



The
DOUBLE

"Twice the Citizen! Army Strong!"

EAGLE

DEC. 2015/JAN. 2016, Vol. 4 No. 9/10



OPERATION TOY DROP 2015

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COVER STORY:

Looking like Santa Claus with a sack of toys on his shoulder, a U.S. Army paratrooper packs his parachute after a successful jump at Sicily Drop Zone for the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), Dec. 5, 2015 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. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



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The DOUBLE EAGLE
"Twice the Citizen Army Strong!"

DECEMBER 2015-JANUARY 2016 Vol. 4, No. 9-10

**THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF
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 U.S. ARMY RESERVE COMMAND
 PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE,
 FORT BRAGG, N.C.**

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Time Really Does Fly

It's hard to believe that another year is almost over. It really does ring true that as we grow older, time does seem to move much faster.

So as we approach the New Year, it's fun to take stock of the events that occurred in 2015.

We were again blessed with a multitude of stories that highlighted the great Soldiers and civilians who make up our Family not only at the U.S. Army Reserve headquarters at Fort Bragg, N.C., but across the entire U.S. Army Reserve.

For starters, our office published more than 40 features and news stories, nearly 500 images, and 12 Double Eagles. Coverage topics included seven exercises (CSTX, Mortuary Affairs, Global Medic, CBRN Operation Guardian, Paralegal Warrior, Operation Toy Drop, and two Innovative Readiness Training missions in Missouri and Montana.

We also covered pin-point special emphasis projects that included Sexual Harassment, Suicide Prevention, Army Reserve Engagement Cells, Force Reduction, Operation Full Court Press, Army Reserve Best Warrior, the FORSCOM Marksmanship competition, and the graduation of the first U.S. Army Reserve female Ranger graduate.

Through all of these stories and images the common factor were dedicated Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians that keep our force on the cutting edge of training and technological advancements. By emphasizing the readiness and training of the U.S. Army Reserve to support our active duty brothers and sisters, it makes the job of telling the U.S. Army Reserve story an easy one to tell.

Our Soldiers and civilians are scattered across America, representing the added value of community involvement.

"For more than 14 consecutive years at war, Army Reserve Citizen-Soldiers have brought skills, honed in the civilian sector, to contingency and Theater Security Cooperation missions across the globe," said Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley, chief of Army Reserve and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command. "Today, those same Army Reserve Soldiers are bringing enhanced skills to the communities where they live and work."

As we close another chapter in U.S. Army Reserve history, let us look forward to another great year. Will there be challenges? Probably, but one thing is certain, our U.S. Army Reserve Family is ready and willing to accept the challenges and overcome them for the greater good of the nation.

May we all have a safe, prosperous, and productive New Year. 🇺🇸



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.

It's Not Just About the Wings



EARLY MORNING SMILE. Staff Sgt. Micheal Tkachenko waits in line to donate his toy in exchange for a chance to earn foreign jump wings at the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), on Dec. 4 at Pope Army Airfield, N.C. Operation Toy Drop is the world's largest combined airborne operation with seven allied partner nation paratroopers participating and allows Soldiers the opportunity to help children in need for the holidays.

Story & photos by Spc. ANGELA LORDEN
362nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - The early December morning was cool and crisp. A hint of the winter to come was in the air. Hundreds of Soldiers waited patiently, bearing gifts for children they would never meet. Some were zipped up in sleeping bags on the cold concrete. Some were huddled together with donated cups of hot coffee cradled in their hands. All of them were there for at least one reason: to participate in this year's "Lottery Day."

For one highly-motivated Soldier, that morning was not his first morning here. It was his second morning in a row spent waiting for what has become a Fort Bragg tradition.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Micheal Tkachenko, a military police officer with the 65th MP Company (Airborne) here, arrived at Green Ramp for the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop's Lottery Day at 7:30 in the morning of Dec. 3, - one day prior to the actual event - as a showcase of camaraderie and a dedication to both his community and military service.

"It's not just about yourself," he said.



Tkachenko, accompanied by five other Soldiers from his unit, asked for their chain-of-command's permission to attend Lottery Day early as an exercise of esprit de corps, as well as an opportunity to give back to the community, he said.

Operation Toy Drop, hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), collected toys to be distributed to children in need this holiday season. Operation Toy Drop is the largest, combined airborne operation in the world. Since its inception, it has raised over 100,000 toys for the community.

Operation Toy Drop worked in conjunction with the annual Operation Toy Trot 5k race to raise toys, as well as collected toys through donation boxes at the post exchanges here. Lottery Day was also one of Operation Toy Drop's events. Almost 1,000 paratroopers came to the event for a chance to be selected for one of the 500 seats to be given the opportunity to jump with a partner-nation jumpmaster and earn foreign jump wings. In true lottery style, whether a Soldier was first or last, his or her chances of being picked for a seat were the same. Although not required, paratroopers were encouraged to bring a toy and donate it at the event.

"If we get wings, it's an extra bonus," he said. "But it's more or less about just being able to participate and give back."

Operation Toy Drop affects the community in a lot of different ways, Tkachenko said. It not only gives toys to underprivileged children, it also shows the community that the military is motivated about giving back.

"The community supports us and we support them," he said. "We're there to help them, not just collect a paycheck."

U.S. Army Spc. Andrew Wood, a MP with the 65th Military Police Company (Airborne) and a Soldier in Tkachenko's squad, agreed that for his squad leader, it has never been about the paycheck.

"He really cares," Wood said. "He's one of the [non-commissioned officers in charge] that would honestly catch a bullet for his joes. And he takes care of them anyway he can."

A self-proclaimed family man, Tkachenko's devotion to his Soldiers and the military are derived from this title.

"I know some say the Army comes first, family



second, but in my mind, Army is family," Tkachenko said.

Tkachenko waited almost 26 hours to receive a little, blue lottery ticket that would never be called. The enthusiasm shown by the first 10 people in line, however, led to U.S. Army Major General Daniel R. Ammerman, the Commanding General of USACAPOC, honored the first 10 people in line with certificates of appreciation and gave them the opportunity to earn their foreign jump wings with a reserved spot on a plane.

Wings or no wings, Tkachenko would have no regrets about attending lottery day, he said.

"I don't come here for the wings," he said.

