalent of closing your eyes while driving and tossing the dice to see if you make it home, but I *had* to do this for myself.

So with my mind racing with anticipation, my brother and I entered the ferry boat that would take us out to the island. The only way back now was over Earth’s most abundant feature. Before the race was underway, I turned to my brother, put my arm on his shoulder, and quoted another great movie, “Strength and honor.” Shortly afterward we were given the command to start. I have never done a military airborne jump, but I can only imagine what I felt that second was the same feeling Soldiers get when the green light comes on, and they file out of the aircraft: a 50/50 mix of exhilaration and terror.

Splash! I felt the cold water rush up my body, from feet to head. “Welcome to the Rock,” I thought to myself. As I cleared the ferry boat, I fought over and through the other swimmers to get a clear lane following the lead boat to shore. It was at



Photos courtesy of Sgt. Justin Tjernlund

The Alcatraz Challenge is a one and a half mile swim that starts at the infamous Alcatraz prison.



Sgt. Justin Tjernlund embarks on his one and a half mile swim from Alcatraz.

this time that I gained a newfound respect for seafaring vessels and animals. The waves were pounding against my forward movement, timed seemingly perfectly with every breath that I took. The first mouthful was the worst. As much as I had trained in swimming pools, I was not used to the taste of saltwater. It was like eating a handful of anchovies. At one point the force of the waves moved me so that I was pointing east at the Bay Bridge and moving toward San Jose, a much longer trip than I was willing to take.

Thankfully, I finally got into my rhythm and was breathing at the crests of the waves. I had my sights set on the Palace of Fine Arts. With my course now marked clearly before me, I pursued my goal with a strong will to finish. Before long, I could make out the shapes of people lined along the beach awaiting, cheering our return to land. As I emerged from the bay, I took a moment to turn back toward the island. I paused for a moment and thought to myself, *Sean Connery ain’t got anything on me.*

(This article is dedicated to Sara “Sally” Lowes.)



In the movie, “*The Rock*,” Sean Connery makes the swim from Alcatraz Island. During the 2007 Alcatraz Challenge, Sgt. Justin Tjernlund suggested he left Connery in his wake.

Successful flight test proves missile defense abilities

Rest easy America ... you are defended in all elements

By Spc. Michael Cost
Public Affairs Specialist

VANDENBERG AIR FORCE BASE, Calif. — Americans lay their heads down at night with the comfort that they will continue to wake up the next morning, and in most cases, this is true. Protecting a family from a home invasion is generally done with a firearm which is easy to obtain and use. What could an American citizen use to defend against an intercontinental ballistic missile flying through space toward their hometown, threatening not just their home but entire neighborhoods and cities? The 100th Missile Defense Brigade (Ground-based Midcourse Defense) has this angle covered ... and the system works.

The Department of Defense has instituted a system to “hit a bullet with a bullet” in space while the average American sleeps, goes to work or plays with his or her children. Ground-based Midcourse Ballistic Missile Defense is coming of age, as a recent strenuous test of the system proved.

On Sept. 28, the 100th MDB and the Missile Defense Agency tested one of their ground-based interceptors against a missile launched from Kodiak, Alaska. The GBI launched from the test pad located here and hit pay dirt several hundred miles off the coast of California during yet another successful test launch.

A strong breeze blew in from the ocean as the countdown over the radios began ... some were concerned over foul weather reports out of Kodiak. Once the countdown reached under 10 seconds, all doubts were pushed aside ... 10, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, and a giant stream of fire forced itself out of the in-ground silo on the coast of California.

A rumble of the earth and through a thick cloud of smoke the GBI protruded almost slowly, but within no time was on its path to success. Cameras clicked and cheers came from the crowd as the missile being put to the test pierced the sky toward its target ... it was well on its way now — moving so fast it was hard to keep in camera viewfinders.

Minutes ticked by, with observers looking to the sky as if they actually expected (hoped) to see the impact hundreds of miles up. Then ... MDA contractors started cheering loudly, signaling ... MISSION SUCCESS!!!

None of this would be possible without the dedication of U.S. Army Soldiers and a multitude of contractors manning the system put in place as a



Photo by Spc. Michael Cost

Brig. Gen. Stuart Pike, Colorado National Guard's Deputy Adjutant General for Space, receives a brief from a contractor as all around him new Ground-based Interceptors are being pieced together in the Missile Assembly Building at Vandenberg Air Force Base, Calif.

sequel to President Ronald Reagan's “Star Wars” program.

“For that day and several days afterwards, myself and my fellow crew members felt like we were walking on air,” said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Mach, Future Operations Officer on Charlie Crew 100th MDB. “These tests continually prove to the warfighters (operators) that this system works and continues to advance.”

Brig. Gen. Stuart Pike, Colorado National Guard Deputy Adjutant General for Space, recently took his position after serving with Special Forces for several years. He was given a tour of the 100th MDB's facilities here to get a clearer picture of how this city-saving system and its components work.

Wires upon wires could be seen in an area kept so clean that every time the general stepped foot into any room, a doormat-sized sticky mat removed any dust or dirt from his boots so that no destructors could penetrate the sanitized room. Each room was loud due to the massive amount of mainframe computers, so much so that briefings to the general had to be in close quarters. The general moved from room to room, building to

building.

