



# The DOUBBLE EAGLE

"Twice the Citizen! Army Strong!"

# EAGLE

DEC. 2014/JAN. 2015, Vol. 3 No. 9/10



**OPERATION TOY DROP 2014**

PAGE 4



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# table of contents



This page is **INTERACTIVE**.  
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# 4

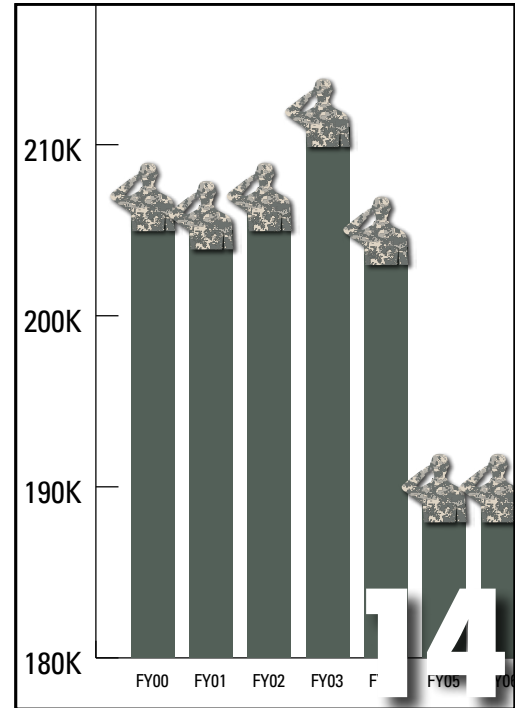
## COVER STORY:

Pfc. William Thompson lands at Sicily Drop Zone during the 17th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), a U.S. Army Reserve operational command, Dec. 6, 2014 at Fort Bragg, N.C. Thompson serves in the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. Thousands of paratroopers donated new, unwrapped toys to earn a seat for a jump and the chance to earn jump wings from one of six allied nations participating in this year's event. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



# 10

## DEPARTMENTS:



The Way I See It.....	PAGE 3
Army Reserve Arrives in Senegal .....	PAGE 18
USARPAC-AREC: Brokering capabilities.....	PAGE 20
7th CSC SHARP program manager receives award.....	PAGE 22
USARC Holiday Open House .....	PAGE 24
USARC Soldiers, civilians spread holiday cheer.....	PAGE 25
History: Honoring Army Reserve Vietnam Veterans .....	PAGE 26
Safety: Hearing Conservation .....	PAGE 28
G8 - Budget: Financial Management Certification.....	PAGE 30
HRC: Maximizing GI Bill benefits .....	PAGE 32
83rd ARRTC: New RTA Commandant .....	PAGE 33
Chaplain's Corner .....	PAGE 34
Around the Headquarters.....	PAGE 35
Across the Army.....	PAGE 36

DOUBLE EAGLE





DECEMBER 2014-JANUARY 2015 VOL. 3 No. 9-10

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HEADQUARTERS,  
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PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE,  
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HONORABLE MENTION: 2013



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Double Eagle back issues.**

# So Long 2014, Hello 2015

It's that time of year again. That time when we look back on the year that has been and look to the future with anticipation and hope.

As we close this chapter of the "Double Eagle", it's fun to take a look back at some of the stories we covered on the great Soldiers and civilians that make up our Family at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters here at Fort Bragg, N.C.

From the annual Operation Toy Drop; a captain who reaches out to area youth through wrestling; welcoming our new chief executive officer, James Balocki; saying a tearful goodbye after the sudden passing of Dr. Lee Harford, the USARC command historian; trying our hand at fishing during Warriors on the Water; highlighting the Best Warriors in the Army Reserve; spending the day with Staff Sgt. Lynette Collier and her Army Soldier Show cast members; and sharing in Staff Sgt. Christopher Croslin's victory as the Army Drill Sergeant of the Year, our stories covered a broad spectrum of moving and uplifting stories.

In addition, the USARC Safety office provided monthly safety-themed articles to show you how to take work safety to residence in their "Bring It Home" series. In 2015, they will continue the series with a new theme.

By contrast, we also took an in-depth look at Army Reserve suicides in 2013 and revealed answers and trends that had not been seen before. We also shared information on how reduced budgets in the coming fiscal years will impact military technicians and civilian employment.

So as you can see, we covered a wide array of subjects and personalities this past year.

As the new year approaches, we eagerly await the stories we can find to keep all of our USARC headquarters Soldiers and civilians entertained and informed.

May you all have a safe and prosperous New Year.

Thank you for your readership and I'll see you next year!

**CORRECTION:**

In the November 2014 "Double Eagle" article entitled "Battalion and Brigade Pre-Command Course Changes," there were two date errors. It should have read as follows:

*TPU leaders selected for battalion command team positions will still attend the Army Reserve pre-command course in Raleigh, N.C. during fiscal year 2015.*

*Starting in fiscal year 2016, all battalion and brigade leaders will attend the pre-command course at Fort Leavenworth.*

We apologize for any confusion this may have caused our readers.



Timothy L. Hale  
Editor

Timothy L. Hale, a U.S. Air Force veteran, is an award-winning photojournalist and editor of the USARC Double Eagle. He is member of a number of professional organizations to include: Nikon Professional Services, National Press Photographer's Association, and the North Carolina Press Photographer's Association. The views expressed in this column are expressly his own and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Army Reserve Command, the Department of the Army, and/or the Department of Defense.



**OPERATION TOY DROP 2014**



# Paratroopers give back in Operation Toy Drop

Story & photos by **TIMOTHY L. HALE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – It is an annual harbinger of Christmas here in the North Carolina Sand Hills.

Parachutes filled the skies over Sicily Drop Zone, here, Dec. 5 and 6, signaling the start of the 17th annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop.

Hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), an operational command under the U.S. Army Reserve Command, Operation Toy Drop is a nearly two-week gathering of Soldiers,

volunteers, and allied jumpmasters, who spread the holiday spirit throughout the area.

Billed as the largest combined airborne operation in the world, Operation Toy Drop has a much deeper meaning – giving back to those in need in the communities surrounding Fort Bragg.

“Toy Drop really is a continuum of service,” said Lt. Col. Aaron Clapsaddle, USACAPOC chief of air operations division and Operation Toy Drop airborne commander. “All of our Service members provide a service to the

country and in many cases, the community also provides services back to those in uniform.

“So with Toy Drop, we are giving back to the community. For our Soldiers it is another way of serving,” he said.

This year’s first Soldier in line to donate a new, unwrapped toy was Pfc. Ezekiel Polite of El Paso, Texas. He wanted to give back to the community so much that he got in the donation line at 2:45 p.m. Thursday – nearly 17 hours before the doors opened at 8 a.m. Friday!

See **TOYS**, Pgs. 6-9

**SPIRIT OF GIVING.** Pfc. Ezekiel Polite, facing page, a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, gives his toy to one of the elves in exchange for his lottery ticket at the 17th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, at Green Ramp, Pope Army Airfield, Fort Bragg, N.C., Dec. 5. Polite was the first paratrooper in line at 2:45 p.m. the day before the lottery drawing. Paratroopers, above, turn in their toys for the opportunity to earn foreign jump wings. Operation Toy Drop is the world’s largest combined airborne operation with seven allied partner nation paratroopers participating with seven allied partner nation paratroopers participating and allows Soldiers the opportunity to help children in need everywhere receive toys for the holidays.

# TOYS

from Pg. 5

Polite, a unit supply specialist with the 3rd Brigade, 82nd Brigade Support Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division, came to Toy Drop last year but was “way in the back of the line. I wanted to be first this year.”

Even though he admitted being first in line was his goal, ultimately, he understands that Toy Drop is about giving back to the community.

“It’s all about the kids,” Polite said, before donating a child’s scooter. “I try to stay humble and remind myself that this is for the kids. I do what I can.”

Polite wasn’t the only one from his unit that made an early appearance.

Spc. Hector Rios, a power generator equipment repair specialist, was the third paratrooper in line – nearly eight hours behind Polite.

Rios, who donated a remote control car said, “It’s nice to know the toy I bring will make some child happy. I know that when I went to buy the toy, I bought it as if someone was giving the toy to me – a younger me and something that I would want.”

In addition to bringing joy to a child this Christmas, Toy Drop offers the paratroopers a little something extra – foreign jump wings.

No Toy Drop would be complete without the assistance of allied jumpmasters. This year, jumpmasters from Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, and Poland, participated in Toy Drop.

Paratroopers are teamed up with one of the allies and their own airborne staff. Once a jump is completed, the paratroopers line up in front of their families and friends at Sicily Drop Zone to receive their wings.



