

A large military transport aircraft, likely a C-17 Globemaster III, is shown from a low angle looking up into its open cargo bay. A tan-colored Humvee is parked inside the bay, facing the viewer. The aircraft's wings and engines are visible on either side of the bay. The background shows a cloudy sky and a flat, open landscape.

# 11th Signal Brigade

# THUNDERBIRD

## Quarterly

January 2015  
VOLUME 17  
ISSUE 4

11th Sig. Bde. Holiday Ball  
40th ESB Culinary Arts NCO of the Quarter  
62nd ESB EDRE  
86th ESB Assumption of Command  
57th ESB Tarver Elementary School Support  
16th TIN Change of Command

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# THUNDERBIRD QUARTERLY

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# 11th Sig. Bde. History

The Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade, was constituted on 1 September 1943 as the 3103rd Signal Service Battalion and activated 20 December 1943 at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. The battalion departed for England on 23 January 1944 and to France on 31 August 1944 in support of the war efforts. During World War II, the battalion received campaign credit for Northern France, Rhineland, and Central Europe. After returning to the United States, the battalion was inactivated at Fort Monmouth on 8 October 1945.

The battalion remained on inactive status until 4 September 1964, when Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 11th Signal Group, assigned to Fort Lewis, Washington, was activated. The group was reorganized and re-designated Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Group, 25 April 1966. The following December, the group was reassigned to Fort Huachuca, Ariz. and designated on 1 October 1979 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade.

In October 2001, the 86th Signal Battalion deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) until the spring of 2002. In August 2002, the A Co 40th Signal Battalion, deployed to the Horn of Africa. Thunderbirds supported CENTCOM's largest exercise of the year, Internal Look 2002 from Kuwait and continued their participation in Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) in the spring of 2003 deploying over 1200 Thunderbirds to the CENTCOM AOR.

From May to October 2005, the 40th Signal Battalion and the 69th Cable Company deployed to support OIF 05-07. Their redeployment was spread from May to September 2006. In August 2006, the 86th Signal Battalion deployed to Iraq to continue to support OIF. The following year, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade, deployed in support of OIF 07-09, 3 October 2007 through 24 December 2008. In December 2007, the 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion deployed to Iraq for a fifteen month deployment ending in March 2009.

On 1 October 2009, the 11th SIG BDE transferred command authority from the United States Army Network Enterprise Technology Command and the 9th Army Signal Command (NETCOM/9th ASC) at Fort Huachuca, to the U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) and III Corps at Fort Hood, Texas. The 11th Signal Brigade's home base continues to be Fort Huachuca.

In the spring of 2010, the 86th ESB deployed to Operation Enduring Freedom 10-11 as "Task Force Tiger" until the spring of 2011. The 40th ESB deployed June of 2010 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn returning June of 2011. The 62d ESB deployed April of 2011 in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom returning October of 2011. 62nd ESB deployed again in September 2013 to Afghanistan and returned in June 2013.

57th ESB deployed 2 companies to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Bravo Company deployed in August 2011 and returned in July 2012. Meanwhile, Charlie Company deployed in March 2012 and returned in November 2012.

HHC, 11th SIG BDE deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in January 2012 and returned in December 2012, and then moved the Brigade Headquarters from Fort Huachuca to Fort Hood in June 2013.

In 2013, 62nd ESB deployed to Kuwait in support of CENTCOM. In 2014, 57th ESB deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom until July 2014, 62nd ESB redeployed from Kuwait to Fort Hood in June 2014, and 40th ESB deployed to Kuwait where they replaced the 62nd ESB.

Thunderbirds have supported contingency operations and training exercises at home and abroad in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Somalia, Egypt, Honduras, Korea, Cuba, Haiti, Afghanistan and Iraq. This operational tempo has given rise to the Thunderbirds' claim of the "Most Active Signal Brigade in the Army." "The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds"



# Birth of the Signal Corps



Albert J. Myer

The historical methods of signaling were attempts by men to overcome the tyranny of distance and time to deliver immediate news. One man who pondered this problem was an assistant US Army surgeon Albert J. Myer. Myer developed a military Signaling system based on his studies of using a unique method of sign language for deaf mutes. Drawing on his experience as a telegraph operator Myer developed a system whereby words could be spelled by tapping them out upon a person's cheek or hand. In Texas he converted this sign language into a flag and torch signaling system which he called "wigwag."