The missile assembly building is a massive structure that can be seen from miles away. This is where the contractors really come into play. Although not extraordinary in their size, these missiles contain so much advanced technology that a person has to remove all jewelry and badges before even entering the facility. Experts briefed the general on how these ground-breaking missiles are assembled.

Standing outside a “clamshell” (where the silo splits the ground and the GBI launches was the last stop on the tour. Below him stood a \$50 million interceptor ready and waiting to be launched against any ICBM launched at North America.

“It's a missile in a hole,” said Chief Warrant Barri Buehre, systems integrator for the 100th MDB.

Soldiers, Sailors, Coast Guardsmen, Airmen and Marines stand ready to defend our nation, on the land, air or sea ... but who protects it from Space? Technology is gaining ground fast and the United States military is keeping ahead of the times. Tried and true, the system put in place to protect our nation from an ICBM attack stands locked and loaded — ready to defend. Rest easy America.

Operations

continued from page 15

Lt. Gen. Joseph Cosumano observed during the activation ceremony for the 100th, “The missile defense strategy of the 20th century was largely based on the concept that rational countries won't attack each other. We've learned in the 21st century that those theories don't apply anymore. Hostile states, and even non-state hostile groups, now either have or are working on long-range missiles. This activation today of an important part of our homeland defense strategy allows us to defend against that threat.”

This point was emphasized during the summer of 2006 with the North Korean missile crisis. At that time, the U.S. Northern Command elevated the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (Ground-based Midcourse Defense) from test mode to operational level for the first time. Since then, the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD) and the 49th Missile Defense Battalion have been “Defending the Homeland” 24/7/365.

FOOTNOTES:

¹ Due to reorganizations within DA and DoD, the operational mission twice transferred to new organizations. Upon the termination of ARADCOM, the Continental Air Defense Command inherited the mission. With the dissolution of CONAD, the Aerospace Defense Command was given operational control of the facility.

² Personnel formerly affiliated with the Stanley R. Mickelsen Safeguard Complex have developed an unofficial web site devoted to the Safeguard System — <http://www.srmcs.org/index.shtml>. This site provided the anecdotes and remembrances included herein.

³ Ibid. Mr. Flavel's entry includes a number of interesting insights into the operations of this nuclear facility.

Civilian News

Computation of retirement benefits: unused sick leave

CSRS: If you retire on an immediate annuity, the amount of unused sick leave you have at retirement will be added to your years and months of service for annuity computation purposes. Unused sick leave cannot be used to determine length of service for eligibility to retire or to compute the high-three average salary. In addition, sick leave is not creditable if you apply for a deferred annuity. See www.ebis.army.mil for further details.

FERS: If you were automatically covered by FERS upon your employment with the government, unused sick leave is not used to compute the amount of your FERS basic annuity at retirement. (Exception: Nurses who retire under title 38 after March 23, 2002, receive credit for all unused sick leave in the computation of their FERS basic annuity.) However, if you transferred to FERS with a CSRS component (i.e., you had five or more years of civilian service creditable under CSRS at date of transfer), you may receive credit for some sick leave in the computation of your FERS basic annuity. The amount of sick leave credited is the lesser of your sick leave balance on the date you transferred to FERS and the sick leave balance you have at date of retirement. For example, if you had 1,000 hours of sick leave at date of transfer, and your account balance is 1,500 hours at date of retirement, you will receive credit for 1,000 hours. (The creditable sick leave is added to your CSRS component.) See www.ebis.army.mil for further information.

Federal Employees Health Benefits: Changes outside of Open Season

Federal benefits Open Season is Nov. 12 to Dec. 10. If you are not participating in Premium Conversion and you do not have a court/admin order in effect requiring you to provide health benefits for your child or children you may change from self and family to self only at any time without changing your health carrier or level of coverage. If you are participating in Premium Conversion and you do not have a court/admin order in effect requiring you to provide health benefits for your child or children you may change your enrollment from self and family coverage to self only: (1) During the annual Open Season; or (2) Within 60 days after you have a qualifying life event. Your change in enrollment must be consistent with and correspond to your qualifying life event. — You do NOT have a qualifying life event under Premium Conversion if you, or your spouse, are retired military and either or both enroll in Tricare. — Changes in Family Status: You may enroll or change enrollment from self only to self and family, from one plan or option to another, or make any combination of these changes during the period beginning 31 days before and ending 60 days after a change in your family status. You can change your enrollment only once during this time period (unless there is another event during this time that would permit an enrollment change). You can also change your premium conversion status as long as the change in enrollment is on account of and consistent with a qualifying life event. — If you change from self only to self and family because of the birth or addition of a child, the effective date of your enrollment change is the first day of the pay period in which the child becomes a family member. If you and your spouse each are enrolled for self only and you want a self and family enrollment because of a change in family status, one of you may change to a self and family enrollment if the other cancels the self only enrollment. See www.ebis.army.mil.

Natural disasters Smart Book for 2007 updated

The Office of the Assistant G-1 for Civilian Personnel (OAG-1, CP) has updated its Natural Disasters Smart Book for 2007. It is currently available on the Army's Civilian Personnel On-Line (CPOL) Web site. The smart book offers a convenient source of information pertaining to federal civilian personnel flexibilities for use in severe natural disasters and their aftermath. In addition, the Army's Well-Being community is including a link to the smart book from the Army Families Online Web site, as well as making available its toll-free helpline, (800) 833-6622, to respond to specific incidents and provide special contact information for individual assistance with specific employment-related issues. This affords a link to the CPOL Web site cpol.army.mil. Go to "References and Tools" then choose "Emergency Guidance & Information."