**UP BEFORE THE SUN.** Paratroopers manifest in the early morning darkness at Sicily Drop Zone for the 17th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), a U.S. Army Reserve operational command, Dec. 6. at Fort Bragg, N.C. Operation Toy Drop is the world’s largest combined airborne operation and allows Soldiers the opportunity to help children in need everywhere receive toys for the holidays.



**"ALL THE WAY!"** Paratroopers, left and top, fill the sky at Sicily Drop Zone for the 17th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), a U.S. Army Reserve operational command, Dec. 6 at Fort Bragg, N.C. C-130H Hercules aircrews used the Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System, or AWADS, to allow the paratroopers to safely exit the aircraft in the low clouds over the drop zone.

Pfc. William Thompson, above right, packs his parachute after landing at Sicily Drop Zone. Thompson serves in the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division.



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**FAMILY ATMOSPHERE.** Willie Wellbrock, top, event emcee, shares a laugh with paratroopers at Sicily Drop Zone Dec. 6. Wellbrock is a long-time fixture at Operation Toy Drop, serving with Toy Drop founder Oler when they were both in the U.S. Air Force, and now as a volunteer.

Santa Claus, bottom, took time from his busy schedule to visit Army families at Sicily Drop Zone during Operation Toy Drop.

For Sgt. 1st Class Shane Weigel of Minot, N.D., this was his third set of German jump wings. A member of 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, he knew what was coming.

Lt. Col. Andreas Wichert, the German Army Liaison at the 18th Airborne Corps, looked at Weigel's name and said, "A German name. Are you ready?" Weigel smiled and replied, "Yes" and Wichert forcefully punched, or "pinned" the wings into Weigel's chest.

"I've earned all three of my German wings at Fort Bragg," Weigel said, smiling, showing no signs of pain from the chest punch.

Even though Toy Drop is in its 17th year, there were some operational changes this year.

In recent years, weather has played a big factor in the cancellation of many of the "lifts," or aircraft full of paratroopers, which never took off from Pope Army Airfield.

This year, the 1,000 hard-slot paratroopers, those who needed a jump, donated their toys a day early and jumped on to Sicily on Friday. That meant there was a better likelihood the 500 paratroopers selected in the Toy Drop lottery on Friday, would make their jump on Saturday – weather permitting.

And it nearly worked. As has been the case in recent years, weather forced the cancellation of some of the lifts. This year, seven out of 10 lifts made it to the drop zone.

Fortunately this year, several



of the C-130H Hercules aircraft were equipped with Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System, or AWADS. With AWADS on board, the flight crews were able to negotiate the thick clouds over the drop zone which allowed the paratroopers to exit and land safely.

“All I saw was white (clouds) when I stepped out,” said Pfc. William Thompson, of Akron, Ohio, with the 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 82nd Airborne. “Then all of sudden you could see the ground. It actually was really smooth, not much wind.”

Another change this year was the addition of more Army Reserve units to support Toy Drop.

Clapsaddle said that Army medics from the 3rd Medical Command, parachute riggers from the 824th Quartermaster Company (Heavy Airdrop Supply), 982nd Combat Camera, public affairs specialists from the 99th Regional Support Command and 318th Press Camp Headquarters, and Army Reserve Careers Division enabled a better use of

available resources.

Clapsaddle said in previous years, XVIII Airborne Corps and individual units were asked to provide their own medical support.

“This year, 3rd MEDCOM personnel have medical providers and ambulances and are here for the duration,” he said.

He added the support lends itself to the total Army concept.

“It’s a coming together of assets, not only USA-CAPOC but the Army Reserve Command,” he said. “It showcases our capabilities to the Army that we can take something as complex as this operation and put it together.”

When it’s all said and done, counting additional jumps for Special Operations Week at Luzon Drop Zone, he said approximately 4,300 paratroopers will descend from the skies over North Carolina.

“This is the largest Toy Drop we’ve done,” Clapsaddle said. 🇺🇸



**ACHTUNG!** Lt. Col. Andreas Wichert, the German Army liaison at the XVIII Airborne Corps, “pins” German Armed Forces Parachutist Badge (Fallschirmspringerabzeichen) on Sgt. 1st Class Shane Weigel at Sicily Drop Zone for the 17th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), a U.S. Army Reserve operational command, Dec. 6, 2014 at Fort Bragg, N.C. Weigel, serves in the 1st Battalion, 508th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. It was his third set of German jump wings.



# Allied jumpmasters spread their wings with American paratroopers

Story & photos by **BRIAN GODETTE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - U.S. and allied paratroopers from six nations spread their wings, here, Dec. 5 and 6, filling the sky over Sicily Drop Zone supporting the largest airborne operation in the world and also a great cause.

The 17<sup>th</sup> annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop is an annual holiday event sponsored by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), a U.S. Army Reserve operational command, based here.

Operation Toy Drop brings smiles and joy to thousands of area children each year. In order to participate in Toy Drop, paratroopers must donate a new, unwrapped toy in order to earn a seat for the airborne operation. The pay-off for the paratroopers is the chance to earn foreign parachutist badges by working with allied jumpmasters.

Jumpmasters from Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Latvia, Netherlands, and Poland participated in this year's event.

"We get to work with

each other, learn each others techniques and train on a large scale," said Lt. Col. Aaron Clapsaddle, Chief of Air Operations Division, USACAPOC. "The complexity of this operation itself is on a large scale and helps us with planning and mission execution."

Jumpmasters are expert paratroopers in airborne units who train and teach proper airborne operations. They are also responsible for training Soldiers who attend the Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia.

U.S. and allied jumpmasters shared their experiences with each other every chance they could, participating in several airborne training exercises and simulated jumps prior to actually going up in the aircraft.

"We train together, we jump together, and it's a great opportunity for me and my team to work with all these countries" said Master Sgt. Nicola Tirreti, an Italian jumpmaster with the Folgore Parachute Brigade.

"My job as a jumpmaster is very important to me. We are

all together in this, my team, American, all of us, and their safety is a big factor."

Five of the six countries involved in this year's event have participated in past Toy Drops. This year, Indonesia joined the ranks for the first time.

"In Indonesia we do many exercises, but this is the first time I'm jumping with other countries and the Americans" said Staff Sgt. Thofik Hidayat, 502nd Airborne Infantry Battalion.

Hidayat, like many of his allied counterparts, did not let the language barrier interfere with training. He often smiled as he watched and learned from others.

"I don't know if I'm more excited or nervous. We will see when I get up there" said Hidayat.

As each Soldier donned their parachutes, their harnesses and straps were checked by the jumpmasters and battle buddies to ensure their safety. Allied jumpmasters ran through dry run rehearsals with their U.S.

See **ALLIES**, Pg. 12 & 13

**PRE-JUMP INSPECTION.** Indonesian Army 1st Lt. Ajie Purbaya, 502nd Airborne Infantry Battalion, is shown paratrooper pre-flight body check techniques by Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Donaldson, U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command jumpmaster, at Green Ramp, Pope Army Airfield, N.C., Dec. 5, 2014. The Indonesia jumpmasters joined five other allied nations at the 17th annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), a U.S. Army Reserve operational command. This is the first time the Indonesian jumpmasters have participated in Operation Toy Drop.



**CHECK AND DOUBLE CHECK.** Spc. Alan Sonseca, above, a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division, dons his parachute and tightens his harness in a staging area in preparation for the 17th annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, at Pope Army Airfield, Fort Bragg, N.C., Dec. 5. Allied jumpmasters from six nations shared their knowledge and experiences with their American counterparts.

A paratrooper, top, with the 82nd Airborne Division walks with his main parachute and reserve chute towards the staging area.

Spc. Adam Nuesse, right, was among the 1,000 hard-slotted paratroopers from the 82nd Airborne Division who participated in the first day of Operation Toy Drop with allied jumpmasters.



# ALLIES

from Pg. 11

partners before boarding the aircraft.

“The routine with the allied jumpmasters are similar to what we do,” said Spc. Walton Morris, with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. “Should we have to go to war with these guys, we know all the things we need to do to work together.”

While the highlights of the event are the actual parachute jump and collection of toys for area children, there were mutual benefits for everyone involved.

“While this is a training event, with great training value, there is also the intangible, which is the cultural piece to this,” Clapsaddle said. “This is the time to build relationships and spend time with our counterparts. It’s the greatest part of this operation. Our partner nations go to great expense to come here and participate with us and we want them to understand how we appreciate that.” 🇺🇸

**REHEARSE AND REHEARSE AGAIN.** An Italian jumpmaster, top right, with the Folgore Parachute Brigade, wears an Operation Toy Drop sweatshirt while waiting in between training sessions with their U.S. and other allied nation counterparts.