For Tkachenko and the rest of the Soldiers who brought gifts and waited in line in anticipation of a Fort Bragg tradition, this time of year was an opportunity to bond with their fellow Soldiers, give back to the community that has supported them and share in the spirit of the holidays. These Soldiers and Operation Toy Drop plan to continue this legacy for years to come. 🇺🇸



THE VOICE OF TOY DROP. Willie Wellbrock, serves as the emcee for the 16th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, at Green Ramp, Pope Army Airfield, Fort Bragg, N.C., in this Dec. 6, 2013 file photo. The first phase of Toy Drop includes bringing in an unwrapped toy to receive a ticket. The tickets are then randomly drawn to earn the seat for tomorrow's airborne operation at Sicily Drop Zone. Wellbrock and Oler served together in the early days of Operation Toy Drop. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)

Willie Wellbrock: The Voice of Toy Drop

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

FORT BRAGG, N.C.-- There was a sea of various camouflage uniforms. Parachutes are carefully worn, and helmets placed throughout the area. Through the fog of multi-cam, stands a man with a microphone in his hand. There stands Willie Wellbrock.

Serving as the Master of Ceremony for the Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, is the largest combined airborne operations hosted by U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological

Operation Command and bringing together U.S. Army Reserve personnel, paratroopers, Air Force crews and nine partner nations, Willie helps to keep the train moving and morale up.

“Really, I didn’t have much to do with it (Operation Toy Drop) on the first one,” said Willie, former C-130 loadmaster and Operation Toy Drop MC. “There were only a few hundred chutes.”

“It wasn’t long after that, that Randy Oler and I got to talking,

and with Scott Murray who we knew very well, said they wanted to continue that operation,” Willie said.

The conversation began with the three men, who had no idea what the operation would eventually grow to.

“They made a comment about it being nice if Pope (Pope Army Airfield) could of jumped on board, and I said why not, did you ask?” Willie said. “We started discussion with wing

commanders, and they thought that wouldn't be a problem at all, with joint training in mind it wouldn't only be training for us, but for the Army, U.S. Army Reserve, Marines and allied nations that were participating."

To date, nearly 100,000 thousand toys have been collected and donated to children homes, social service agencies, and families in the local community as part of Operation Toy Drop and more than 4,000 paratroopers have participated in the Toy Drop jumps. A stark comparison to the first operation in December, 1998.

"We came on board initially with four aircrafts and two were spares," Willie said. "We just hit it off, and kept going ever since then."

"When I retired, Sgt. Maj. Quinn was the head for Toy Drop, and he gave me a call asking what I was doing. I told him I was up in Ohio with visiting

family and he said 'you still working Toy Drop ain't ya,'" Willie recalled.

The question caught Willie off guard, who was unclear as to his future with the operation after retiring from 26 years with the Air Force.

"Well I said I wasn't sure, no one had asked. He said 'well I'm asking, and we would love to have you come back and be a player with Toy Drop,'" Willie said.

"So I continued to come back, and initially I still did what I did when I was in the Air Force," Willie said. "My basic job was coordinating the Air Force assets along with translating to the Army what it was we were doing."

When the needs changed Willie was ready to assist. He didn't realize he was transitioning to a role with high visibility and importance, keeping the Service members motivated.

See **WILLIE**, Pg. 8



A FAMILY AFFAIR. Event emcee, Willie Wellbrock, and his daughters, Annaliesa, center, and Tiffany, call ticket numbers for an opportunity to earn foreign jump wings at the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), Dec. 4 at Pope Army Airfield, N.C. Operation Toy Drop is the world's largest combined airborne operation with seven partner-nation paratroopers participating and allows Soldiers the opportunity to help children in need everywhere receive toys for the holidays. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)

WILLIE

from Pg. 7

“They said to me, why don’t you be the lottery guy? We want you to call tickets,” Willie said. “I said sure, whatever you need me to do, anything to keep the dream alive, and that’s what I’ve been doing ever since, the lottery call.”

For Willie it didn’t matter the role he played, because being a part of such a generous cause, was enough.

“It’s such an honor, to be standing in front of all these young Americans who put their lives on the line everyday for our country,” Willie said. “To go there and see them taking time out their personal lives to donate a toy for an opportunity, not a guarantee, an opportunity to get on our flight, just to be a part of that is an honor in itself.”

“They make it fun, they make it easy,” he said. “They join in on the ticket calling, especially on the scratches. When we get a scratch

that whole place goes crazy.”

Those who participate in Toy Drop, in any form, add fuel to the reason Willie enjoys coming back every year.

“This is an operation that I hope and pray never goes away,” Willie said.

While Willie is now seen as the center man of it all by many, due to his high visibility in the operation because of his MC duties, a void was left in Operation Toy Drop by the man whose name it memorializes, Randy Olerman.

“He was the founder and the key to this operation,” Willie said. “He led a group of people together that not only worked hard but made it fun.”

No one could take the place of Randy in Willies’ mind. The two men were friends and became closer every year they worked together.

“Randy passed away in 2004,

and I was chief of tactics then, and I was actually working that night when Randy was out on the plane and had the heart attack,” he said.

The exact moment when Willie received the call is a memory he will never forget.

“I got the call that there was an in-flight emergency, and that a paratrooper was coming back in cardiac arrest,” Willie said.

Today, the fond memories of Randy keep a smile on his face.

“Randy was the kind of guy that would go into a place and not know a soul, come out and know everybody, that was Randy. He cared about people.”

“When Randy passed it was tough. There was that void showing up in the morning at four o’clock, or two o’clock, like where’s that big Mountain Dew,” Willie said. “He always had a 20 ounce Mountain Dew in his hand.”

Randy will be forever missed,

A FRIEND TO ALL. Willie Wellbrock, event emcee, shares a laugh with paratroopers 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, in this Dec. 6, 2014 file photo at Fort Bragg, N.C. Wellbrock is a long-time participant in Operation Toy Drop, serving with Toy Drop founder Oler when they were both in the U.S. Air Force, and now as a volunteer. (Photo by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



but his dream for Toy Drop lives on.

“It’s not about us, it’s about the kids and what we can do for them,” Willie said.

Continuing to participate in Toy Drop has never been for self, but for others and the thrive to keep a lasting memory for his friend ongoing.

“The key here is I’m just here to help, and keep Randy’s dream alive,” Willie said.

His dream is still very much alive, as can be seen in the 18th year of the operation.

“There’s still a lot to do with less people doing it, and those people, I tip my hat to, because they are the ones that continue to make this happen,” Willie said. “I am a little part, they are the major part of that.”