Military News

Soldier combat stress reaction: A pocket guide for spouse, loved ones

Visit the Web site: www.behavioralhealth.army.mil/soldiers. Here you will find links for resources in helping yourself, your spouse or any deployed Soldier who you care about. One link provides a brochure that can be printed for further reading on combat stress reaction. This Web site is an excellent source of help.

The Army is changing

The Army is changing the selection and assignment policy for its top noncommissioned officers. One of the centerpieces of the new policy will be the ability for the most senior NCOs to move from command sergeant major assignments to sergeant major assignments and vice versa. According to the Sergeant Major of the Army, the change will "provide the flexibility at the battalion and the brigade level for the Army, for senior leaders who become sergeants major to be qualified to serve as command sergeants major too. This gives great flexibility and adaptability for the brigade combat team, the brigade commander, and of course the senior commands above that to get the right person in the right position at the right time..." See the article about the change at Army News Services, Oct. 9, on www.army.mil/news.

5 reasons to use a VA home loan

Did you know that with a Veterans Administration loan: You can get up to \$417,000 toward your home? That you can buy a home with no down payment? That you can lock in historically low rates? That you can refinance to lower monthly payments? That you can get cash for purchases and remodeling your home? For more details read the article at military.com, look to the left on your screen, click on "Benefits," in the middle of the screen you will see "VA Home Loans," click there and begin your journey.

TRICARE adds MRI screenings

The Tricare Management Activity recently changed its policy by adding coverage for Magnetic Resonance Imaging screening for women at high risk of developing breast cancer. If any qualified beneficiaries received this care on or after March 1, 2007, and it was denied, they can resubmit their claim for reimbursement. For more information about breast cancer, visit the National Cancer Institute's Breast Cancer home page, cancer.gov/cancertopics/types/breast. Breast cancer is the third most common cancer among Tricare beneficiaries and the second most common cause of cancer death for women in the United States.

Retiree COLA set

Military and federal civilian retirees, veterans receiving disability compensation and Social Security recipients will get a 2.3 percent cost-of-living adjustment in January. The increase also will boost annuities under the military's survivor benefits plan. The increase is tied to inflation as measured by the government's Consumer Price Index for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W). The increase is based on the average change in prices for a market basket of goods and service from the third quarter of 2006 to the third quarter of 2007.

3 tips to a degree faster and cheaper

The cost of getting a degree is expensive, and the costs can sometimes be more than \$50,000. Here are three tips to get your degree faster and cheaper. Tip #1: Test Out: You can challenge a course by examination — if you pass the test, you get the credit for the course. Tip #2: Go Online: Online courses offer the advantage of allowing you to take a course from anywhere; all you need is access to the Internet. Tip #3: Get Someone Else to Pay For It: Tuition Assistance is available to all active duty personnel. TA will pay up to 100 percent of all tuition fees, special fees and lab fees.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Kivlehen

Capt. Carlos Santana reacts after he gets pied at the Charlie Company Luau.

Charlie Company gets just desserts

By Spc. Juan DeJesus, Unit reporter

LANDSTUHL, Germany — After two weeks of training and another grueling week of a force protection exercises, the Soldiers of Charlie Company finally got their chance to wind down. Activities were kicked off with a Family Readiness Group luau fundraiser held at the company barracks.

The grill was fired up, the food was stacked as high as the eye could see, and Soldiers and their Families began showing up. There were a few new faces, even some old, but it was time for everyone to pull together and get further acquainted.

What could be better for that than hitting your buddy in the face with a custom made pie? There were eight pies thrown in all, consisting of everything from mayonnaise and ketchup to whipped cream. If you wouldn't want it in your face it was probably in one of the pies.

There were originally six people brave enough to endure a pie in the face. The first to take the plunge was Staff Sgt. Darren Haynes picked by none other than his own daughter. After a dramatic series of auction style bidding it was time to get Haynes dirty. No one was smiling bigger than his daughter, who would be helping him get up-close and personal with the pie. An eerie silence grew over the crowd,

the pie was thrown, and the crowd exploded in cheers as they watched Haynes wipe the mess from his face.

The next in line was the new first sergeant at Charlie Company, 1st Sgt. Eric Blount. Blount did all he could to avoid the pie but the might of his junior enlisted Soldiers introducing him to the company was too strong. There were at least a dozen Soldiers who teamed up to win the auction to deliver the biggest pie of the night.

Blount humbly bowed his head, removed his throwback jersey and hat, and walked over to the pie area. Little did he know that one of the junior Soldiers was already at work grabbing his jersey and putting it on along with his hat. Walking up, the Soldier delivered the pie in Blount's own clothes.

After several more people received their "just desserts," the night came to a close. With spirits high, things now had to be cleaned up. The few Soldiers who stayed late, undertook the task of eating the leftover food and cleaning things up. There was still the distinct odor of pie lingering on those who had been pied, but everybody worked together to close out an enjoyable evening.

When all was said and done, more than \$1,000 had been raised for the FRG.

Echo Co. Soldiers experience Okinawa's Obon Festival

By Spc. Darleen Hofstetter
Unit reporter

FORT BUCKNER, OKINAWA, Japan — Soldiers deployed overseas have the unique opportunity to experience cultures different from their own. This year, the Soldiers from Echo Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, were able to witness Okinawans as they celebrated Obon, a festival for the dead.