Ft. Bragg paratroopers, right middle, from the 82nd Airborne Division listen to instructions from their allied jumpmasters in the early morning hours.

82nd Airborne Division paratroopers engage in simulated jump procedures with their allied jumpmasters.



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# Operation Full Court Press Key to Retaining, Recruiting Quality Soldiers

Story & graphics by **TIMOTHY L. HALE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – As the defense budget continues to shrink, the next few years will prove challenging for the U.S. Army Reserve in terms of maintaining manpower and readiness.

In the past month, Army Reserve leaders have held town halls and spoken with media outlining how a new retention initiative will help the Army Reserve meet Congressionally-mandated end strength goals.

According to Mark Cogburn, chief of the Adjutant General Division, U.S. Army Reserve Command, G1, Operation Full Court Press is a new initiative “intended to focus our leaders on the issues that will have the largest impact on U.S. Army Reserve personnel strength.”

Cogburn said the main tasks of Operation Full Court Press are to increase accessions (recruit), reduce controllable Soldier losses (those currently serving), resolve “flags” or unfavorable actions, increase promotions to sergeant and staff sergeant, and improve the sponsorship program.

Before looking at how Operation Full Court Press will address these tasks, it is important to review where the Army Reserve has come from in regards to overall end strength.

## Rising and Falling End Strength

At the end of 2000, there were nearly 207,000 serving in the Army Reserve. Those numbers increased to nearly 212,000 in 2003 to support Operation Iraqi Freedom and the nearly two-year old Operation Enduring Freedom.

In 2005, Army Reserve end strength leveled off at a little more than 189,000, staying there through 2007. As the Army’s operation focus shifted from Iraq to Afghanistan, starting in 2008, the need for Army Reserve Soldiers increased with end strength reaching a high-water mark of a little more than 205,000.

End strength numbers started falling in 2009 –from a little more than 205,000 to the current 195,000.

Ultimately, Congress currently funds the Army Reserve at 205,000 Soldiers.

Brig. Gen. Tammy Smith, U.S. Army Reserve assistant chief of staff, said that maintaining Army Reserve end strength is important for two reasons: Congressionally-mandated troop levels and readiness.

“We have a responsibility, not only to the nation but to the Congress, to ensure that our strength is maintained at a level that is consistent with our funding,” Smith said.

“When you look at the macro level, strength is important because we are funded to be at our strength. Congress gives us money and says, ‘here is enough money for your authorization.’ We use that money for commanders to conduct the type of training and do all the things we need to do to have a ready force for our nation,” she said.

“The other part is that strength is the foundational piece of readiness,” Smith said. “And for us to be able to perform those missions that our nation requires us to perform, we’ve got to have sufficient Soldiers in our ranks to fill all the positions – leader positions and Soldier positions.”

## Retention Requires Active Leaders

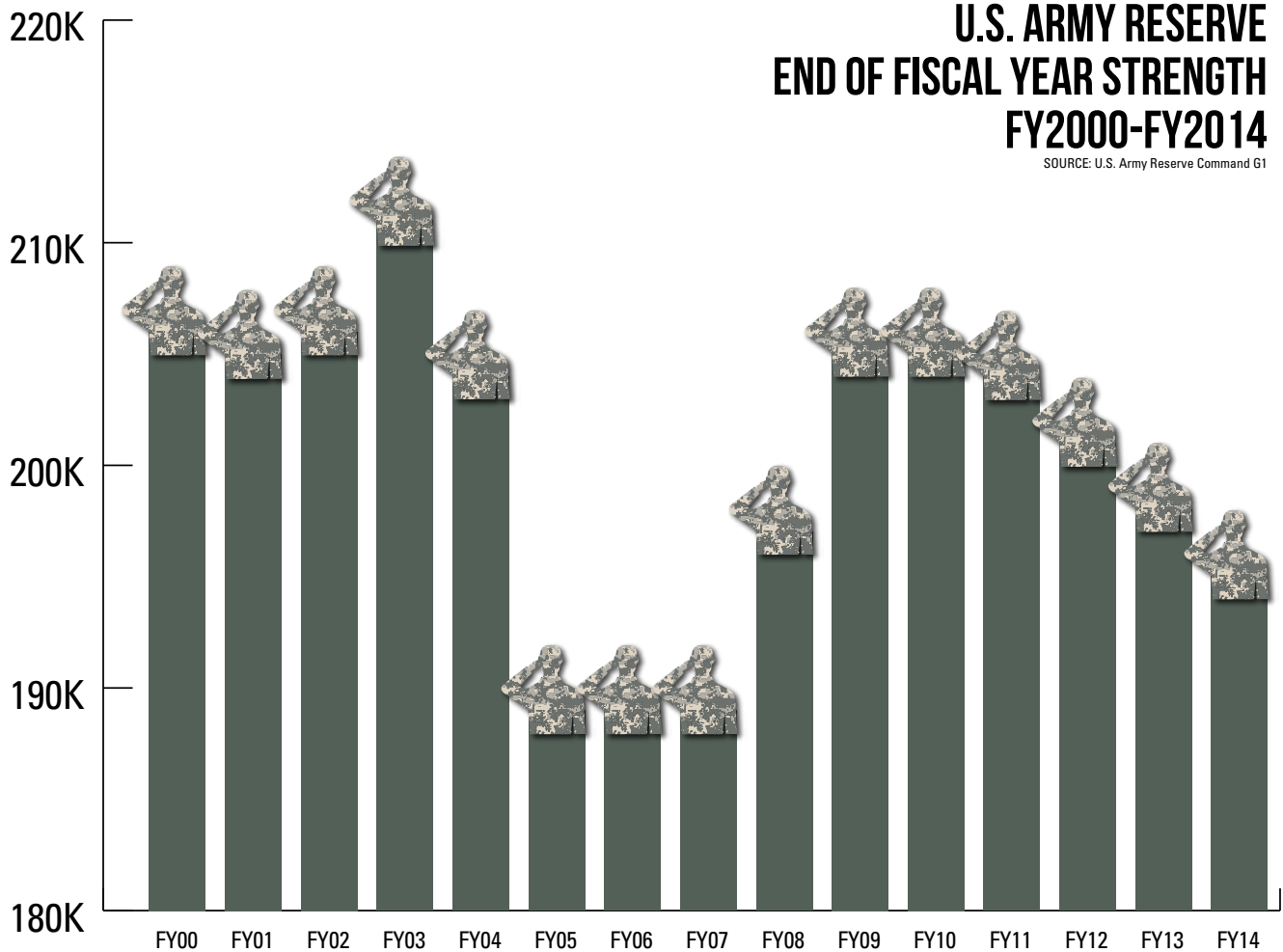
Smith said the responsibility for retention rests with unit leaders – from general officers down to platoon sergeants.

If leaders are not actively engaged with their Soldiers especially during Battle Assemblies, those Soldiers may question why they even joined in the first place, she said.

“You can’t have ready Soldiers if you don’t have them in the formation,” Smith said. “Keeping Soldiers in our ranks is a leader activity. It’s a one-on-one conversation that has to occur at every level – from

## U.S. ARMY RESERVE END OF FISCAL YEAR STRENGTH FY2000-FY2014

SOURCE: U.S. Army Reserve Command G1



**EBB AND FLOW.** Army Reserve end-strength by fiscal year. The Army Reserve end strength peaks represent Soldiers needed for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom troop surges.

team and squad level all the way up to our command sergeants major and commanding generals.”

It boils down to leaders greeting Soldiers with open arms.

“Every leader in the Army Reserve has a responsibility to retain those Soldiers, to bring them in, and keep them in the Family,” Cogburn said.

Leaders need to know their Soldiers as people, not just a position on a manning roster, Smith said.

“Having an understanding of who they are, why they are in the Army Reserve, and what keeps them coming back,” she said. “You have to have a good human understanding of who your Soldiers are. Relevant and well-planned training also keeps them coming back. They want to have a reason to come to Battle Assembly.”

Maj. Gen. Luis Visot, U.S. Army Reserve chief of staff, said leaders must understand their Soldiers in order to retain them.

“The whole retention piece is getting to know and understand your Soldiers, really interacting with that Soldier, really appreciating and valuing the individual, and understanding what is going on with their Family and their employers,” Visot said. “If you show and demonstrate that, there is no doubt in my mind you will retain that particular Soldier.”

### Controlling Soldier Losses

Ultimately, Cogburn said the key to success in Operation Full Court Press is managing controllable losses.

“This is a major focus we will be undertaking with the leadership,” Cogburn said.

In the years immediately following 9/11, Cogburn said recruiting and retaining Soldiers was much

See **RETENTION**, Pg. 16

# RETENTION

from Pg. 15

easier because there was more money and incentives available, leading to a higher number of Soldiers on unit rosters.