“There are such quality individuals involved with this, that I thank, for letting me be a part of what they really do,” Willie said.

The entire operation takes a village to put on, a village Willie is proud to be a part of.

“It’s a family, that’s exactly what it is. You play hard, you work hard,” Willie said. “Everybody helps each other, not only with the U.S. Army Reserve, but the Air Force Reserve side of the house, the Air Force active side, The Army active duty side, and the allies.”

The end result is a constant motion of thousands of bodies, resulting in thousands more in gifts for those who need.

“It’s really something to see when you get all of this put together, and you watch how the operation goes,” Willie said.

“Some of these guys come in

with some really nice gifts, and you know just as well as I do what they make, so that tells me where their heart is,” Willie said.

The operation has also become a family affair for Willie who has four kids, Lauren 27, 1 grandchild, Joe 25, Annalisa 13 (plays a role in trying to collect toys at her middle school to donate to toy drop) and Tiffany 10. His wife Cecile, who struggled with breast cancer, and still pushed Willie to do this knowing how much it meant to him.

“When my daughter, who’s going to be 14, was 6 years old, she asked if she could go to Toy Drop with me, she kept asking what Toy Drop was all about, and it was shame on me because all my time was dedicated to making sure everything was happening the way it was supposed to happen, not having the opportunity to explain to my kids what I was doing,” he said.

“When I finally sat down with her and said what it was about she said ‘I want to do something too, I want to give a kid a gift,’” Willie said. “I said ok, what do you want to give them? And she said ‘I want to give them a bike.’”

A bike? A bike was an easy request for Willie to help facilitate his kids obtain, and served as a point of pride in his children.

“Ever since then my kids have donated two bikes every year,” Willie said. “From that point on its been a family thing. They come out, they help collect the toys, they enjoy meeting the Soldiers, they enjoy the elves working with them, and it’s a quality show going on when we are out there.”

“Randy would be proud, not of himself, but of all the

people who continually keep this operation going. I know his family is,” Willie said.

The operation isn’t the only thing keeping Randy’s memory alive, his family serves as the living representation and appreciate the legacy he has left behind.

“I know his son Zach, and his daughter who is up in Virginia, every now and then come down and they are just in awe of how this operation continues, how well its doing, and even though their dad isn’t here, his dream still lives,” Willie said.

It has been 18 years and counting, and Willie doesn’t plan to miss a beat.

“I wouldn’t miss it for the world,” Willie said. “There are some that come and some that go, and being one of those originals that has been here for the whole operation and to continue to be a part of it means the world to me.”

“I live for this time of the year. This is the best gift that I can give to anybody,” Willie said.

Whether the gesture is small or big, it’s all about the gesture of kindness according to Willie.

“My dad always said, if you can just give a little, it doesn’t have to be a lot, it makes a difference,” Willie said.

As the man behind the microphone addresses the sea of uniforms and volunteers for another year, his message to those who have never heard about Toy Drop, is as clear as day.

“If you want to be a part of a great operation, you want to be part of something that’s bigger than life, come out. Come out to operation toy drop, make that little bit of difference,” Willie said. 🇺🇸

Christmas Descends from the Sky

Story & photos by Staff Sgt. SHAIYLA HAKEEM
354th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas!

Chutes instead of snow.

Take a look at the sky again, they're jumping against the wind, Giving gifts, descending to below!

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - Olive drab colored parachutes tinted the early morning sunrays on Sicily Drop Zone Friday at Fort Bragg, N.C. during the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop.

For a donation of toys, which are given to local children, Soldiers had the opportunity to earn partner nation jump wings and participate in a unique airborne experience.

“Operation Toy Drop is a multifaceted training exercise which also has an important community relations aspect,” said Maj. Andre A. Battiste, chief of adjunct general division at the United States Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations (Airborne). “It is also exposure to allied nations on how we do our airborne operations.”

USACAPOC(A), a U.S. Army Reserve functional command, hosted this international training event. Operation Toy Drop is the world’s largest combined airborne operation. Partner nation participants this year included Canada, Colombia, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Latvia, and the Netherlands. This event gives the nations’ jumpmasters a chance to exchange a part of their culture with the U.S. Army.

Aircraft from Pope Army Airfield’s 43rd Airlift Group provided airlift support. They also sponsored Operation Toy Trot, a 5K race held here Wednesday that was used as a fundraiser to collect new, unwrapped toys.

Preparation for the big toy day included rehearsal training for static line jumps, refresher training on the main canopy parachute (MC-6), T-11 reserve parachute, aircraft familiarizations for the UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, C-130, C-160 and C-27. Reserve Soldiers from the 824th Quartermaster Company supplied and packed more than 200 MC-6 and T-11 parachutes for the event.

Operation Toy Drop was founded in 1997 by the late Sgt. 1st Class Randall R. Oler, who on April 20th, 2004, suffered a heart attack on a C-130 aircraft while performing jumpmaster duties.

His international vision and legacy lives on.

“There are little offshoots of Operation Toy drop all around the airborne community & it spawned from Randy Oler’s idea,” Battiste said.

This event is huge in the toy collection aspect, but it also serves as a far-reaching training event. Capt. Juan DeValdenebro, Colombian Special Operations Command jumpmaster, said working with the U.S. has been a valuable training experience and he would like to come back to participate again. This was the first year his country has been a part of Operation Toy Drop.

“We are very glad of having this opportunity,” DeValdenebro said, “It’s great for us so we can share training techniques, procedures, know new aircrafts and other countries procedures so we can improve ours.”

Aside from collecting more than 1,000 toys for needy children and providing an international personal development opportunity, Operation Toy drop offered esprit de corps among Soldiers with a boost in morale.

U.S. Army 1st Lt. Suyapa Lopez, with Alpha Company 407th Brigade Supply Battalion, cheered all the way through her descent to the ground. She earned a pair of Netherland wings from her jump in Operation Toy Drop.

“This was my smoothest, most calm jump ever,” said Suyapa, “It was awesome!” 🇵🇪



THUMBS UP. First Lt. Suyapa Lopez, with Alpha Company 407th Brigade Supply Battalion, gives a thumbs up in approval of her safe and flawless jump during the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, Dec. 4, at Sicily Drop Zone, Fort Bragg, N.C.

When Nations Unite

Story & photos by Sgt. DESTINY MANN
352nd Civil Affairs Command

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – Just after dawn, the chilly air was filled with the sounds of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. It appeared over the tree line, dropping nations from the sky.