Obon is a three-day period in which families and villages gather for song, dance and offering of gifts to their deceased loved-ones. The dance performed during the festival honors and welcomes spirits to their homes and returns them back to their last resting place.

Unlike mainland Japan, which celebrates Obon Aug. 13-15 every year, Obon in Okinawa is based on the lunar cycle, and the dates change every year, with this year's festival celebrated Aug. 25-27.

The first day of the festival is the welcoming day, where the doors to the home of the family altars are opened and lanterns are lit to help the spirits find their way. The families set offerings of food and drink at the family altars, and then stand at the door to welcome the ancestral spirits once darkness falls.



Many spend the second day visiting the altars of their family, bringing gifts for them such as rice or tea. The final day is when the people gather to escort the spirits back to their resting place.

Family members light incense and pray for protection from bad luck and forgiveness for not visiting more often. Once the incense is placed in its holder at the altar, a final feast is usually held.

Dinners are prepared for their ancestors to take back with them, as well as spirit

money to ensure that the spirits will have no needs when they return to their resting places. Dancing and music with taiko drums late at night help to send the spirits on their way.

The dancers for the Obon festival wear clothing of bright colors, including reds, yellows and blues, very different from the traditional colors of pale yellow, dark blue and white.

The dancing is considered an Okinawan art form, performed by all ages for special occasions.

Sometimes during the Obon holiday, different groups of dancers will cross path and battle one another with heart-pounding drums and spirited dancing for performance superiority.



Photo by Maj. Brian W. Adams

Veterans Day Parade

Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell, commanding general of SMDC/ARSTRAT (front seat passenger), waves a miniature U.S. flag in his role as the Grand Marshal for this year's Veterans Day Parade Nov. 12 in downtown Huntsville, Ala. Riding with him in an M151A2 Vietnam-era Jeep is his wife Kathy (directly behind him) and Nguyet Borja, wife of Command Sgt. Maj. Ralph C. Borja. This year's reviewing officer was Maj. Gen. James R. Myles, commanding general, U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Command. More than 26,000 people lined the two-mile parade route as more than 120 parade entries, including six marching bands and 1,000 Soldiers, passed by.

Delta Company Soldiers participate in CNPS class

By Spc. Christopher Lovett
Unit reporter

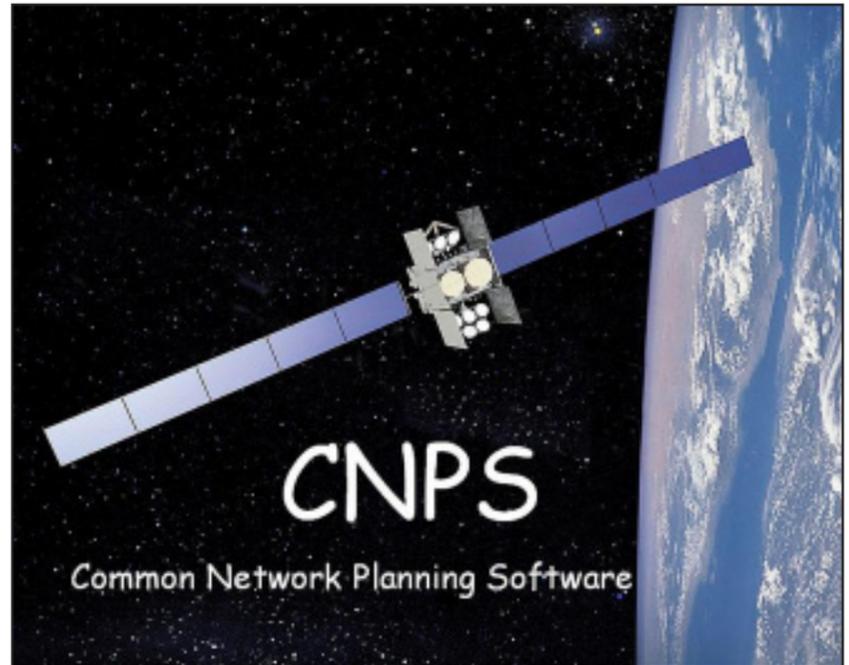
CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. — The Soldiers of Delta Company recently had an opportunity to get a better look at the future of satellite control by participating in a two-week Common Network Planning Software class. CNPS, a new software from Northrop Grumman, is designed to be able to plan for current Defense Satellite Communication System III satellites already in use as well as the new Wideband Global Satellites (the first of which launched mid-October). CNPS's predecessor DNPS (DSCS Network Planning Software) is not capable of accommodating the new WGS satellites.

CNPS is like DNPS in many aspects except it incorporates the concept of time. The addition of time in the planning environment proved to be a challenging concept to grasp for even the seasoned controllers at Delta Company who recently attended the CNPS New Equipment Training course. However, in a short

time, the Soldiers and the company Operations Analyst Steve Wikoff, were able to master the new CNPS that runs in the very familiar windows environment.

The graphical unit interface, with standard windows functionality, is utilized to plan, coordinate and manage satellite networks in X-, Ka-, Ku- and C-band frequencies. In fact, CNPS has the capability to utilize any frequency to plan networks. However, the software is in its early stages of development and is riddled with glitches. It's somewhat quirky but still creative. The tools used in the software streamline the plan and mission implementation. Unfortunately, many advertised functions/capabilities are either not working as intended or not implemented at all.