Now, the situation is not the same. He said the recruiting pool is smaller than in previous years with three or four out of 10 people eligible for military service. He said those three or four individuals have many paths to choose from ranging from colleges and universities, technical schools, and even other military branches.

“We are in a resource-constrained environment where we can’t offer incentives to everybody,” he said. “The reason we were so successful the last time

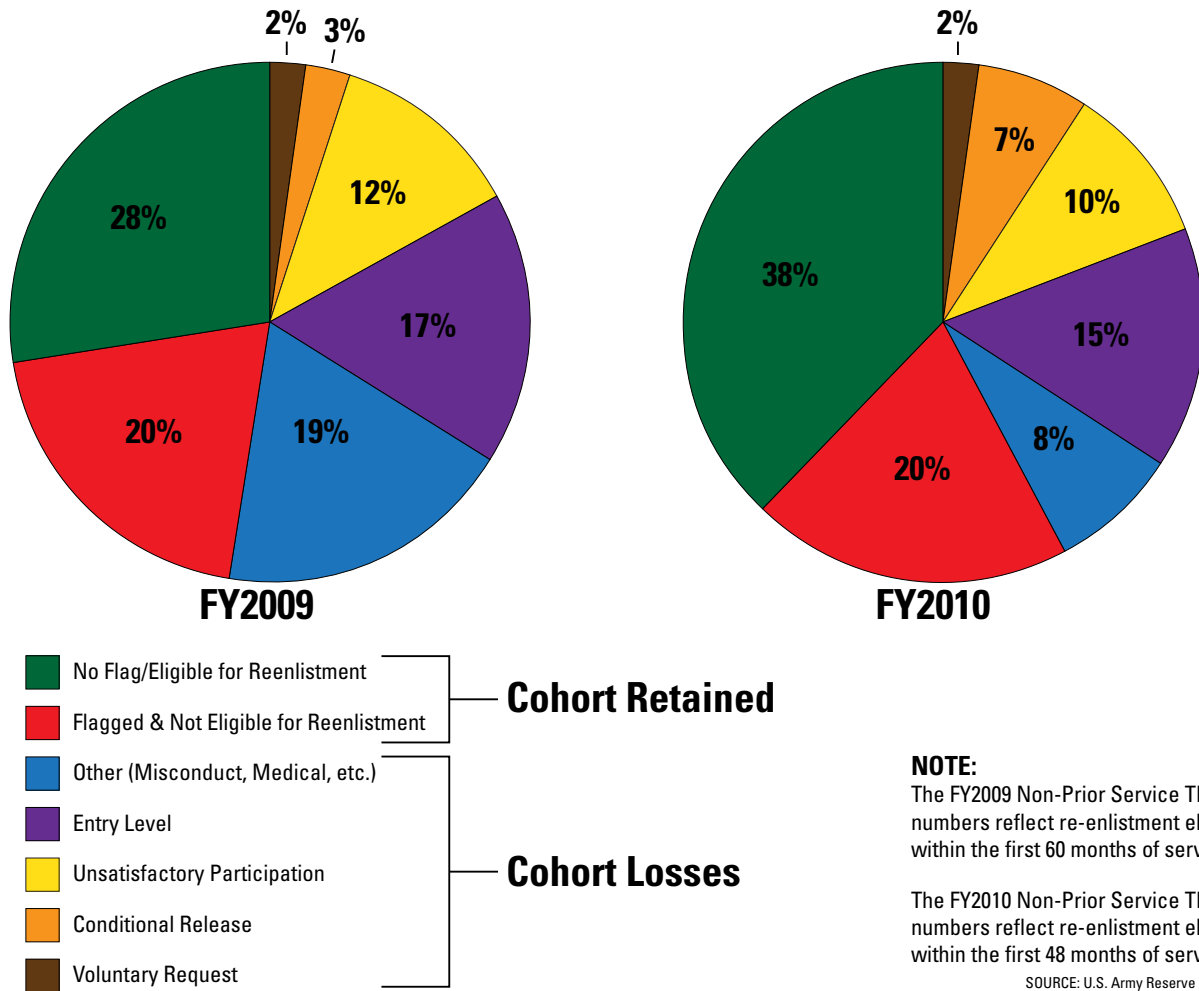
we increased our strength was because we had more money.”

There was also the lure of being in an operational military environment, one the U.S. had not seen on a large scale since Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. As the military operations wind down, senior defense leaders are looking at a downsized, garrison-style military.

“We’ve been through this before. We are on the downside of a cyclic process,” Cogburn said.

“The key to our success is keeping the people that we have,” he said. “We have to reduce the numbers of Soldiers who voluntarily leave the force.”

## Non-Prior Service Enlisted Troop Program Unit (TPU) Accession Cohort



**ELIGIBLE SOLDIERS.** A comparison of non-prior service enlisted Troop Program Unit, or TPU, Soldiers within their first-term re-enlistment eligibility windows who enlisted in Fiscal Years 2009 and 2010.



Visot said a key to controlling losses is building a trust between the leader and the Soldier.

“If they trust us as leaders, they will commit themselves and give you more than you ever ask of them,” he said.

These controllable losses include: Soldiers who end their contract through ETS (end term of service), unsatisfactory participants (Soldiers who no longer come to drill), entry-level separations (Soldiers who join, drill, but then never ship to basic training), voluntary requests (when a Soldier has a medical or Family hardship), and conditional release (a Soldier who requests to go to the Individual Ready Reserve, National Guard, or active Army).

Of the Fiscal Year 2009 non-prior service enlisted Troop Program Unit accessions, 43 percent of those Soldiers were lost to one of these five categories. Of the Fiscal Year 2010 enlistees, 52 percent were lost.

U.S. Army Reserve G1 officials say that approximately two-thirds of all Army Reserve losses fall into one of the five categories.

“Every situation is unique,” said Col. Cynthia McCarty, director, USARC G1. “We have to find out what is causing a person to decide, that at this point in time, they want out; they can’t do this any longer.”

McCarty said many times, Soldiers have job, Family, or educational demands that hamper their participation. She said unit leaders need to figure out how they can accommodate those demands on the individual within the existing policies.

### Clearing “flags”

Of the remaining Soldiers who do not fall under a controllable loss are those who are “flagged” and are not eligible for re-enlistment.

Soldiers can be flagged for various reasons but the usual causes are failing height and weight or the Army Physical Fitness Test.

At a recent town hall in Kaiserslautern, Germany, Command Sgt. Maj. Luther Thomas Jr., the Army Reserve’s top enlisted Soldier, addressed the flagging issue.

“I know it’s difficult with Soldiers coming one weekend a month, two weeks at a time throughout the year, but as a leader, you have to figure out ... how do I motivate this Soldier? How do I inspire this Soldier to be all that they can be?” Thomas said.

McCarty said Army Reserve leaders need to focus on Soldiers who are flagged and resolve those flags.

“Either get the Soldier to pass the PT test or off the height and weight,” McCarty said. “Then, the Soldier can reenlist or be separated (if they don’t meet the standard).”

A flagged Soldier jeopardizes their career in many ways – one of which is career advancement.

“Flags prevent promotions,” she added. “So we want to take care of our Soldiers, we want them to benefit from their military experience, and realize their potential.”

Visot said there are plenty of leaders to prevent a Soldier from being flagged. He tells Soldiers the Army issues them seven people to lead and guide them - a sponsor, a battle buddy, a squad leader, a platoon sergeant, a platoon leader, a first sergeant, and a company commander.

“That’s seven people to make sure they are role models and upholding standards,” Visot said. He said that once Soldiers see their leaders upholding the standards, then the Soldiers will more than likely follow suit.

“Help the Soldiers resolve the flags, so they can continue their good service,” Cogburn said.

### The Way Ahead

Ultimately, Cogburn said the current situation didn’t happen overnight and it will not be fixed overnight.

However, through a concerted effort by all leaders at all levels, it can be changed.

“We must set the conditions to inform and educate every Soldier at every level within the Army Reserve of their individual responsibility in regards to maintaining their readiness, their resiliency, and their professional career,” Cogburn said.

“Managing their individual responsibilities as Soldiers and leaders has a direct influence on the overall manpower and readiness of the Army Reserve,” he said. 🇺🇸

*EDITOR’S NOTE: This is the first in a series of articles regarding Operation Full Court Press and the manning and readiness of the Army Reserve. Future articles will discuss leadership, readiness, career progression, counseling, and unit retention success stories.*

# Army Reserve arrives in Senegal

Story & photos by SGT. 1ST CLASS ALEXANDER A. BURNETT  
21st Theater Support Command

DAKAR, Senegal – After weeks of preparation, elements of the Army Reserve’s 7th Civil Support Command, deployed to Dakar, Senegal, with main body elements of the 21st Theater Sustainment Command headquarters, 30th Medical Brigade and 16th Sustainment Brigade, in support of Operation United Assistance.