Paratroopers from America, Canada, Colombia, Germany, Indonesia, Italy, Latvia, and Netherlands, all fell from the sky to the Nijmegen Drop Zone in participation with the Operation Toy Drop.

“I’ve jumped in the States before in Fort Lewis and that was a lot of fun. This is great because there’s a whole bunch of different countries,” said Canadian Army Sgt. Zachary Jacob.

Together with 13 others from the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Center (CAAWC), Jacob drove down from Trenton, Ontario, to participate in Operation Toy Drop in Fort Bragg, N.C.

A first-time Toy Drop jumper, Jacob joined the Canadian army in 2004 because his father was in the Army.

Jacob said his father served in a different regiment than he



UNITED EFFORT. Canadian paratrooper, Cpl. Jason Bent, from Trenton, Ontario, packs away his parachute after successfully completing a jump on the Nijmegen Drop Zone for the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), Dec. 3, at Fort Bragg, N.C. Operation Toy Drop is the world’s largest combined airborne operation and collective training exercise allowing Soldiers the opportunity to help children in need receive toys for the holidays. Bent serves as a rigger with the Canadian Army Advanced Warfare Center.

did so there was a lot of friendly competition over whose regiment was better.

Jacob got transferred from the Battalion to the CAAWC school as a parachute instructor.

“Not only do I jump it, I teach it as well,” said Jacob.

As a parachute instructor in Canada, Jacob teaches a High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) course that is approximately five

weeks long, involving two weeks of ground instruction and the rest of three weeks consists of 32 jumps.

Jacob said he really was happy to be able to have the opportunity to donate toys for children in need.

Other paratroopers expressed their pleasure in being part of a charity event for children.

“I brought three Nerf guns to

donate,” said Canadian Army Cpl. Jason Bent with a big grin on his face.

Bent, a Canadian army rigger, is a seven-year Canadian army vet also from CAAWC.

Bent said he really enjoyed having the opportunity to come to the U.S. with so many other paratroopers from around the world for such a great and charitable event. 🇨🇦



DROPPING IN. A paratrooper glides towards Nijmegen Drop Zone for the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), Dec. 3.



BABY ON BOARD. Sgt. 1st Class Sharilyn Wells, with the 5th Battalion, 108th Regiment (Civil Affairs/MISO), and her son, Gunner, run in the annual Operation Toy Trot 5K race Dec. 1, on Fort Bragg, N.C. Toys donated to Operation Toy Trot were given to support the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U. S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne). Operation Toy Drop is the world's largest combined airborne operation with seven partner-nation paratroopers participating and allows Soldiers the opportunity to help children in need everywhere receive toys for the holidays.

Operation Toy Trot 5K leads in to Toy Drop

Story & photos by Spc. ANGELA LORDEN
362nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - A little fog has never stopped Santa from delivering toys to children on Christmas Eve - and it didn't stop service members from taking part in the annual Operation Toy Trot 5k race, held Dec. 2, 2015.

Coordinated by the Air Force, Operation Toy Trot worked in conjunction with the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop. Hosted by the U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne) with the help of the Army Reserve, Operation Toy Drop is an event that collects toys and distributes them to children in need during the holiday season.

"Operation Toy Trot and Toy Drop help by not

just giving back, but by giving hope," said Airman 1st Class Haley Bradshaw of the 43rd Air Base Squadron, a volunteer for Operation Toy Trot.

Airmen, Soldiers and families came in holiday costumes with toy donations, which were then given in support of Operation Toy Drop.

The participants weren't the only ones motivated the morning of Operation Toy Trot.

"I try and do a lot of volunteer events," said Bradshaw. "For this one, I was really excited when I first heard about it. I signed up immediately."

This enthusiasm for helping the community and Operation Toy Drop helped the event raise over 70 donations this year from its participants.



“It is the holiday season and you can always give back,” said Tech Sgt. Donell Walker, the non-commissioned officer in charge of Operation Toy Trot with the 43rd ABS. “I have everything. I’m blessed. I have a job. I have a great family. I have my health. The only thing I can do now is give back and help spread the holiday cheer.”

It is this holiday cheer that has fostered Operation Toy Drop’s success since 1998. This success has provided over 100,000 toys to children since the event’s creation. 🎁

SMILES ALL AROUND. U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Gladys L. McGowan, top, smiles in her holiday attire for the annual Operation Toy Trot 5K.

Airmen, Soldiers and Family members participate in the annual Operation Toy Trot 5K race Dec. 1, 2015, on Fort Bragg, N.C. Toys donated to Operation Toy Trot were given to support the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U. S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne).



Operation Toy Drop through the lenses of U.S. Army Reserve Photojournalists



A U.S. Army paratrooper returns after completing her jump during the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, hosted by U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), Dec. 4, 2015, on Sicily Drop Zone at Fort Bragg, N.C. Operation Toy Drop is the world's largest combined airborne operation and collective training exercise with seven partner-nation paratroopers participating and allows Soldiers the opportunity to help children in need receive toys for the holidays. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Destiny Mann, 450th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne))



Canadian paratrooper Cpl. Jason Bent, top, from Trenton, Ontario, draws in his parachute on the Nijmegen Drop Zone, Dec. 3. (Sgt. Destiny Mann, 450th Civil Affairs Battalion (Airborne). Staff Sgt. Juan Felix, bottom left, is all smiles as he waits in line for a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter and a chance to earn partner nation jump wings, Dec. 3. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Joshua Wainz, 414th Civil Affairs Battalion) Soldiers, bottom right, wait outside the Green Ramp passenger terminal at Fort Bragg, N.C. to turn in their toys. (Staff Sgt. Timothy Koster, 362nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