In its current state, the software works but is certainly not mission capable. However, since DNPS cannot possibly support WGS, this means that CNPS will have to be run simultaneously with DNPS, an added burden for the controller. The real concern with CNPS is



Common Network Planning Software, a new software from Northrop Grumman, is designed to be able to plan for current Defense Satellite Communication System III satellites already in use as well as the new Wideband Global Satellites, the first of which launched mid-October.

the new implementation scheme. It basically takes the responsibility of database integrity from the controller and gives it to the RSCCs/GSSCs. Although it lessens the workload for the controller, some controllers wonder if it is

wise to take away the responsibility of database control from the people with the most experience at it. CNPS has a bright future in SATCOM; it just may not be at the level it needs to be at this stage in development.

New Onboard Vehicle Power system demonstrated at SMDC

By Andy Roake
SMDC/ARSTRAT Public Affairs

What is the size of a bread box and produces enough electricity to power your entire house and more?

It's a new Onboard Vehicle Power System developed at the direction of the New Initiatives and Innovations Division of the Space and Missile Defense Technical Center at SMDC/ARSTRAT and recently demonstrated to a group of people from SMDC and Program Executive Office — Missiles and Space.

The unit weighs less than 150 pounds and is designed to replace a large 1,000 pound diesel motor/generator system that is pulled behind a vehicle, such as a HMMWV. Because it is mounted on the vehicle, it can be turned on and used while the vehicle is moving.

Diversified Technology Inc. built the system and demonstrated it to about 50

people at SMDC headquarters on Oct. 16. David Moak, Diversified Technology Inc. systems engineer, gave the demonstration and answered questions.

Moak pointed out the system produces seven kilowatts of continuous power and can produce up to 10 kilowatts of power for one minute. The unit draws a maximum of 43 horsepower from a 160-horsepower HMMWV engine.

"The small waterproof package allows flexibility on mounting locations," said Moak. "There are lots of mounting options because it is so small."

Moak estimated that it used an extra one gallon per hour to power the OBVP system over what a HMMWV normally used at idle.

Leon Riley, general engineer in the New Initiatives and Innovations Division of the Space and Missile Defense Technical Center, was on hand to see the results of his initiative.

"I saw a need for power onboard a vehicle to power radar and other things," said Riley. "We needed a system that only required some retrofit modifications to a HMMWV to save money, rather than develop an entirely new mobile system to transport power."

Riley worked with Mississippi State University, which developed the concept and then transferred the technology to Diversified Technology. Auburn University contributed to the

product design. "It's an example of how successful we can be with university technology transfer programs," said Riley.

According to the system fact sheet, it only requires an upgrade to the existing alternator on a HMMWV and a circuit breaker installed.

"This OBVP system is designed to replace the Tactical Quiet Generator System which is a diesel-powered, towed system," said Riley. "Unlike towed systems, the advantage is that you can have power on the move; providing power for all sorts of systems."

Moak said that the system can provide all the power requirements needed for a Sentinel Radar, a command post, field hospital, or Remote Guardian System.

Riley pointed out that it could also be useful for civil affairs operations or humanitarian relief. For example, "if they were available during the hurricane Katrina recovery, one system sitting on a HMMWV could have powered all of the pumps at a gas station," he said.

"They could also be used to power air conditioning systems," said Riley. "This is the only portable power system that can generate the 50 hertz, 60 hertz and 400 hertz used by aircraft systems."

Riley noted that the OBVP system could provide 80 percent of mobile electrical power support for needs in the field, which would eliminate the typical towed power requirements.

"Today we're trying to educate project managers of this capability," said Riley about the demonstration. "We're doing several demonstrations [at DoD locations across the country] to educate potential users and organizations."

Barrie McArthur, vice chairman of Diversified Technology, said "This is game changing technology. We have prototypes in testing right now, in several different environments, and other companies are looking at using the technology. We expect production in the first quarter of FY08."



Photo by Skip Vaughn

Systems Engineer David Moak of Diversified Technology Inc. explains a newly developed Onboard Vehicle Power System, to power a HMMWV. The 150-pound power generating system is designed to provide nearly the same amount of power as a towed 10-kilowatt power diesel generator.

Force Protection at its best

By Staff Sgt. Christopher Miller, Unit reporter

LANDSTUHL, Germany — Officers, noncommissioned officers and the Soldiers of Charlie Company, 53rd Signal Battalion, participated in their 2nd annual FPX (Force Protection Exercise) Sept. 17-19.

To kick off the exercise, the Charlie Company commander, Capt. Carlos Santana, called for an alert at 1 a.m. with a two-hour recall. The Soldiers of Charlie Company grabbed rucksacks loaded with their gear and headed to the company as fast as they could and went straight for the arms room. The armorer, Sgt. Edward Grant, was one of the first NCOs on the scene and issued weapons out to the Soldiers. Grant could barely hand out weapons fast enough as the Soldiers poured into site.

Once all the weapons were handed out, the NCOs and Soldiers headed out to their

respective areas of operation for the night. By the time the last Soldier arrived to Charlie Company, the leadership already had the Quick Reaction Force (QRF), Sergeant of the Guard, Observation Points, Roving Teams, Vehicle check-point, shift schedules and sleeping schedules for the entire company ready to go.