The team’s mission in Dakar is to provide strategic logistical support to the Joint Forces Command – United Assistance in the form of a regional support element, coupled with a small team from U.S. Army Africa. Their goal was to set the conditions in Dakar to receive members from the 101st Sustainment Brigade and a U.S. Air Force C-130 squadron. The first members of the Regional Support Element-United Assistance arrived in mid-October, tasked with bridging the gap between USARAF and the 101st Sustainment Brigade. They were also tasked with establishing a life support area and intermediate staging base for equipment and personnel.

**SETTING UP.** Soldiers from the 21st Theater Sustainment Command and 7th Civil Support Command, U.S. Army Reserve, lay the flooring for a future tactical operations center in Dakar Nov. 18. Elements of the 7th CSC are working with the 21st TSC, 30th Medical Brigade, and 16th Sustainment Brigade in support of Operation United Assistance to manage the Ebola outbreak in Africa.

“We (the first group) came in and started building the LSA and setting the stage for units to come in after us,” said Army Reserve Maj. Tomasz E. Zaremba, the RSE-UA assistant liaison officer and a native of Buffalo, New York. “Our number one priority was to set the conditions for other units and services to come here and begin their mission in support of United Assistance.”

The establishment of an LSA required coordination with the host government and creating contracts for services. The USARAF and RSE-UA team partnered with other organizations in Senegal for land on a Senegalese Air Base and instituted contracts to clear, level and develop the land. They also contracted for Force Provider showers, bathrooms, laundry machines and living tents to house up to 300 multi-service personnel, said Maj. Tyler D. Olsen, the RSE-UA logistics officer and a native of Mennephi, Utah.

“The U.S. Army Africa team that came before us



had already started most of the processes to acquire the land and institute the contracts; we continued to work with them, the project managers and the contracting team from the 414th Contracting Support Brigade to see this project to fruition,” said Olsen. “The credit for all of this really goes to those teams. Everyone worked extremely hard to make this happen.”

The team also bridged the gap for strategic and operational level logistics by providing leadership and management of the LSA while awaiting the arrival of the 101st Sust. Bde. They received incoming and outgoing passengers, ensured the LSA was stocked with food and drinking water, coordinated for fuel and gave traveling personnel a place to live.

Olsen stated that the team was able to truly demonstrate their value by providing theater level logistical support while simultaneously managing the LSA.

When the main body of the personnel arrived, they immediately established a tactical operations center and began improving the communications capabilities at the LSA. The team will remain in place until the 101st Sustainment Brigade assumes the mission.

“The Soldiers and all of our joint and multi-national partners have done an outstanding job accomplishing the mission and supporting Operation United Assistance,” said Col. Barry Diehl, the RSE-UA officer in charge. “We will maintain our mission focus and sharpen our skills until our change of mission and redeployment.”

The RSE-UA is composed of a total of 41 Soldiers, 15 of whom are AGR Soldiers from the Army Reserve’s 7th CSC. The entire team is expected to return to Germany in December. 🇺🇸

*EDITOR’S NOTE: Lt. Col. William Ritter, U.S. Army Reserve Command, contributed to this report.*



**LEADING THE EFFORT.** U.S. Army Reserve Command Sgt Maj. James Murrin, left, the senior enlisted adviser to the 21st Theater Sustainment Command’s Regional Support Element-United Assistance and a native of Boston, hosts a town hall for enlisted Soldiers at the Intermediate Staging Base in Dakar, Senegal, Nov. 23, 2014.



ARCTIC OCEAN

Islands

NORTH PACIFIC OCEAN

SOUTH PACIFIC OCEAN

SOUTHERN OCEAN



# USARPAC-AREC: Brokering capabilities across the Pacific

Story by **TIMOTHY L. HALE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - With support of overseas wartime operations winding down and reduced funding, the Army Reserve is looking at new ways to ensure the operational readiness established for more than a decade is maintained.

During the October Association of the United States Army annual meeting, Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley, chief of the Army Reserve and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command, said his Soldiers can ill-afford to be used “once every five years during the ‘available’ year of the ARFORGEN cycle.”

Under the “Plan, Prepare, Provide” Readiness model, Talley said he intends to continue to keep his Soldiers trained, ready, and relevant by aligning forces with geographic combatant commands around the world.

The way to maintain this operational readiness is by regionally aligning forces and having those forces managed by Army Reserve Engagement Cells, or ARECs.

These ARECs will support Army service component commanders, or ASCCs, while smaller in scale Army Reserve Engagement Teams, or ARETs, will support geographic combatant commanders, corps-level and other forward stationed major Army commands. The AREC and the associated ARETS fall under the direction and leadership of the AREC director.

The first fully manned and completely operational AREC is forward stationed at Fort Shafter, Hawaii. Also in the Pacific Command area of operations are ARETs in Hawaii supporting U.S. Pacific Command as well as Korea (8th Army), Japan (U.S. Army Japan), and I Corps at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

All of these Army Reserve entities fall under the leadership of Brig. Gen. Brian Alvin, who is both the deputy commanding general, U.S. Army Pacific and

the director of the AREC.

During his incoming command speech in October, Alvin said the USARPAC-AREC will serve a “key global role that provides a flexible, well-trained force of enablers to support USARPAC with the capabilities to meet the needs of an increasingly challenging dynamic Indo-Asian Pacific region.”

Col. Ross G. Barrera, AREC deputy director, said when component and combatant commanders are looking for support they are looking at the entire Army Reserve.

That is where the AREC comes to the table to offer the needed capabilities.

“We are at the table with our counterparts at the ASCC and we should be there,” Barrera said. “We are integrated into the planning and the future exercises the Army Reserve will be relevant in.”

“We know that some of the conflicts are winding down. We need to be involved in the exercises and the training.”


“The way we keep our Army Reserve Soldiers interested, integrated and to participate in future exercises is with the AREC and ARETs.”

“We are your broker. We are your face at the table when it comes to ASCC requirements,” Barrera said.

With the AREC and ARETs, Barrera said, “we are the eyes and ears for anything Army Reserve.”

Barrera said the AREC also has reach-back capability to USARC and the Office of the Chief of the Army Reserve.

“We are basically USARC-Forward in the Pacific,” he said.

In the May 2013 “Double Eagle,” Maj. Katherine Numerick, U.S. Army Reserve Command, G-35 plans officer, said, “realigning Army Reserve forces to meet the needs of the Army not only reaffirms our readiness but also helps the supported commands tap into our unique capabilities.” 

# 7th CSC SHARP program manager receives award for 'bystander intervention' training



**EFFECTIVE INTERVENTION.** Chief Warrant Officer 5 Debra Blankenbaker meets with members of the 7th Civil Support Command Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention team and others, Oct. 31, 2014, at the 7th CSC's headquarters at Daenner Kaserne in Kaiserslautern, Germany.

Story & photo by **J.D. LEIPOLD**  
Army News Service

WASHINGTON - Chief Warrant Officer 5 Debra Blankenbaker not only earned the Army's Sexual Assault Prevention Innovation Award, she also received the Defense Department's award for the "bystander intervention" training program she developed.

Blankenbaker serves with the 7th Civil Support Command, in Kaiserslautern, Germany, as her unit's Sexual Harassment/Assault Response and Prevention, or SHARP, program manager, and as a sexual assault response

coordinator, or SARC, for almost 1,000 Soldiers, their families and civilians.

She conceived the idea for bystander intervention training when the Army started giving Soldiers scenario-based requirements as part of the SHARP program, she said.

"This is about how to effectively and safely intervene," Blankenbaker noted, adding that she had done research about the problem of sexual assault on college campuses. "We adopted the program

developed by Arizona State called "Step Up," and in their training they did the very thing I was just speaking of.

"They not only taught the students how to become more aware of circumstances, but they also were teaching them how to safely intervene and not put themselves or the possible victim in harm's way," she continued.

Sexual harassment and sexual assault are not one in the same, said Blankenbaker, but explained studies have shown about 90

percent of sexual assault cases actually started with harassment. It was just never addressed, and escalated to sexual assault.

That's where her 16 trained SHARP coordinators have been a huge help.

"We've got a comfort zone and developed a trust with our Soldiers in the program," she said. "We've had a couple of interventions on possible harassment and because we handled them at that level, they did not escalate to assault."

To bring the message to people that it's not acceptable to turn a back any longer when witness to harassment, Blankenbaker participates in community events to raise awareness and educate on prevention.