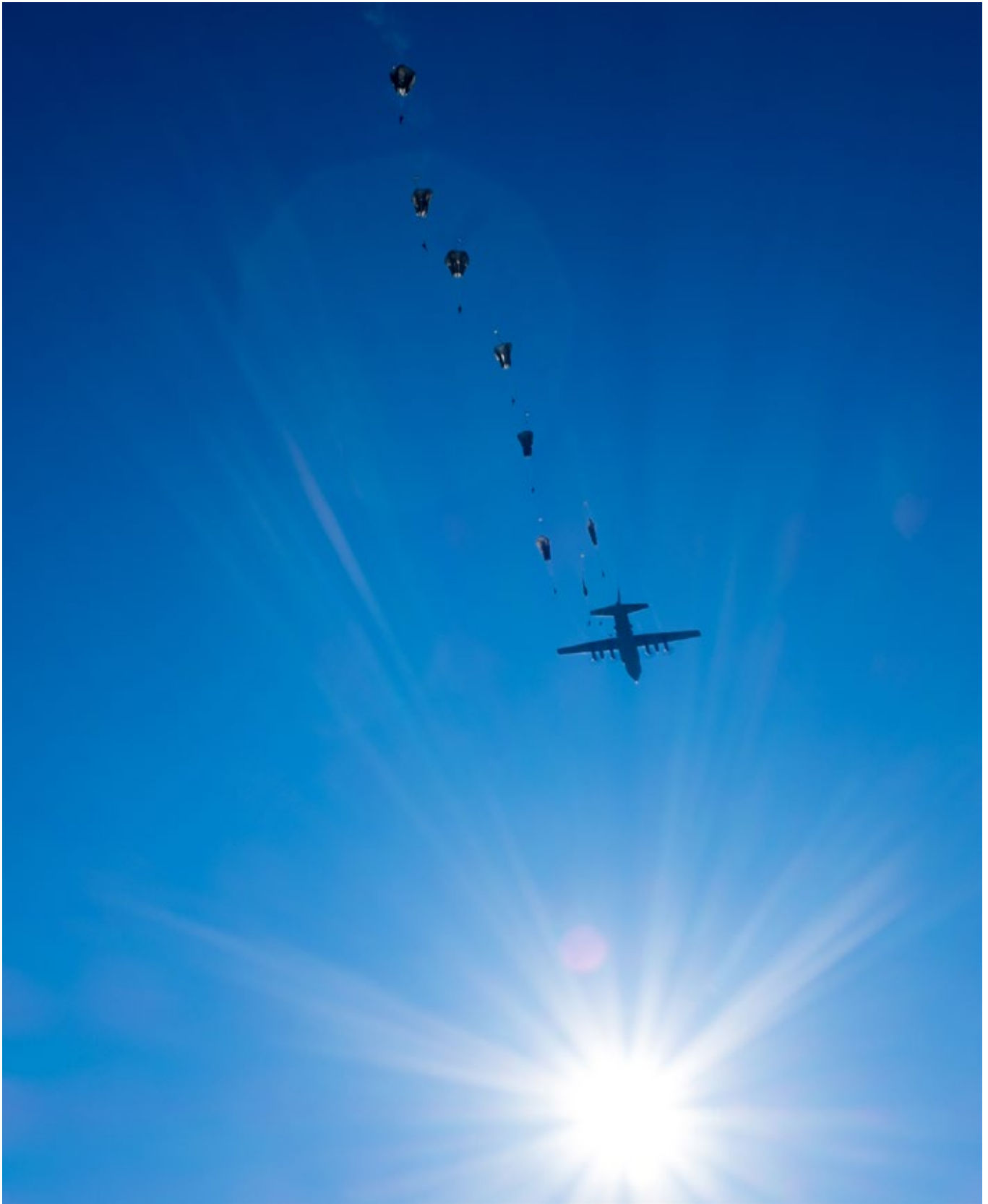


Soldiers, top left, with the 824th Quartermaster Company pass out T-11 reserve parachutes, Dec. 4, while U.S. Army paratroopers, top right, check their gear. Sgt. 1st Class Eric Soto, bottom, U.S. Army Civil Affairs & Psychological Operations Command (Airborne), performs jumpmaster parachute inspections during a familiarization training exercise. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Shaiyla Hakeem, 354th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)



Santa, top, laughs with paratroopers as they wait in line to donate their toys in hopes of receiving a winning lottery ticket for the opportunity to earn partner nation jump wings, Dec. 4, while a U.S. Army paratrooper smiles as he looks at all the bikes donated Dec. 4, 2015. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Nicole Paese, 361st Press Camp Headquarters)





U.S. Army paratroopers, opposite page top, line the street before the sun rises, waiting to donate their toys in hopes of receiving a winning lottery ticket for the opportunity to earn foreign jump wings, Dec. 4. U.S. Army paratroopers, opposite page bottom, wait patiently for their ticket number to be called. U.S. Army paratroopers exit a C-130 Hercules at Sicily Drop Zone, Dec. 4. (Photos by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)



U.S. Army paratroopers exit a C-17 Globemaster III, top, at Sicily Drop Zone for the 18th Annual Randy Oler Memorial Operation Toy Drop, Dec. 5.

U.S. Army paratroopers right, fill the sky.

Looking like Santa Claus with a sack of toys on his shoulder, a U.S. Army paratrooper, top of next page, packs his parachute after a successful jump at Sicily Drop Zone.

U.S. Army paratroopers, bottom of next page, fill the sky at Sicily Drop Zone, while other paratroopers receive their allied nation jump wings in front of friends and families. (Photos by Timothy L. Hale/U.S. Army Reserve Command)





USARC HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE





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

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - Lt. Gen. Jeffrey W. Talley, opposite page, chief of the U.S. Army Reserve and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command, flipped the switch to light the USARC Christmas Tree during the annual holiday open house at the command headquarters, Dec. 18.

In addition to 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, at left in top photo, won first place for the second straight year. She made elf figures, bottom photo, out of clay with each one having a specific theme such as bakers, musicians, present wrappers and snow makers. 🇺🇸



HOLIDAY THREATS and CYBER SECURITY



**U.S. Army Reserve
Protection Program Message (PPM) 16-001**

**2015 Holiday Threat Awareness
and New Cyber Crime Prevention Flyers**

The holiday season is inherently a period of large gatherings and travel that presents opportunities for terrorist organizations and Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVE) to consider attacks. DOD affiliated personnel remain attractive targets for both transnational terrorists HVE inspired by jihadist ideology. The continued U.S. military operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq may motivate HVEs in the U.S. to plot attacks against DOD targets. HVEs are often familiar with their local area and are difficult to identify and interdict.

Terrorist and Criminal Organizations continuously demonstrate their use of social media. They have also proved, to some extent, that they are able to aggregate users' social media data into actionable intelligence using sites like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter as they have become more popular amongst these organizations. It is important to understand that this practice is not new nor is it a temporary phenomenon but a sustainable one given the growing ease of internet access.