In 1856, Myer wrote to Secretary of War Jefferson Davis and offered his signaling system the War Department.

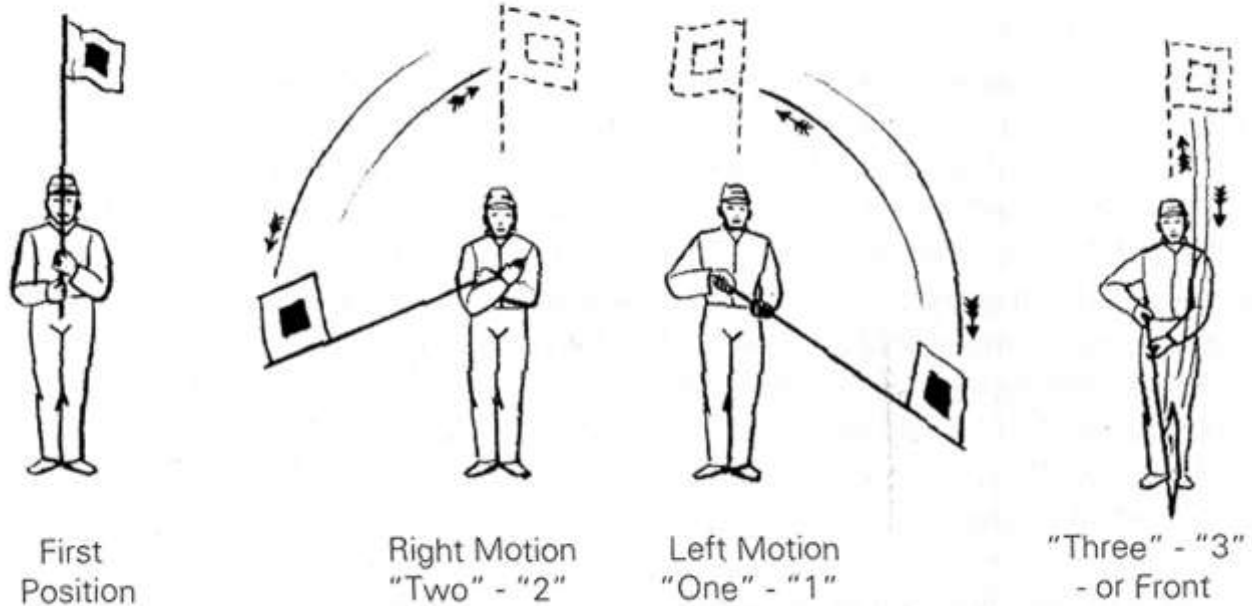
But a lack of specificity by Myer lost Davis' attention and the Secretary turned Myer down. In 1857 the new Secretary of War, John B. Floyd demonstrated an interest in Meyer's system but it was not until 1859 that his system was evaluated by the army. Myer appeared before an examination board of officers in Washington DC, presided over by LTC Robert E. Lee. The board gave the system a luke warm acceptance but recommended further tests. These tests began in April 1859 at Fort Monroe and later moved to New York Harbor, West Point, and Washington DC. Myer's chief assistant during these trials was Lt. Edward Porter Alexander. Alexander would later create the Confederate Signal Corps and become Lee's Chief of Artillery during the Civil War.

On 29 March 1860, the House approved the Army appropriations bill for fiscal year 1861. This bill included the acceptance of Myer's system and provided for the position of signal officer to be added to the Army staff, with the rank of a Major. On 21 June 1860, President Buchanan signed the bill into law and the U.S. Army Signal Corps was born. Myer was appointed as CSO on 27 June. The US Army became the first in the world to establish a separate communication branch with the appointment of a signal officer to the army staff in the War Department.

Myer's signaling system was based on a unique equipment kit which consisted of flags, staffs, torches, a torch case and a wormer to extract the wick if it became lodged inside the torch. The canteen was filled with ½ gallon of turpentine to fuel the torches. The haversack contained wicks, matches, pliers, shears, a funnel, 2 flame shades, and a wind shade. Soldiers also needed to carry binoculars or a telescope in order to read the signals from afar.



## FLAG POSITIONS OF MYER'S ORIGINAL TWO-ELEMENT CODE\*



Compasses were used for reconnaissance and the locating of signal stations. Notebooks were a must in order to log the messages sent and received.