She's also been a consultant on the creation of several Armed Forces Network public service announcements that drive home the point with "statistics about unreported cases and cases that could have been brought to adjudication if someone had just

gotten involved and helped."

Blankenbaker has written articles for the command newsletter, providing parents with additional topics to discuss with their children, such as the difference between appropriate and inappropriate touch, respect for boundaries and personal space and what does and doesn't constitute consent.

"Our next initiative coming out is an application for Smartphones for SHARP in Europe," she said. "Those apps will let someone who's been assaulted know with two clicks who to call instead of trying to remember a phone number with something as traumatic as sexual assault... it will bring up a GPS location and tell them where the closest on-call SHARP counselor is."

Blankenbaker is an Active Guard Reserve Soldier on her 22nd year of active duty, with the Army Reserve. She also serves as command chief warrant officer for the 7th Civil Support Command. 🇺🇸

**SHARP**  
SEXUAL HARASSMENT/ASSAULT RESPONSE & PREVENTION

**I AM THE FORCE  
BEHIND THE FIGHT.**

**I Am Committed**  
to Stopping Sexual Harassment  
and Sexual Assault.

**I Am Living**  
the Army Values.

**I Am Protecting**  
the Members of My Team.

**I.A.M. STRONG**  
U.S. ARMY

[www.PreventSexualAssault.army.mil](http://www.PreventSexualAssault.army.mil) DoD Safe Helpline: 1-877-995-5247

# USARC HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE



Photos by **BRIAN GODETTE**  
U.S. Army Reserve Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley, U.S. Army Reserve Command commanding general, and his wife, Linda, right, flipped the switch to light the USARC Christmas Tree during the annual holiday open house at the command headquarters, here, Dec. 19.

In addition to singing Christmas carols and food buffets on every floor, the annual cubicle holiday decorating contest was kicked up a couple of rungs on the candy cane ladder.

Maj. Bronwyn Odhner, bottom left, and Diane Rogers, bottom right, collaborated on the first place-winning cubicle. In all, Odhner estimated about 40 hours away from the office were spent constructing the figures, desk accessories, and collecting the toys for the prize-winning entry. 🇺🇸





# USARC Soldiers, volunteers bring holiday cheer to Fayetteville veterans



**HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS.** James Braboy, above, a 10-year resident of the North Carolina State Veterans Home, smiles as he watches U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers and civilians unpack Christmas decorations, Dec. 3, 2014 in Fayetteville, N.C. U.S. Army Reserve Command Soldiers and civilian volunteers donated their time to decorate the home for the holiday season.

Staff Sgt. Ann Marie Kallhoff, right, a well-being liaison with the U.S. Army Reserve Command Suicide Prevention Program, separates the branches on a small Christmas tree. This was the first time Soldiers and volunteers from USARC have visited the home for the holiday. (Photos by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



Click [HERE](#) to see more on our **FACEBOOK** page

# Yesterday was 50 years ago:



**U.S. Army Reserve  
in Vietnam:  
August 1964  
to  
May 1975**



**HONORING  
THOSE WHO  
SERVED**



(Graphic by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve)

# Army Reserve Vietnam Veterans to be Honored

Story by **DR. JOHN A. BOYD**

Director, Office of Army Reserve History

In 1968, 42 units of the U.S. Army Reserve – almost 6,000 Soldiers – were called to active duty for service in Vietnam.

Of the 42 units, 35 were sent to Vietnam where they served for one year.

Most were transportation, ordnance, maintenance, quartermaster, and medical units with some finance and military intelligence detachments.

Their experience in Vietnam was like that of any other unit or Soldier but their distinction as Army Reserve Soldiers makes them a rare commodity.

It is now time for the Army Reserve to honor them and commemorate their unique historical contribution.

During the Vietnam War, the mobilization of the Army Reserve had been debated for some time at the national level.

Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara had suggested it to President Lyndon Johnson in 1965. But the idea was resisted; Johnson believed calling up reserves during what he defined as a “limited” war would send the wrong signal to the American public.

However, following the North Korean seizure of the USS Pueblo and the North Vietnamese Tet Offensive this decision was reversed.

Army Reserve Soldiers reported to their home stations May 13, 1968 and subsequently to their assigned mobilization stations where they would begin pre-deployment training that lasted from six to nine months.

Once in Vietnam, these Army Reserve units performed their missions well. In all, one Silver Star, five Legion of Merits, 384 Bronze Stars, seven Air Medals, 779 Army Commendation Medals, and 20 Purple Hearts were awarded.

The 231st Transportation Company (Medium Boat) would receive the Army’s Outstanding Transportation Unit in Vietnam and National Defense Transportation Awards.

For Army Reserve veterans of Vietnam, 50 years ago often seems like yesterday, and upon reflection, a long time ago.

Unlike many veterans of the active duty Army, Army Reserve veterans fall back on their companies or detachments for reunions and social events.


Conversely, those who were part of active duty units have access to larger veteran unit organizations to honor those who served.

In 2015, the Army Reserve will commemorate the service of Army Reserve Vietnam veterans nationwide in a series of ceremonies starting at the U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C. in January and concluding in Winston-Salem, N.C. in September.

The plan is simple. The Army Reserve will conduct commemoration ceremonies at Army Reserve centers located in the communities from which selected Army Reserve units originated.

Although subject to change, the Office of the Army Reserve History seeks to hold additional commemoration ceremonies at: 231st Transportation Company (Medium Boat), St. Petersburg, Florida in February; 319th Transportation Company (Truck), Augusta, Georgia in March; 173rd Petroleum Company and 424th Personnel Services Company in Greenwood, Mississippi in April; 842nd Quartermaster Company, Kansas City, Kansas in May; 737th Transportation Company (Truck) in Yakima, Washington in June; five units-detachments in New York in July; Headquarters and Maintenance Support Company, 513th Battalion, Maintenance Direct, Boston, Massachusetts in August; and concluding commemorations with the 312th Evacuation Hospital in Winston-Salem in September.

The Army Reserve is proud to honor our Army Reserve Vietnam veterans.

More details on commemorations will be forthcoming – plan on attending a ceremony near you. 

# BRING IT HOME:



(FILE Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve)

# HEARING CONSERVATION

Story By Chief Warrant Officer 5 THOMAS BAKER  
USARC Safety Office

Hearing conservation programs are required throughout modern military operations because hearing loss is a permanent and debilitating injury.

Military operations can be dangerously loud and cause immediate and permanent hearing loss.

But, the more insidious cause of permanent hearing loss comes from a repeated and long-term exposure to noise without wearing protection. You lose a little bit of hearing at a time over years.

Industrial hygienists evaluate our work places for noise levels to identify where hearing protection is required and it's really no surprise where these areas are. Ranges, motor pools, and flight lines are all obvious locations of high impact noises. Elsewhere, our chronic sources of noise such as heavy equipment, construction sites, and even warehouse operations can cause just as much damage.

Hearing protection ranging from the simple soft expanding earplugs to sophisticated tank and aircraft helmets are designed to reduce noise levels to non-damaging levels, but they must be used to be effective. Hearing is a critical sense and a loss is permanent. This can affect your health, your well-being, and your ability to safely accomplish both Family activities and the Army Reserve mission.

With the emphasis placed on preserving this

precious and irreplaceable sense on duty, you must be able to do the same away from duty.

Soldiers wear hearing protection when they operate a lawn mower at work and you should do the same at home. Quality earmuffs aren't expensive and will last you for years. Home tools like string line trimmers, pneumatic hand tools, air compressors, and grinders all easily exceed safe levels of noise.

Loud music in your car or at a concert can cause permanent damage and it's up to you to keep it at a safe level. A great concern at home and particularly for our children is the earbud style headphone that channels the sound directly in the ear canal. It's difficult to tell how loud the music is unless you put the speaker in your own ear, but know that loud earphones will cause permanent damage quickly. Also, listening to music through headphones to cover up the sound of a lawnmower or other source of noise is a cumulative exposure to noise, which can easily cause permanent damage.

"Bring It Home" and resolve for the New Year to use your knowledge of hearing conservation to protect this most fragile sense.

The quality of your hearing directly impacts your quality of life as a citizen and your survivability and lethality as a Soldier. 🇺🇸

## ARMY RESERVE FACT:

**In 2006, there were over 55,864 veterans' compensation cases awarded for hearing loss, costing over \$900 million. Between 2001 and 2006, there was an increase of 319 percent in compensation payments for hearing loss as the primary disability. This increase includes all work-related hearing loss disabilities. Hearing loss is the second most common new disability awarded by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Tinnitus (such as noises, ringing, or humming sounds in the ears) is the most common disability awarded by the VA.**

DON'T LEAVE YOUR PROFESSIONAL DISCIPLINE BEHIND

# DOD implements new Financial Management certification program

By LT. COL. MALINDA J. WILSON  
USARC G8 Budget Officer

Whether you embrace it or not, Financial Management certification is here to stay.