For more information on preventing holiday threats and cyber security awareness, contact your unit anti-terrorism officer or security manager. 🇺🇸

Dry Support Bridge now part o

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

FORT A.P. HILL, Va. – The U.S. Army Reserve 310th Engineer Company (Multi Role Bridge Company), recently got a new addition to its line of equipment, increasing it’s capabilities for at home and in theatre military operations.

Soldiers with the 310th, alongside National Guard Soldiers, began their six-week field training on the new 46 meter (150 feet) M-18 Dry Support Bridge system, Oct. 12.

Dry Support Bridges provide the Army with assault and support bridging for gaps of up to 40 meters.

Now, the DSB replaces the outdated, manpower-

and time-intensive medium girder bridge (MGB) with a mechanical system capable of emplacing a 46-meter bridge.

“To set up the bridge it takes one hour and eight Soldiers,” said Ruben Velazquez, senior system integrator for the U.S. Army Reserve.

In addition, the DSB will improve current bridge load-carrying capacity, moving it up to Military Load Classification 96 for wheeled traffic (supporting upwards of 120,000 pounds), such as an M1 tank uploaded on a heavy equipment transporter.

The DSB is designed for transportation as a palletized load by Palletized Load System trailers or



of U.S. Army Reserve inventory

by service support units equipped with PLS trucks.

“There are seven PLS trucks for just one bridge,” Velazquez said.

The six week training began with Soldiers training on the PLS trailers solely, properly utilizing the loading system before moving on to bridge capabilities.

Soldiers of the 310th, who already have experience with and possess the previous 40-meter DSB, received instruction and training from contractors from England, whose company developed the equipment.

“Not many units, active component, reserve, or

National Guard, have this equipment,” Velazquez said.

“As of today, each component has one unit with the 46 meter Dry Support Bridge, and the 310th is the only reserve unit with that capability.”

Currently there are 25 MRBC units, four active duty, 12 National Guard, and nine U.S. Army Reserve.

The U.S. Army Reserve units are fully equipped with all existing bridging capabilities, and Soldiers of the 310th are now even more flexible with the level of support they can provide at home or abroad. 🇺🇸



SPANNING THE GAP. It takes eight Soldiers and a single launch vehicle less than 90 minutes to span a gap of 46 meters (150 feet) with Dry Support Bridge. The U.S. Army has adopted the DSB as its new bridging system and DSBs have repeatedly proved their value in the field with deployment in the U.S., South Korea, and Iraq. A DSB's primary mission is emplacement on main supply routes in the rear of the area of direct combat while its secondary mission is to support and maintain the momentum of attack, when water and dry-gap obstacles are encountered that exceed the capabilities of assault bridging assets. So far, more than 100 DSB bridging systems have been supplied to armed forces around the world. (U.S. Army Reserve file photo)

Really Getting to Know Someone

By Chaplain (Lt. Col.) CHARLES CAUSEY

U.S. Army Reserve Command Deputy Command Chaplain

I have a question for you. *How well do you know that person?*

As a parent, I have asked my four teenagers this multiple times when they request spending exclusive time with someone else.

Many people can fake others quite extensively. One example is the news headline in early December regarding the shooting in San Bernardino, California. The family members of one of the shooters were left scratching their heads and answering unanswerable questions to the press the day following the shooting.

“We did not know!” “This is out of character!” Some people go out of their way to hide things from others, especially when their deeds are evil. Proverbs 26:26 declares “*Their malice may be concealed by deception, but their wickedness will be exposed publicly.*”

Again, I ask, how well do you know that person?

Strong relationships are not passive projects, they take intentionality and hard work. From the work I do as a chaplain, where I routinely hear of broken marriages, I am reminded that I need to sit down with my wife and ask her how she is doing in our relationship.

Am I meeting your emotional needs? Are we doing well together? What am I doing lately that is really bothering you?

Sometimes we have to be vulnerable and put ourselves out there with those closest to us. I do this with my teenagers as well. Do I really know my wife and kids? I have often thought of the horror that the parents of the Columbine High School shooters must persistently feel. Yet I am forced to ask if they truly knew their kids and what made them tick.

One day, when my now college-age daughter was a 10-year-old, I tucked her in for the night and asked

her how her day went. She said she had fun playing at school. I asked her what games she played. She said that as her father I should know her well enough to answer. That took me back.

Oh my word, I have to think about this? I remembered how much she loved dolphins so I guessed, “Playing with dolphins?” She said I was only half-way right, that it was “Riding the dolphins!” This taught me a lesson. Many times I go through the motions as a parent and just want to phone it in. Many times after work I feel weary and don’t want to be bugged, but there are great rewards for intentionally pursuing those we love.

A few days ago, we had over another military family in our home for Thanksgiving. We were discussing personality types and why people say and do certain things.

My visitor’s 18-year-old son interrupted the conversation and said, “Dad, there are certain things that really bother me about you. Can we discuss them now?” I am sure this fellow Soldier was mortified by his son’s banal attempt to publicly air their dirty laundry. To my friend’s credit he allowed his son to proceed and they entered into a positive discussion on why the family operated the way they did—*right during our turkey meal!*

We should welcome this kind of dialogue with those loved ones around us. What does it cost us to bring honesty and vulnerability into a discussion? What do we give up when we ask someone to forgive us? There are great gains to be made with authentic, wholesome relationships, and I hope your relationships are successful in 2016.

A parting question; *How well do you know those you love, and how well have you allowed them to know you?* 🐼

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.



Time to Create A Holiday Spending Plan

Story by Contributing Writer

FORT BRAGG, N.C. - The holiday season is in full swing. While this is traditionally a great time of year to spend quality time with your Family, it's also the season for consumers to spend at retailers.

Shopping during this season can generate great stress on household budgets if we're not prepared for the additional spending. Fortunately, U.S. Army Reserve Family Programs provides vast array of financial support to include financial training at sponsored events/venues.

"One of the benefits of the holidays is several units are having Family Day (events), so we can reach both the Soldier and the Family," said Chris Morrow, certified financial counselor, U.S. Army Reserve Survivor Outreach Services (SOS). "We encourage Families to save for the holidays, rather than paying with their credit card."

Even though Morrow's primary mission is to provide education to increase financial literacy of surviving Families of Fallen Soldiers, the holiday proves to be an excellent time to share nuggets of information.

Morrow also encourages Soldiers and Families to visit www.militarysaves.org to take the pledge to become a military saver. The organization, which will kick off its 2016 Military Saves Campaign in the coming months, also provides these tips for holiday spending:

How Much Can You Afford To Spend?