As Myer was the only authorized signal officer in the US Army and the only one to operate his system, he had to borrow and use officers and enlisted men detailed from their combat arms regiments. These men had to be trained in the wig-wag system and in August 1861 Myer established a central signal camp of instruction at Red Hill, Georgetown, D.C., in the area now occupied by the former Soviet Embassy.



First Signal Officer Class, 1861

# Brigade Commander



Col. James C. Parks, III

## ***'Commander's Corner'***

Thunderbirds –

To the Soldiers, Families, and friends of the 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade, I'd like to extend to all of you a Happy New Year and I hope that everyone was able to spend quality time over the holidays with those close to them.

As we head into 2015, our Army continues to be engaged around the world. The Army currently has nine out of ten active duty divisions committed to missions around the globe. Combat operations still continue in Afghanistan, we are supporting the Iraqi military in operations against ISIL, the Ebola mission in Liberia is ongoing, in total we have over 140,000 Soldiers deployed in nearly 150 locations worldwide.

Another area that the 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade will play a crucial role in during 2015 and over the next few years is cyberspace operations. Adversary cyber threats continue to evolve while our own vulnerabilities increase as more systems are networked together. The cyber arena is not a standalone environment; for the rest of our careers cyberspace operations will be combined with other nonlethal and lethal actions to play a key role in our Army's operations. It is important as Signal Corps leaders and technical experts that we continue to educate ourselves and stay relevant in our training and operations.

It is crucial that we are trained and ready at all levels to support at a moment's notice any mission that comes our way. Down to the lowest level we must maintain technical proficiency, administrative readiness, physical and mental fitness. The Army's OPTEMPO will remain extremely high throughout 2015 and the Thunderbirds will continue to be at the forefront of deployments.

Just as we had a successful 2014, I have full faith that the professionalism and dedication in our ranks has us ready for the challenges of 2015. I encourage all of you to stay ready.

The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds.

—Thunderbird 6



# Command Sergeant Major

## ***'Troop Talk'***

Thunderbirds ,

We are already almost a month into 2015 and it is a busy time across the Brigade. This is also the time when New Year's resolutions fall by the wayside as the excitement of the moment passes and the stresses of work take a priority over the personal goals we all set on January 1<sup>st</sup>.

The end of January is a good time to do an azimuth check on where we are with our new year's goals and recognize what we need to do to maintain them or get back on course. The first part of that is looking back on the last year.

The Brigade had a tremendously successful 2014. The 57<sup>th</sup> and 62<sup>nd</sup> Battalions both redeployed after successful missions in Afghanistan and Kuwait. The 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion replaced the 62<sup>nd</sup> in Kuwait and has maintained the same level of success in a complicated mission. The 86<sup>th</sup> continues to support NIE as the Army's premier communications support battalion. The 16<sup>th</sup> TIN led the way on the I3MP upgrade mission across numerous posts and the Brigade hosted the Signal Regimental Week. All these accomplishments could not have happened without the hard work and professionalism of our Soldiers down to the lowest level and for that I thank all of you.



**Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice A. Rambert**

As we've hit the ground running in 2015, we should be proud of what we've accomplished but also stay focused on improving every day. With no end in sight to deployments, and with short notice deployments becoming the norm, it is imperative that we maintain high standards in our professional and personal lives to be ready when called. I challenge all of you to look over the following tasks and apply them to your daily lives.

Be technically proficient. Know your job, not just at your level but the level above and below you. Ensure that what you have alternates trained so that you do not become a single point of failure.

Be tactically proficient. Continue to maintain and improve your basic Soldier skills. Knowing the common warrior skills and tasks are what enables us to fight, survive and win in combat.

Be Self Motivated. Take initiative; don't have to be constantly reminded to complete tasks. When you face an obstacle at work, look for a solution not a reason to say it can't be done.

Have high standards of appearance and military bearing. Look and act like a professional, show respect for superiors, peers and subordinates. Know and follows military standards and regulations.

Maintain your physical and mental fitness. Passing the APFT and height weight standards are a bare minimum, strive for excellence. Keep a healthy work – life balance, spend time with your families.

Educate yourselves. Seek self-improvement not only professionally, but also within your personal life. There is always someone you can learn from and something new in your career field that you can become an expert on. Learning never stops no matter your rank or position.