Some Soldiers started their guard duty early while others began their work on the operations floor and a few fortunate others began on their sleep schedule. Each 24-hour shift consisted of six hours on guard duty, six hours working and six hours sleeping. Regardless of the order, the cadre ensured that the Soldiers did not have too much time to get settled.

As soon as each Soldier was situated, the scenarios came quickly after that. The first morning the action did not seem to cease. Soldiers were positioned high in observation posts located in the large AN/



Photos by Capt. Carlos Santana

Staff Sgt. Hector Aguirre and Sgt. Michael Simpson unmask during the Nuclear, Biological and Chemical portion of the Charlie Company Field Training Exercise.

FSC-78 satellite antennas and were reporting everything from insurgents disguised as German contractors to insurgents disguised as gardeners armed with hoses. The 360-degree view of the terrain included buildings, storage sheds, vehicles and the huge fence line.

The QRF had been praying for some action and they were answered by the Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear NCO, Sgt. Christopher Kyer. The QRF responded quickly to what sounded like an explosion and they moved fast to get the whole company into MOPP 4 (Mission Oriented Protective Posture). The attack lasted four hours, and since the QRF was closest to the attack, a MOPP exchange and decontamination was in order for them. Kyer led the decontamination of the QRF and had them back ready to fight another day.

An hour later the QRF was requested one more time. As part of a scenario, gunshots were heard, and one of the roving team members got "shot." The QRF jumped in hot pursuit of the suspects involved in the "shooting." Using their resources, they called in for a combat life saver and Spc. Jason Stevens came to the rescue.

Stevens and a member from the QRF moved the injured Soldier to the casualty collection point, while the QRF went after the suspects. Led by Staff Sgt. Hector Aguirre, the QRF moved the suspects to the outside of the compound and drove them off.

Other scenarios included crowd control, media-relations and tactical combat casualty care. The exercise ended the afternoon of the third day, and the Soldiers could not wait to go home and sleep in their own bed.



Pfc. Daniel McCafferty, Sgt. Mark Wasmundt, Spc. Jason Stevens, and Sgt. Charles Keller react to evacuate a wounded casualty during Charlie Company's Field Training Exercise.



Photo by Marco Morales

Army astronaut makes big impression at AUSA Annual Meeting in D.C.

Army Astronaut Lt. Col. Shane Kimbrough signs an autograph for a youth and her parent during the Association of the U.S. Army's Annual Meeting conducted from Oct. 8-10 at the Convention Center in Washington, D.C. Kimbrough autographed more than 400 photos of himself as visitors to the SMDC/ARSTRAT exhibit toured the event's display floor. Kimbrough is assigned to the space shuttle crew for Endeavour's STS-126 mission, targeted for launch in September 2008.

SMDC proudly represented at DA Warrior Competition

By Sharon L. Hartman
SMDC/ARSTRAT Public Affairs

FORT LEE, Va. — Twenty-six of the U.S. Army's best noncommissioned officers and Soldiers competed against each other to earn the titles of Department of the Army Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year, Oct. 1-5. Among this elite 26 stood two members of U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command, both proudly representing the command and proving that the warrior spirit does not only live within Soldiers who serve on the front lines.

"We had the opportunity to represent all the outstanding Soldiers from within our command," said Sgt. Patrick Mann, SMDC/ARSTRAT's 2007 NCO of the Year and the SMDC/ARSTRAT 2006 Soldier of the Year. "It was a great honor to be able to show to the rest of the Army the quality of Soldiers that proudly serve within SMDC/ARSTRAT."

Sgt. Martin Jensen represented SMDC/ARSTRAT as the 2007 Soldier of the Year. He began the competition through company and regional levels as a specialist, but was promoted to sergeant shortly before the MACOM board.

Both Mann and Jensen are satellite network controllers stationed with Charlie Company, 53rd Signal

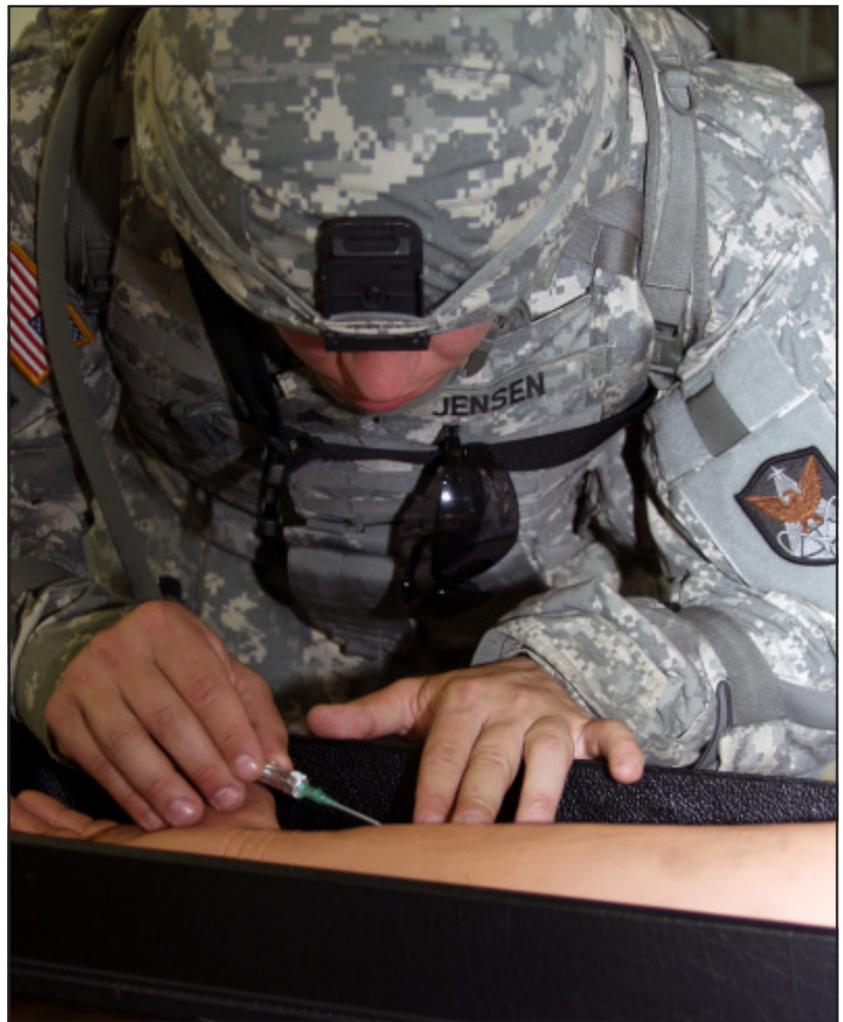
Battalion, in Landstuhl, Germany.