If you have a holiday fund in which you've saved over the last year, try to stick with that amount. If you haven't set a holiday fund, start now and plan to save more for next year.

Make A List

Include all extra holiday expenses, not just gifts. The cost of wrapping paper, postage for holiday cards, and food for holiday dinner parties may seem small but they add up over the course of the holiday season. Eliminate surprises and plan ahead for the big and small budget busters.

Create A Strategy

Prepare for holiday spending by comparison shopping, using coupons, taking advantage of sales only for the items on your list, and keeping a copy of your budget and your list with you when shopping.

Keep Track of Your Spending

Chances are good that even with the most thorough preparation, unanticipated holiday expenses will pop up. Add those to your list, and save it for next year to have an even more complete list of holiday expenses.

Avoid Debt

Besides helping you save and spend wisely, creating a holiday spending plan can help you avoid overspending and incurring costly loans or credit card debt that could take years to pay off. Holiday deals aren't really deals if you find yourself paying the purchase price with credit, and then adding interest charges month after month.

For additional information regarding financial support, contact your command's Family Programs Director or Coordinator, or Barbara Giddens, U.S. Army Reserve SOS Program Manager. If you are facing a financial emergency, contact Fort Family at 866-345-8248, available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. 🇺🇸



(Graphic courtesy of MilitarySaves.org)

Power of One: Turning Back Suicide

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

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – *“But in the end one needs more courage to live than to kill himself,”* said writer *Albert Camus*.

The U.S. Army Reserve continues to lose Soldiers to suicide and prevention of it is of grave importance, and the responsibility of everyone.

A sentiment expressed by Maj. Gen. Peter S. Lennon, Deputy Commander for Support, U.S. Army Reserve Command, as he emphasized his message on the topic from a senior leader perspective at USARC headquarters, November 30.

“If the leaders are not committed to it then the Soldiers are not going to realize their level, and how they can help,” Lennon said.

The U.S. Army Reserve Command is running a social media campaign called the Power of One. Power of One is the current Department of Defense and Department of the Army campaign for suicide prevention.

“It’s interesting the power of one. You talk about the power of one Soldier, one battle buddy, one commander, one phone call, one action, one question, and all that may turn the tide,” said Lennon.

Lennon, who has been to more Soldier funerals as a senior leader than anyone would like, holds a deep passion for suicide prevention in the Army ranks, and the culture which we need to foster in order to change.

“You need to create the culture, a culture of engagement, a culture of caring,” Lennon said.

“We talk about the Warrior Ethos and one of the lines in the ethos is never leave a fallen comrade. I think in the case of suicide and struggling Soldiers we should say falling comrade, because that Soldier is



Maj. Gen. Peter S. Lennon

falling and we need to make sure he doesn’t fall,” Lennon said.

The responsibility rests on the shoulders of everyone in a unit according to Lennon, from the leader level down, and embracing that as an inherent truth is crucial.

“That maybe part of the culture that we need to change at all levels, not only the leader level, but the Soldier level, and the battle buddy level,” Lennon said.

“What we need to do is make sure every Soldier realizes that they are a contributor to the success and the welfare of their unit, and part of that success is

having their Soldiers being present for duty, able to do their jobs, and not being distracted by the things that are ultimately leading to suicides and suicide attempts,” Lennon said.

The Army Reserve has one of the highest rates of suicide for an Army Component.

After seeing a decline in previous years the numbers have flattened out and the Army Reserve forces numbers have surpassed that of Active duty Soldiers according to the Pentagon.

“That’s disappointing because we put a lot of effort into it (suicide prevention). We still have to do more to make sure every Soldier realizes that they have a responsibility, no matter what their rank,” Lennon said.

The initial change begins with battle assembly meetings according to Lennon.

“The first thing you say on Saturday morning is ‘how are you doing?’ Well, I think what we should do is put the ARE in capital letters, ‘how ARE you doing’, and really mean it, ask the tough questions and expect an answer that might not make you feel warm and fuzzy, but it may give you the information you need to help,” Lennon said.

Soldiers and Family members alike are not alone when dealing with suicide or someone who may be going through the struggle. The military offers several resources that can provide assistance.

“Our Army One Source is a strong tool we can use, Fort Family is a terrific resource, and if you ask me to give you the phone numbers for them right now I wouldn’t be able to do it, because they’re on my speed dial,” Lennon said.

“Every Soldier should have Fort Family, the suicide hotline, and Army One Source on their speed dial, just the same as they do their boyfriend/girlfriend, their husband or wife,” he said.

“This gives you a way to react if you are hit with

a situation where you may need them, and gives you the confidence to be able to face those challenges,” Lennon said.

For those U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers and other Service members who had the courage to serve, it will take additional courage to help them through a time of struggle and to endure life.


“The bottom line is it’s everybody’s responsibility. The term battle buddy is not just a phrase of the day, and it really should be something people live, not just on weekends, but everyday of the month,” Lennon said.

“We are citizen Soldiers, but we are Soldiers who care about each other,” Lennon said. 🇺🇸

SUICIDE PREVENTION

POWER OF 1

1 ACT
1 QUESTION
1 CALL...CAN SAVE A LIFE
POWER OF 1

 **Veterans
Crisis Line**
1-800-273-8255 **PRESS 1**

dodea
DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE EDUCATION ACTIVITY



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS. U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Mark Korte, center, a civil affairs noncommissioned officer with Company B, 457th Civil Affairs Battalion, 361st Civil Affairs Brigade, 7th Mission Support Command, listens to civilian role players and his Danish interpreter June 17, 2015, during the Danish Army's Civil Military Cooperation Support Team, 2nd Armored Infantry Battalion's NATO Response Force validation and training exercise Brave Lion 15, held June 8-19, 2015. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Chlosta, 7th MSC Public Affairs Office)

U.S. Army Reserve building partnerships with European allies

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

FORT BRAGG, N.C. – The U.S. Army is globally engaged, supporting Combatant Command missions in multiple countries.

As the complexity and number of security challenges in the world increases, new requirements are created and the U.S. Army Reserve continues to be in a position to provide some of these requirements.

A current example is highlighted in Europe, as U.S. Army Reserve assets provide capabilities to U.S.

Army Europe and NATO allies, much of which is mitigated through Army Reserve Engagement Cells. ARECs provide direct reach back support into the Army Reserve, enabling commands to access the U.S. Army Reserve's Regionally Aligned Forces and capabilities.