Last and certainly not least, take pride in your job as a Soldier, a Signaleer, and as a Thunderbird. I wish all of you a Happy New Years and I am confident that we will have as much success in this New Year as we did in 2014.

# Brigade Chaplain



Lt. Col. Zan Sellers

## ***'Inspirations'***

Hello Thunderbirds! Welcome to 2015. It is my prayer that you had a great and relaxing holiday season. Hopefully you are back, refreshed and resilient and ready for the next Thunderbird mission.

For those who have just returned or are returning soon from a deployment – Welcome Back! – well done. Know that your chaplain and chaplain assistant, your Unit Ministry Teams (UMTs), are here to help in any way we can. If you are in a unit without a chaplain, the chaplain assistant knows who to contact locally for help. Just let the Chaplain Assistant know your need.

If you are deployed or about to deploy, your UMT is praying for you and your Family and doing our best to take care of your Family until you return to them. Again, let us know of any issues with your Family and we will do all we can to help.

Many people have a difficult time emotionally and spiritually during winter. If you or your Family are having difficulties with depression or dealing with life issues, please contact a professional. We are always here as well as Behavioral Health, Military One Source and many other resources on and off post. This is for both you AND your Family members.

I do pray you and your Family have enjoyed the break of the holidays. Many of us were able to be with our Family after having been away from them in the past. Enjoy your time this winter and look forward to spring.

May God bless you and your Family.

— Thunderbird Spirit



# Thunderbird Commander's Conference

Story By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold

Photos By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold & Capt. Pete Bogart

An annual tradition, command teams from across the brigade met here on Fort Hood on December 3 through 4. Here they engaged in team building activities and attended briefings and classes to help them in their leadership positions, and to also keep them up to date on some hot topics around the Army.

On day one of the conference, command teams did PRT together and enjoyed some friendly games of football on the field at Fort Hood Stadium. After the games, they gathered at Comanche Chapel and had a day of classes from III Corps and HHC



*Col. James Parks, Command Sgt. Major Maurice Rambert, and the command teams from around the brigade joined for a group photo after PRT on December 3, 2014 at Fort Hood Stadium.*

personnel on topics such as SHARP, the new OER and NCOER, WIN-T training and property book accountability tips.

The next day, the command teams had another PRT session together and then a golf scramble at the Clear Creek Golf Course. After the golf scramble, command teams and Soldiers attended the Thunderbird Holiday Ball at Club Hood.





*Col. Parks escapes the pressure from his defenders and prepares to throw the ball to an open receiver.*







Clockwise from above:

(1) *Capt. Marcelline, HHC, 11th Sig. Bde. company commander, scans down the field before throwing a TD pass into the end zone.*

(2) *1st Sgt. Rivera, Company Charlie, 62nd ESB takes his three steps before throwing the ball down field.*

(3) *After being chased down by Capt. Marcelline, 1st Sgt. Johnson, Company Alpha, 62nd ESB, manages to get the play off for a near touchdown.*

(4) *1st Sgt. Ontiveros, Company Bravo, 86th ESB, catches the ball and prepares to pass it to one of her battles during group PRT.*

(5) *With Maj. Hendrix closing in, 1st. Sgt. Fontanez, Company Bravo, 62nd ESB, has his target locked right before throwing his second TD pass of the day.*







*Maj. Blue, brigade S-3, signals “touchdown” as Capt. Mynatt, Company Charlie commander, hauls in the catch putting his team up by a large margin.*



*Command Sgt. Maj. Rambert throws a perfect spiral pass to his awaiting receiver while Maj. Hendrix closes in seconds too late.*