The DA competition put the Soldiers through a wide range of events to include a board chaired by the Sergeant Major of the Army, Kenneth O. Preston, a traditional Army physical fitness test, a written exam, day and night urban orienteering, M-4 rifle qualifications, battle drills and the infamous mystery events.

Some Soldiers vying for the title wondered if Mann, who competed as SMDC's 2006 Soldier of the Year had a slight advantage over the other Soldiers. "I possibly had a small advantage," said Mann. "Just knowing the layout of Fort Lee probably helped out in the Urban Orienteering course, but everyone who makes it to that level of competition has trained so hard and proven that they are very competent in their Soldiering skills."

Mann also commented that "the competition was very similar to last years, so there were no real surprises for me. However, the mystery events are always a challenge and they did a great job picking a wide variety of tasks."

In the end, Staff Sgt. Jason R. Seifert from the National Capital Region was named the Army's top NCO and Spc. Heyz T. Seeker with U.S. Army Special Operations Command was selected the Army's top Soldier.



Photos by Sharon L. Hartman

Sgt. Martin Jensen starts an IV, one of the many tasks competitors had to perform during the mystery event.



Jensen puts in a request for a medical evacuation during the competition.



A "wounded" Soldier is carried to safety by Sgt. Patrick Mann after her HUMVEE was "attacked."



An evaluator, right, keeps track of the number of rounds fired, by Mann during the range portion of the competition.

SMDC celebrates 50 years with style



Photos by Sharon Adams, Sigma Services

Country music singer, Lee Greenwood, begins the evening's celebration by singing the national anthem as the SMDC/ARSTRAT Color guard renders honors. Later, Greenwood entertained guests as he sang for about 30 minutes. He finished with his famous, "God Bless the USA," as the crowd stood with patriotic pride.

HUNTSVILLE, Ala. — A 50th Anniversary dinner and celebration was held in honor of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command for its contributions to the space and missile defense community here Oct. 3.

Oct. 3 is a significant date for the command because it was on that day in 1957 that the Redstone Anti-Missile Missile System Office was established. Created for the development of Nike-Zeus, it was the first program/system office devoted to ballistic missile defense and the predecessor organization to today's SMDC/ARSTRAT.

The event was jointly sponsored by the Air, Space and Missile Defense

Association (ASMDA), the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) Tennessee Valley Chapter, the Air Defense Artillery Association (ADAA) and the Huntsville/Madison County Chamber of Commerce.

The dinner and celebration included historical vignettes from past employees and leaders of the command, a video commemorating the event, and a performance by singer Lee Greenwood.

Greenwood wrote and recorded one of the most recognized patriotic songs in America, "God Bless the USA." He is also a two-time winner of the Country Music Association's Male Vocalist of the Year Award.

Another highlight of the celebration



Huntsville Mayor Loretta Spencer proposes a toast to SMDC/ARSTRAT.

included the keynote speech from Norm Augustine, the former chairman and CEO of Lockheed Martin and a previous Under Secretary of the Army. Augustine was also the chairman and principal officer of the American Red Cross and a former president of the Boy Scouts of America. He has also served as the president and chairman for the Association of the United States Army and for the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics. Currently, he is a member of the Advisory Board to the Department of Homeland Security and serves on the President's Council of Advisors on Science and Technology.

Approximately 1,200 guests attended the dinner and celebration.



Photo by Dottie White

Volksmarch successful part of celebration

Nearly 100 military and civilian employees of U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command participate in its 50th Anniversary Celebration Volksmarch Sept. 27 on Redstone Arsenal, Ala. Dr. Rodney L. Robertson, Michael C. Schexnayder, and Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell welcomed everyone and made a few remarks to kick off the event. Following the volksmarch, which included 5K and 10K courses, participants had the opportunity to relax and enjoy a variety of German foods.