According Department of Defense Instruction 1300.26, Nov. 20, 2013 signed by Robert F. Hale, Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller), Chief Financial Officer, Department of Defense, the certification program is required as a condition of employment.

So what does that mean to you?

It means that if you are a Financial Manager in any component of the Department of Defense, you are required to participate in the FM certification program.

For the United States Army Reserve Command, personnel affected by this program include: all civilian financial management personnel assigned to a 05xx series position, and some assigned to 0343 positions; military personnel assigned to positions designated 36A/36B are required to participate; as are all civilian and military (01A) personnel assigned to Auditor positions.


Financial Management personnel (36A/36B) assigned to Inspectors General positions are exempt; as well as those assigned to any other position which is not designated a financial management position on the MTOE/TDA.

Those personnel will receive a Notification of Inclusion to the FM Certification program upon assignment to a FM position.

The USARC is on the verge of implementation for FM certification.

As this article goes to print, some of the first individuals should begin to receive their system-generated, welcome email from the Learning Management System, or LMS. This email provides guidance to the individual participant for accessing their profile in LMS.

As you begin to navigate the site, you will find the on-line tutorials helpful.

Some extremely useful step-by-step instructions, for every participant level of this program, are found at the JobAids link provided immediately below. 

## FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CERTIFICATION

Step-by-step instructions you should use until familiar with LMS:

<https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/FMCertProgram/JobAids.aspx>

Frequently Asked Questions:

[https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/FMCertProgram/FMCert\\_FAQ.aspx](https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/FMCertProgram/FMCert_FAQ.aspx)

Practical Exercises and Orientation:

<https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil>

Lt. Col. Malinda J. Wilson 910-570-8441 [malinda.j.wilson.mil@mail.mil](mailto:malinda.j.wilson.mil@mail.mil)

Sgt. Maj. Tonja R. DeMar 703-806-6175 [tonja.r.demar.mil@mail.mil](mailto:tonja.r.demar.mil@mail.mil)

# Useful Financial Management certification websites

**DoD FM Certification Program**

vol 2 issue 3 sept 2014

**FM WORKFORCE – GOING FROM GOOD TO GREAT**

**contents**

Comptroller Corner	1
Congratulations!	2-3
FM Online Updates	4
Quarterly Quiz	4
Continuing Education and Training Hours	5
Course Spotlight	6
Defense Civilian Emerging Leader Program (DCELP)	7
Searching for Courses in FM myLearn	7
Certification Implementation	8

**Comptroller Corner**

As I step into my new role as Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Chief Financial Officer, I am increasingly aware of the need for strong decision support skills within the DoD financial management community. I rely heavily on Comptroller staff for their expertise and boots-on-the-ground experience. Therefore, I am committed to providing you with training and developmental opportunities that will improve our collective analytical skills. Through the DoD FM Certification Program, we have the means to ensure you have opportunities to develop professionally from a variety of experiences. I view the certification program as a critical enabler, helping us become a more responsive organization.

Cutting across all levels of our enterprise, we need people drawing from a broad base of functional professional experience in DoD financial management. This combination of experience and knowledge is an invaluable resource and is emphasized through the DoD Certification Program's "Developmental Assignment" requirement, mandatory at Certification Level 3 and encouraged at Level 2. While each Department and organization has the flexibility to determine what constitutes a developmental assignment within their purview, the requirement's intent is to ensure that employees are exposed to new ways of doing business and, when a better way of doing things is

**Mike McCard**  
Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller) and Chief Financial Officer

**FM RESOURCES.** Current newsletters are available on the DOD FM Online website under the DOD FM Certification Program tab located at <https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/FMCertProgram/Certification.aspx>.

**FM Online**  
Financial Management

**Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

If you have component-specific questions, please refer to your organization's FM Certification POC. If you have additional questions, please email the DoD FM Certification team at [dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil](mailto:dodfmcertificationprogram@mail.mil).

Categories:

<a href="#">General</a>	<a href="#">Financial Management Learning Management System (LMS)</a>
<a href="#">Acquisition</a>	<a href="#">Implementation</a>
<a href="#">Component Administrators</a>	<a href="#">Points of Contact</a>
<a href="#">Certification Requirements</a>	<a href="#">Test-based Certifications</a>
<a href="#">Continuing Education and Training (CET)</a>	<a href="#">Waivers</a>
<a href="#">Education/Training/Experience</a>	

**General:**

1. What is the DoD FM Certification Program and how would I actually get certified?
2. Where can I review the DoD Policy for the program?

On the DOD FM Online website is a list of Frequently Asked Questions to help users navigate through the certification process. The FAQs can be found at [https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/FMCertProgram/FMCert\\_FAQ.aspx](https://fmonline.ousdc.osd.mil/FMCertProgram/FMCert_FAQ.aspx).

# Factors to consider for maximizing your GI Bill benefits

Story by **TEDDI EMBREY**

Team Lead, Army HRC GI Bill

With the implementation of the Post-9/11 GI Bill program on Aug. 1, 2009, thousands of Army Reserve Soldiers and veterans found themselves eligible to exercise their entitlements under more than one GI Bill program.

As such, eligible Service members need to be aware of the variety of features of GI Bill entitlement programs, including payment rates, kicker eligibility, transferability and other features before choosing the GI Bill program most appropriate for their particular circumstances.

Service members may be eligible for more than one of these programs:

- Post-9/11 GI Bill (Chapter 33)
- Montgomery GI Bill-Active Duty (MGIB-AD, Chapter 30)
- Montgomery GI Bill-Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR, Chapter 1606)
- Reserve Education Assistance Program (REAP, Chapter 1607)
- Veterans Education Assistance Program (VEAP, Chapter 32)

Before Soldiers select a Department of Veterans Affairs education benefit best suited for them, they should consider these questions:

- Which program benefits me the most based upon my personal circumstances?
- Which benefit program “pays” me more?
- Can I use my kicker benefit?

To compare GI Bill programs and payout rates and answer these questions, Soldiers and veterans should review the GI Bill program information located on the VA website: [www.benefits.va.gov/gibill](http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill). In addition, Soldiers and veterans may contact their closest Education Services Office or counselor for other assistance.

Soldiers and veterans should also investigate whether additional sources of educational assistance available to them.

Soldiers currently serving on active duty or in the Selected Reserve may be eligible for Tuition Assistance through their service component or may be eligible for scholarships or other financial aid through

other federal or state agencies or entities.

Completing a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is relatively easy and can provide additional information for pursuing grants or other sources of funding that do not require repayment.

- Is the Soldier or veteran considering using the Post-9/11 GI Bill? If yes, consider the following:
- For which Post-9/11 GI Bill payment “tier” am I eligible (40-100 percent payable rate)?
- What type of college or training will I pursue and how much of the training will be conducted online or through distance learning?
- Is my college or training program covered by the Post-9/11 GI Bill?
- How much time do I have remaining to use my benefit?
- Is my delimiting period about to expire?
- What if I want to transfer some or all of my benefits to one or more of my dependents?

A Soldier’s eligibility to transfer the Post-9/11 GI Bill entitlement is determined by the Army.

The Soldier must currently be serving on active duty or be successfully participating in the Selected Reserve to transfer benefits.

To request transfer of Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits, a Soldier should do so via the Department of Defense TEB website, <http://milconnect.dmdc.mil>.

Other factors to consider before submitting a request to transfer benefits can include:

- Do I have remaining entitlements under another Veterans Affairs education program, and what impact would they have if I want to convert to the Post-9/11 GI Bill?
- If my request to transfer benefits to my dependents is approved, do I incur an additional duty service obligation?
- How do I transfer my benefits? 🌐

## WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Visit the DOD TEB website at  
<http://milconnect.dmdc.mil>



# BRADY NAMED RTA'S FIRST COMMANDANT

By LT. COL. DEBBIE LIPSCOMB

83rd Army Reserve Readiness Training Center

FORT KNOX, Ky. – Leadership at the 83rd United States Army Reserve Readiness Training Center announced creation of the Readiness Training Academy in a ceremony here on Oct. 31.

Col. Ernest Parker, commander, announced the change and introduced its first commandant, Lt. Col. Terry Brady.

While interviewing candidates, Parker recognized Brady's potential to lead at the next higher level based on his adherence to and embodiment of the principles of mission command.

"I am both humbled and excited about this opportunity," Brady said. "Humbled because it is a privilege... to lead an organization with so many talented individuals. Excited because I truly believe this initiative (the rolling out of the Readiness Training Academy (RTA)) is an example of our organization continuing to inculcate mission command principals into our Army."