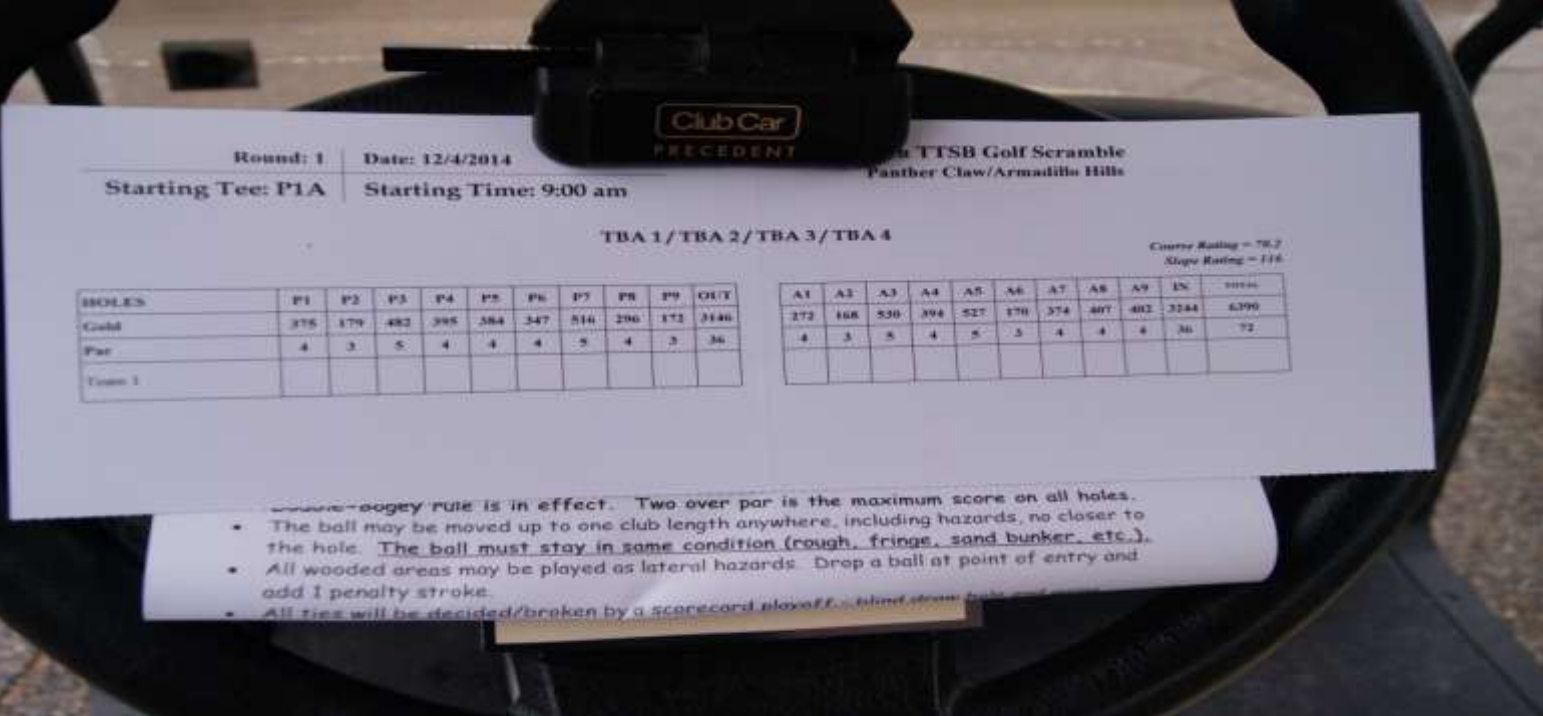
*1st Sgt. Ontiveros, Company Bravo, 86th ESB, gets open just in time to receive the ball during morning PRT with the command teams from across the brigade.*





*Command Sgt. Maj. Barnett, 86th ESB, lines up his shot before putting it in for birdie.*





*Before beginning the golf scramble, command teams receive instructions from a golf course employee on how the matches will work.*



*Teams load their gear onto the golf carts and Prepare for a day of team building.*





Clockwise from above:

(1) *Capt. Severson, company commander, 16th TIN, drives for the fairway.*

(2) *Chief Warrant Officer 2 Castro, brigade S-1 shop, knocks the ball into the hole.*

(3) *Command Sgt. Maj. Greening, 57th ESB, looks to putt his team into the lead.*

(4) *Command Sgt. Maj. Rambert three shoots his way onto the green and looks forward to his birdie putt.*

(5) *1st Sgt. Lambert, 86th ESB, eyes up the hole before putting the ball in on his first attempt.*





*Command Sgt. Maj. Rambert greets those in attendance on the receiving line.*





Clockwise from above:

- (1) Sgt. Romero and her spouse find their seats and grab their raffle tickets.
- (2) Brigadier Lai helps greet Soldiers and their families as part of the receiving line.
- (3) Lt. Col. Gregor and his spouse greet Soldiers at the holiday ball.
- (4) Maj. Matchin leads those in attendance to the first toast of the night.
- (5) Col. Parker and his spouse, Brigadier Lai and his wife, Col. Parks and his spouse, and Command Sgt. Maj. Rambert prepare for the colors to be posted.