"I love the AREC concept," said Lt. Gen Frederick Hodges, Commanding General, U.S. Army Europe.

"When Lt. Gen. (Jeffery) Talley first told me he

wanted to do this, and that he had an Army Reserve General Officer and Army Reserve Soldiers that would come to U.S. Army Europe, help us organize, and think through how to get the best out of the Army Reserve, I was thrilled,” Hodges said.

The USAREUR leadership, Hodges said, immediately noticed the role of U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers.

“It really is a reflection of the proactive nature of the Army Reserve as an organization, Lt. Gen. Talley’s leadership, and Army Reserve Soldiers in general,” Hodges said.

“The U.S. Army Reserve has so much of our logistical capabilities, military police, engineering, public affairs, and so many different areas that fill capability gaps for us,” Hodges said.

The capability gap, referred to by Hodges, holds a valuable meaning to an active duty force that has decreased in size of the years.

“U.S. Army in Europe has 30,000 Soldiers in total, we used to have 300,000,” Hodges said. “Our mission when we had 300,000 was to deter the Soviet Union and assure allies, and our mission today with 30,000 Soldiers is to deter Russia, and assure allies.

“How do you make 30,000 feel like 300,000, knowing that we are not going to grow back again? The Army Reserve and the guard both contribute to that with capabilities,” Hodges said.

A tangible example of the benefit to the overall USAREUR mission by U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers is highlighted in the involvement of the U.S. Army Reserve movement control teams, who help move equipment, personnel, and supplies all throughout the European area of operation. A decrease in available active duty movement cells has created a need for U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers to fill those positions for mission success.

“Without that we would not be able to move around Europe and we would not be nearly as responsive as we are,” Hodges said.

The effective capabilities stretch beyond the hands-on effect the U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers provide to the region, but to how they push the command message to the world.

“When the President of the United States, in

response to the Russia invasion of Ukraine and illegal annexation of Crimea, decided to put paratroopers from the 173rd Airborne Brigade into Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, and Poland, he did that to send a strategic message,” Hodges said.

“Putting the paratroopers there was one thing, but if no one knows about it then you don’t get any strategic effect, and U.S. Army Reserve public affairs detachments were mobilized to join these companies we had in each country to help tell that story, and provide that strategic effect,” Hodges said. “Without U.S. Army Reserve Public Affairs Soldiers it would be like the proverbial tree falling in the forest.”

While Hodges attest to the many benefits the U.S. Army Reserve provides to USAREUR, the same can be said for what USAREUR provides to U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers.

“I think we have the best leadership lab in the Army,” Hodges said. “One way that we are doing this is by putting more and more responsibility on young leaders.”

According to Hodges, Soldier development is a strong factor that the U.S. Army stays a ready and reliable force, and the mutually beneficial relationship of the USAREUR and U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers encourage growth.

“It’s normal that the senior U.S. Army commander in an East European country is a captain, a troop commander, battery commander, or aviation commander,” Hodges said. “We have convoys moving up and down the eastern flank of NATO with logicians, and it’s typically a non-commissioned officer or very junior officer that is a senior person in-charge of that element.

“Our Army Reserve Soldiers are in that exact same environment, so you have junior leaders, non-commissioned officers, that have a lot of responsibility for accomplishment of the mission, safety, maintenance, and I can’t imagine a better leadership lab than what’s going on in U.S. Army Europe,” Hodges said.

The relevancy of the mission provides depth to the training being conducted, and provides a platform for possible real-world scenarios.

“When we fight, if we have to go to war or conduct operations, it’s not going to happen in Texas,

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EUROPE

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or Florida, or North Carolina, it's going to happen somewhere else, so everything that we are doing is in a complex environment, with allies, different cultures, and that's everyday life in U.S. Army Europe," Hodges said.

"I can't imagine a better preparation than that," Hodges said.

Hodges sees the value in the U.S. Army Reserve presence in Europe, and he is not the only one.

"Our allies are envious of the reserve component of the United States Army," Hodges said. "They see how we depend on and benefit from U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers, U.S. Army National Guard Soldiers, and they see what we get from that," Hodges said.

"The British Army, for example, is working very hard on creating that same sort of capability to help them maintain capacity in the same affordable way," Hodges said.

As a force that is globally engaged, with a footprint and AREC's in every major regional command, the U. S. Army Reserve continues to support the missions presented to them, utilizing the unique capabilities of the entire force.

"Most European (militaries) have some sort of reserve component, but its nothing that has the capability like we have," Hodges said.

"That's something I'm very proud of, how our U.S. Army Reserve Soldiers provide a great model for our allies," he said. 🇺🇸



MAKING A POINT. Lt. Gen. Ben Hodges, commander, U.S. Army Europe, speaks Dec. 9 at a Pentagon press briefing about the focus of U.S. exercises such as Atlantic Resolve. (Photo by David Vergun/Defense Media Activity-Army)

Following a Blueprint to Success



BUILDING ON SUCCESS. U.S. Army Reserve 1st Lt. Jerome Johnson assesses a building's integrity using tablet software and reviews architectural plans (Courtesy photo).

Story by Contributing Writer

While in his pursuit of a career as an architect, 1st Lt. Jerome Johnson wears many different hats.

He serves as an engineer with the U.S. Army Reserve 412th Theater Engineer Command, while balancing civilian jobs as a computer-assisted design technician and as an assistant architect.

He also frequently returns to the college he attended to mentor and motivate the next generation of ROTC cadets.

“One of the biggest benefits of part-time service is the flexibility,” Johnson said. “I’m used to a set schedule in the military, which helps me manage my time in my personal life as well.”

Johnson’s background in architecture has earned him more responsibility in the military.

“As a recent college graduate, other engineers ask for my opinion as an architect,” he said. “In design,

you have to think of everything. I have to think as a project manager, an architect, and an engineer. I’m charged with finding the right answer.”

In the U.S. Army Reserve, Johnson evaluates building sites and provides recommendations for constructing everything from medical facilities to obstacle courses. His military job is helping him get the necessary experience to become a registered architect faster than he would with only a civilian job, while also leaving enough free time for Johnson to complement his professional education with civilian experience.

“One day, I’d love to be a registered architect, but in order to do that I need professional experience,” Johnson said. “Being in the U.S. Army Reserve allows me enough time to also get the civilian experience necessary.” 🇺🇸

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

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