Commemorative items available to SMDC/ARSTRAT community

U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command has designed two special items to commemorate its 50th anniversary. The first is a ceramic 16-ounce beer stein conceived as part of the SMDC/ARSTRAT Volksmarch that was held at Redstone Arsenal, Ala., Sept. 27. The white stein is gold accented and sports the SMDC/ARSTRAT standard logo, and the command's 50th anniversary logo designed by Eric Gronquist. This emblem salutes the command's heritage and its contributions to research and development, test and evaluation, and operations in the fields of missile defense and space.



Also available are SMDC/ARSTRAT 50th anniversary commemorative T-shirts. The T-shirts are available in a variety of sizes and colors. A small SMDC/ARSTRAT logo is printed on the upper left front and a large 50th anniversary logo is emblazoned on the back.



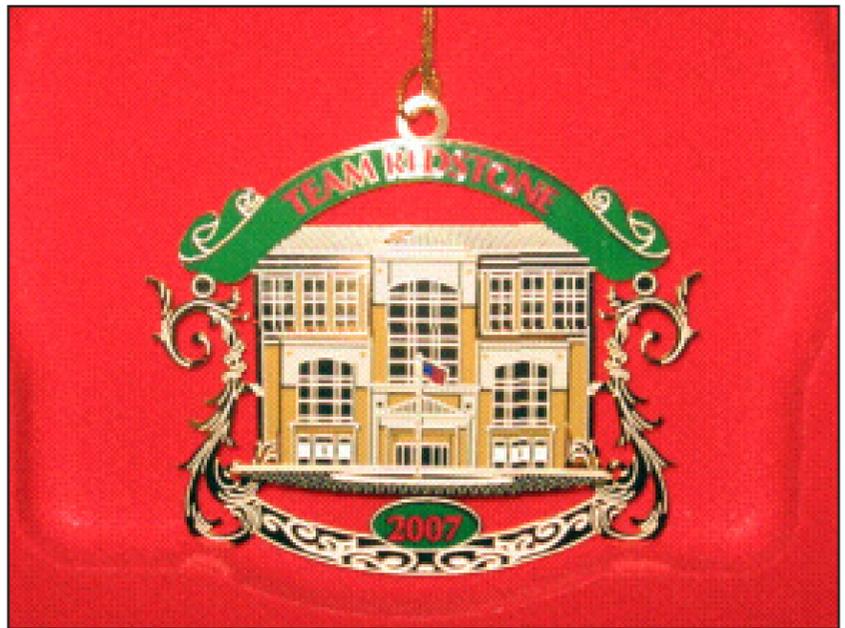
Both the commemorative beer steins and the T-shirts sell for \$14.50 plus shipping (if applicable) and are available to anyone in the SMDC/ARSTRAT community. They are produced by the Redstone Arsenal Morale, Welfare and Recreation Multi-Crafts Shop and can be purchased directly from the shop. Contact Tim Metzger at (256) 876-0172/7951 or e-mail at timothy.d.metzger@us.army.mil.

'Seize the High Ground' book online

SMDC/ARSTRAT Historical Office

Published by the Center of Military History and the Government Printing Office in 2004, this illustrated history of U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/U.S. Army Forces Strategic Command is now available online. The book can be found on the Historical Office Web pages (<http://www.smhc.army.mil/SMDC/History.html>) and the 53rd Signal Battalion's AKO Web page.

Copies of this work were also distributed earlier this year to each office/unit in the command and libraries at the various SMDC/ARSTRAT locations. Please contact the Historical Office, Sharon Watkins Lang, (256) 955-1133, or Mark Hubbs, (256) 955-2830, for additional information.



SMDC, Von Braun Building selected for Team Redstone Holiday Ornament

Recognizing two significant events in SMDC/ARSTRAT's history, SMDC and the Von Braun Building were selected to be the Team Redstone Holiday Ornament for 2007.

The Historical Office and the 50th Anniversary Committee submitted nominations to the Redstone Arsenal Post Exchange and the Redstone Arsenal Garrison Commander in June. The proposals recognized the official transfer of Lt. Gen. Kevin T. Campbell and the SMDC/ARSTRAT headquarters from Arlington, Va., to the Arsenal, as mandated by the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Report. This event was marked by the uncasing ceremony conducted June 26. It also highlighted the command's 50th anniversary with the creation of the Redstone Anti-Missile Missile System Office (RAMMSO) on Redstone Arsenal on Oct. 3, 1957. The RAMMSO was the first organization to have a mission specifically tied to missile defense.

The 2007 ornament depicts the front central façade of Von Braun Complex Building 1. The back is engraved "U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command and Von Braun Complex Building 5220."

The Team Redstone Holiday Ornament series highlights structures on Redstone Arsenal. Begun in 2004, SMDC is the fourth ornament in the series.

Additional information on these ornaments is available from the Redstone Arsenal Post Exchange at (256) 883-6100.

Combined Federal Campaign



Sept. 1 - Dec. 15, 2007

You may contribute to organizations that benefit your unit, family and Soldiers.

See your local SMDC/ARSTRAT CFC representative:

- SMDC/ARSTRAT..... Norberto Soto-Fuentes
- Huntsville, Ala..... Phil Patterson
- Colorado Springs, Colo..... 2nd Lt. Sheronda Booker
- Fort Greely, Alaska..... Command Sgt. Maj. Barbara Zanders
- Kwajalein Atoll..... Master Sgt. Daniel Perdue
- White Sands Missile Range, N.M..... Sheila Schlie