Clockwise from top left:

(1) *The ceremonial table left empty to remember those service members that have passed.*

(2) *1st Sgt. Rivera, Company Charlie, 62nd ESB takes his three steps before throwing the ball down field.*

(3) *Spc. Winston sings for those in attendance at the holiday ball.*

(4) *Senior leaders from 57th ESB enjoy themselves during the ball.*

(5) *1st Sgt. Fontanez and Capt. Czajak prepare for their meals to come out.*







*Brigadier Lai, Col. Parks and Command Sgt. Maj. Rambert cut the cake for the holiday ball.*







*Capt. Kapoor and Sgt. 1st Class Gomez enjoy a photo op during the 2014 holiday ball.*



*Spc. Santiago and Spc. Hoagland are a battle buddy team at work, and also a team at the holiday ball.*



*Chaplain Cochell and his spouse enjoy time with the Soldiers, their families and one another during the holiday ball on December 04, 2014 at Club Hood.*







# Fort Hood Motorcycle Policy Updated

By Capt. Pete Bogart



*Soldiers ride up a hill at the Belton Lake Outdoor Recreational Area during a motorcycle mentorship ride,*

Several important changes were made to the Fort Hood Motorcycle Safety program that emphasize the mentorship programs and lessen some of the paperwork and procedural requirements. The most talked about change is that Soldiers are no longer required to wear a reflective vest while riding. All the other PPE requirements remain the same and the policy letter still encourages riders to wear bright colored or reflective clothing while riding. The other major change is that sports bike riders who complete the sport bike riders course no longer have to also complete the experienced rider course.

Motorcycling is a popular hobby for Soldiers and when done correctly is a safe and rewarding activity. The most common cause of motorcycle accidents among Soldiers is inexperienced riders who ride outside of their comfort level. Brigade and Battalion mentorship programs are a requirement but are also a fun way to bring together motorcycle riders of all types and give new riders a chance to learn from more experienced riders. New riders are required to do a check ride with the unit mentor who will verify that the rider has the necessary skills and give them any tips for improving. Units also conduct quarterly mentorship rides during duty hours, often ending at a local restaurant or park for a meal or cookout.

MSG Mark Branch, the Brigade Motorcycle Mentor, has been riding throughout his 24 year Army career and sees mentorship programs as a sober and deliberate attempt to promote safe and responsible Motorcycle riding behavior while maintaining the joy, enthusiasm, and camaraderie of motorcycle riding.

"The Unit's Motorcycle Safety Program should be viewed by Soldiers as more than just paperwork or packets needing to be tracked," said Branch. "I have found this culture to be fun and full of long lasting personal connection that may last a life time. As a service member I have no problems with adhering to a few minor requirements, and vowing to operate my motorcycle in a safety and responsible manner to enjoy the open road on a motorcycle ride full of fun, excitement, and spirit-de-corps".



*Spec. Timothy Gerlach (left) and Sgt. 1st Class Andy Holt (right) conduct safety inspections of their motorcycles before a company mentorship ride.*



# Thunderbirds Provide Global Mission Support

By Capt. Pete Bogart

“The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds” is the official motto of the 11<sup>th</sup> Theater Tactical Signal Brigade and like the old British Empire from which the slogan originated; the Thunderbird Brigade continues to have Soldiers on missions across the globe.

The 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade has the brigade headquarters, two subordinate battalions and a separate company stationed here at Fort Hood, one battalion at Fort Bliss, Texas, and one battalion at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. Even with the drawdown of troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Thunderbird Brigade has Soldiers in more than seven countries overseas and spread across nine states here at home.

The nature of the missions range from communications support to combatant commands, retrograde efforts of communications equipment, Defense Support to Civil Authorities missions, testing and validating new equipment at the Network Integration Exercises at Fort Bliss, information infrastructure upgrades, working at the Network Enterprise Command, supporting rotations at Army training centers, and supporting other unit's training missions with tactical communications.

The Deputy Brigade Commander for the 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade, Lt. Col. John Gregor, previously commanded the 62<sup>nd</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion during their recent deployment to the Middle East where the battalion was the primary communications provider for the U.S. Central Command Area of Responsibility.