Creating the Readiness Training Academy, or RTA, implementing Mission Command and incorporating the Army Learning Model 2015, or ALM 2015 improves the 83rd United States Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, or 83rd USARRTC's ability to support Army Reserve Campaign 2015 and the Army Reserve 2020 Vision and Strategy.

"Col. Parker recognized that our organization

wasn't quite at the point he wanted it to be, in terms of mission command," Brady said. "Our three NCO Academies operate autonomously and are mission ordered, disciplined initiative driven entities within our command. What was missing was what is now called the RTA. He (Parker) communicated that to me, selected me as commandant, and I communicated it to my subordinate leadership. In less than a week, I've seen amazing, positive changes. It's amazing what can be accomplished by empowering subordinate leaders.

Brady's vision is to build cohesive teams through mutual trust, create a shared understanding, provide a clear commander's intent and exercise disciplined initiative, using mission orders and accepting prudent risk. When Mission Command is applied, commanders are better prepared and able to understand, visualize, describe and direct the mission or operations process.

The ALM 2015 is the overarching guidance for both the 83rd USARRTC and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command. ALM encourages blended learning and technology delivered instruction to build student knowledge and prepare them to learn prior to arriving for class. Once in the classroom environment, instructors facilitate student interaction and experiential learning rather than lecturing. 🇺🇸



**NEW COMMANDANT.** Col. Ernest Parker, left, commander of the 83rd U.S. Army Reserve Readiness Training Center, introduces Lt. Col. Terry Brady as the first commandant of the newly formed Readiness Training Academy at a ceremony, Oct. 31, at Fort Knox, Ky. The RTA implements Mission Command and incorporates the Army Learning Model 2015 style instruction in support of Army Reserve Campaign Plan 2015 and Army Reserve 2020 Vision and Strategy. (Photo by Renee Rhodes/ Fort Knox Photography)

# Winter of the Soul

By CHAPLAIN (MAJ.) RAYMOND W. LEACH  
USARC Chaplain's Office

The icy grip of the cold winter season is again upon us.

The trees have shed their leaves that faded quickly from green to reds, oranges to yellows, and then browns, standing as silent testimonies to the cycle from life and vitality to death and fleeting memory.

Our lives have cycles as well. Emily Mueller pens, "I am in the winter of my soul; All lies dead and quiet, without color and without warmth..."

The winters of our souls don't always line up with nature's seasonal cycle, but winter can deflate us as it calls to mind times when life's events had almost convinced us that all hope was lost. And winter is especially acute for those currently in the polar blast of a chilling life drama.

The cycle of life as it takes us through difficult circumstances is important. Don't cheat yourself if you are experiencing pain, grief, and sorrow due to crisis, personal attacks, or loss. Those feelings are yours and they are legitimate. As I tell anyone who is mourning, "Grief is hard work; make sure you do the hard work of grieving."

On the same token, don't get caught up in your heartbreak, locked down by your remorse, or trapped by your bereavement.

Emily Mueller continues to write, "...But I know one thing about winter – that after it, comes spring..." She echoes the Psalmist's ancient admonition, "Weeping may tarry for a night, but joy comes with the morning." (Psalm 30:5 ESV)

The Apostle Paul tells us, "We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next." (Romans 5:3-5 The Message)

Your winter of the soul may threaten to freeze your spirit forever, but do not give up.

Your persistent trudge through the blizzard, guided by God's light on the path before you, and aided by godly people on either side will lead you to a spring time of renewal and resilience beyond the storm. 🌈

## **FORSCOM/USARC Christian Bible Study**

**U.S. Army Forces Command and U.S. Army Reserve Command  
hosts a weekly Christian Bible study.**

**Studies are held each Tuesday,  
starting at 11:30 a.m., Room 1901 near the USARC G-4.  
Please come and share a time of  
fellowship and worship with us.**

**"All Scripture is breathed out by God and  
profitable for teaching,  
for reproof, for correction, and for training  
in righteousness, that  
the man of God may be competent,  
equipped for every good work."**

*Second Timothy 3:16-17*




## USARC Staff Officer Training and Orientation for 2015

The U.S. Army Reserve Command headquarters will hold USARC Staff Officer Training and Orientation, or SOTO, for all new USARC personnel.

The next SOTO is January 5-7.

Orientation starts at 8:30 a.m. and will be held in KCR located in the basement of the headquarters unless otherwise posted.

This training is mandatory for all military and civilian employees assigned to the USARC headquarters.

For more information, you may contact Lt. Col. John Bates, Secretary of the General Staff, at 910-570-8433, or via email at [john.w.bates.mil@mail.mil](mailto:john.w.bates.mil@mail.mil). 

# Fort Bragg's All-American Trail closes Oct. 1 for hunting season

Fort Bragg's All-American Trail closes Oct. 1 and will remain closed due to hunting season.

The trail will reopen Jan. 2, 2015, when the hunting season ends.

Fort Bragg cannot stress enough the importance of not using the trail between Oct. 1 and Jan. 2. Approximately four years ago, a runner was accidentally killed by a hunter who mistook the runner as wild game.

Runners and off-road bike riders are also asked not to use the roads in the training areas for running routes.

These areas are used for training purposes and the presence of runners

and riders can disrupt training events and become a safety hazard.

Runners and riders also may face trespassing charges if found in the training areas.



(Hunter and Bear Graphic courtesy of Vector Art Explosion)

# Ready, Set, Makeup!



**TRAINING REALISM.** Spc. Charles Saunders, an Army Reserve Soldier from the 971st Medical Logistics Company, 807th Medical Command, based in Ogden, Utah, uses a stick and fake blood to represent neck trauma on University of Utah Air Force ROTC Cadet Cierra Manley during Exercise Vigilant Guard, Nov 3-6. Volunteers from multiple branches and organizations are lending a hand serving as wounded patients during the National Guard earthquake response exercise.

## Moulage in earthquake preparedness

Story & photos by CAPT. CHAD NIXON  
807th Medical Command (Deployment Support)

SALT LAKE CITY - Tables covered in makeup, fake blood and bandages might make you think of a horror movie film set, but these 807th Medical Command Army Reserve Soldiers volunteered their support to the Utah National Guard working as special effects, or moulage artists, during earthquake response exercise, Vigilant Guard, Nov. 3-6.

According to FEMA, "Vigilant Guard is an emergency preparedness exercise designed to test and improve the Utah Division of Emergency

Management's and the Utah National Guard's ability to support local responders during a disaster."

The event scenario starts with a 6.0 magnitude earthquake followed by a 7.0 earthquake, two days later.

"With an earthquake that size you will have multiple wounded," said Capt. Jann Griffis, a Salt Lake City native and nursing graduate from Westminster College currently serving as the officer in charge of the Army Reserve moulage team,

working out of Fort Douglas, Utah.

“The purpose of moulage is to make notional wounds look as real as possible,” Griffis said. “The goal of my team is to provide the medical providers who service the wounded a visual stimulus to help them react accordingly.”

Makeup work comes second-nature for Griffis, many years ago she attended training to be a cosmetologist.

“I would do beauty pageants, fashion and runway shows ... it was fun, but I left it behind to enter nursing.”

Others were first in line to get their hands bloody as well.

Spc. Chanelle Harrelson, a 68 Whisky or Licensed Practical Nurse with Bravo Company, 328th Combat Support Hospital, based in Fort Douglas, hadn't made fake wounds for training since she entered the field a number of years ago.

“I am a little rusty, but having fun,” Harrelson said. “Practice makes perfect and the more I do, the better the wounds look.”

More than 100 volunteers from the U.S. Army Reserve, Army National Guard, University of Utah Reserve Officers' Training Corps and civilian contractors, volunteered their time to role play as wounded for the exercise.

“During my time as a trauma nurse, I have witnessed many wounds and accidents that give me some creative ideas,” said Griffis. “We have a pretty motivated team willing to get dirty to help make this exercise as realistic as possible for everyone involved.” 🇺🇸

(From top) Capt. Jann Griffis, an Army Reserve nurse with the 807th Medical Command (Deployment Support), based in Fort Douglas, Utah, uses a balloon and fake blood to mimic abdomen trauma.

Griffis, and Spc. Jessica Lovett an Army Reserve medical logistics specialist with the 971st Medical Logistics Company, 807th Medical Command, based in Ogden, Utah, places a bandage over the right eye of University of Utah ROTC Cadet William Lewis.



**Wishing  
everyone in the  
USARC Family  
Happy  
Holidays  
and a  
Wonderful  
New Year**

*from*  **The DOUBBLE EAGLE**  
"Twice the Citizen! Army Strong!"