Soldiers from 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion test a Ka-band antenna for the Army Navy Tactical Satellite Communications (AN/TSC-93E) assemblage May 25, 2014. The 40th ESB is currently deployed to Camp Buehring, Kuwait in order to support Operation Enduring Freedom. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Kalie Jones/Released)



The 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade also plays a key role supporting garrison operations and network upgrades. One of the 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade's separate companies, the 16<sup>th</sup> Tactical Installation Networking (TIN), is often at the front of these missions.

The 16th TIN is one of only two Tactical Installation Networking companies in the regular Army. The Soldiers of the 16th TIN possess a unique skill set specifically when it comes to cabling and complying with industry standards during installation.

More than 60 Soldiers from the 16th TIN have been involved in the Installation Information Infrastructure Modernization Program (I3MP) upgrade mission and have conducted installations at Redstone Arsenal, Alabama, Fort Bliss, Texas, Red River Army Depot, Texas, and Fort Sill, Oklahoma as well as here on Fort Hood.

The 16<sup>th</sup> TIN commander, Capt. Tony Severson, said that while it can be a daily challenge to balance missions like the I3MP upgrades with garrison and readiness taskings, it provides a unique real world training opportunity for the Soldiers.

"When your subordinate units are spread out geographically, additional duty training completion at the lowest level is important to ensure you can support yourself without others assistance," said Gregor. "In addition, build good relationships with higher, lower and vertical units. This will help the unit in the long run."



Lt. Col. Patricia Sayles places an 11<sup>th</sup> Theater Tactical Signal Brigade shoulder insignia on the uniform of a service member at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, March 23, 2012.(Photo by Airman 1st Class Ericka Engblom



“This project offers a unique opportunity to train and keep their skills sharp,” said Severson. “The experience they gain is great preparation for upcoming missions as most signal Soldiers only perform these unique tasks in a deployed environment.”

The 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade Commander, Col. James C. Parks III, divides his time between the three bases his unit is stationed and also travels to where his Soldiers are deployed or supporting training missions. An important part of Col. Parks’ job is interfacing with the various leadership.

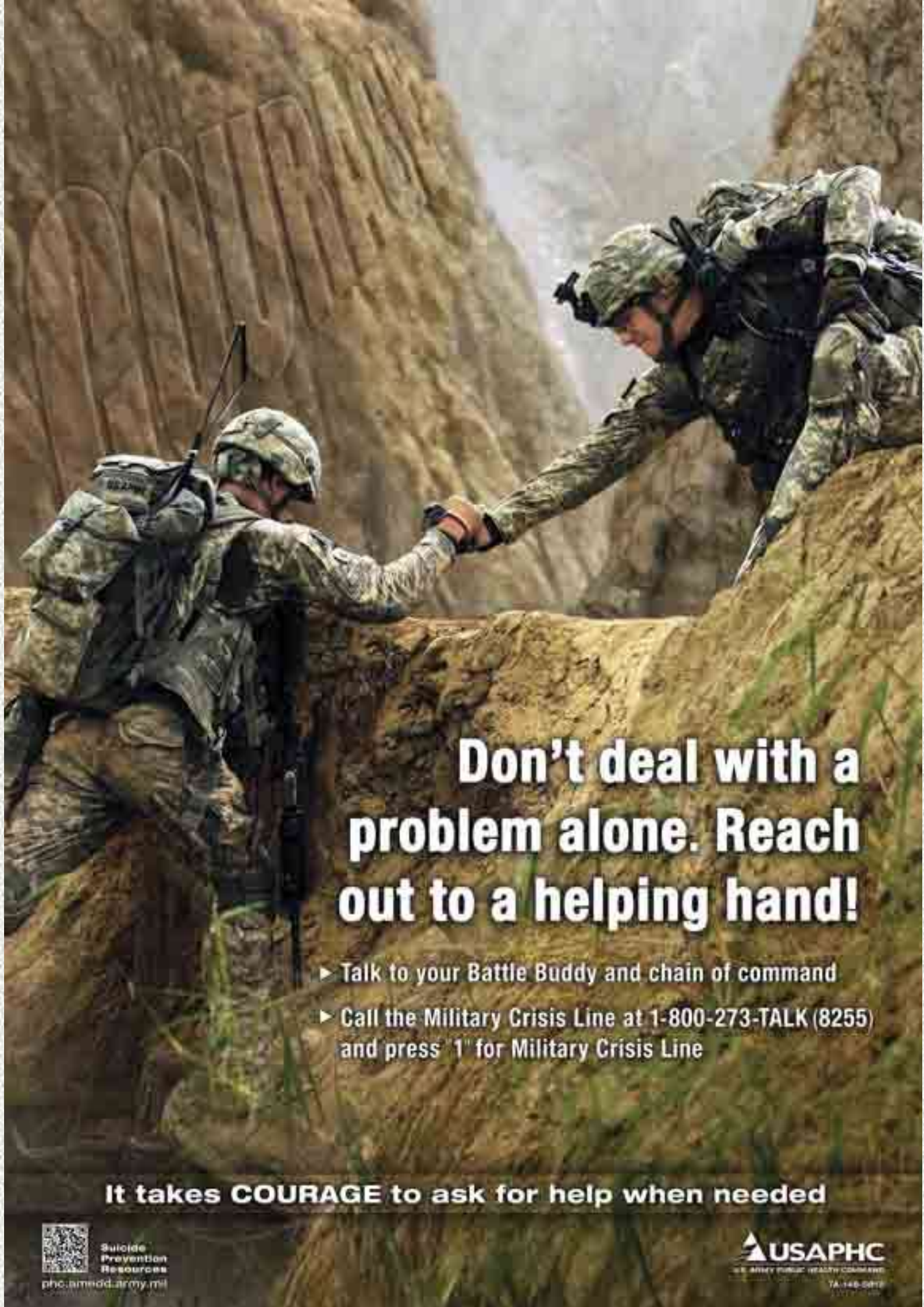
“Our units are spread not just over three installations but also over two combatant commands,” Parks said. “This unique setup requires us to work with multiple command teams in the course of our daily operations.”

With the Army involved in operations around the world, the 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade continues to be ready to provide tactical communications support in austere environments and live up to it’s motto of “The Sun Never Sets on the Thunderbirds”.



*The Sun Never Sets on the  
Thunderbirds!*





# **Don't deal with a problem alone. Reach out to a helping hand!**

- ▶ Talk to your Battle Buddy and chain of command
- ▶ Call the Military Crisis Line at 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and press '1' for Military Crisis Line

**It takes COURAGE to ask for help when needed**



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# Sergeant Cooks Up Win at Culinary Arts NCO of the Quarter Board

Story and photos By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold



*Sgt. Kory Bender, Alpha Company, 40<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, cuts up some key ingredients for his main entree. Bender left Fort Huachuca to compete in the Culinary Arts NCO of the Quarter board at Fort Hood, Texas, on Jan. 7. After winning the board, he went on to compete in the Culinary Arts NCO of the Year competition on Jan. 8 – 9.*

others.”

The III Corps Culinary Arts Soldier/Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter board was held on Jan. 7 at the Ironhorse Dining Facility here, with the winner advancing the Culinary Arts Soldier/NCO of the Year competition on Jan. 8 – 9.

Five cooks from the different units under III Corps here and at Fort Huachuca competed to see who would earn bragging rights as the Culinary Arts Soldier/NCO of the Quarter.

After winning the brigade Culinary Arts Soldier/Noncommissioned Officer of the Quarter board in November 2014 at Fort Huachuca, Sgt. Kory Bender, Alpha Company, 40<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade, came to Fort Hood to compete in the III Corps board.

Bender, who has been in the Army for almost five years, has always enjoyed cooking, and the Army gives him the opportunity to improve his craft.

“I enjoy learning different styles of cooking,” said Bender. “I also enjoy working with

After winning the quarter board, he went on to the III Corps Culinary Arts Soldier/NCO of the Year competition. The competition started with a board on Jan. 8 and concluded with a cooking portion on the following day.

Bender was originally supposed to leave after the Culinary Arts quarter board on Jan. 7, but after the NCO did so well, Sgt. Maj. Timothy Woods, food operations sergeant major, III Corps, was able to coordinate for Bender to stay for the next board.

Before the board began, Woods shared some words of encouragement with the Soldiers about competitions.

“These things are stepping stones in your career,” said Woods. “They can take you where you want to go.”

Up against six Soldiers this board was increasingly more difficult, but Bender stayed focused and kept his composure.



It was tougher than a normal board, said Bender. One board member asked each Soldier a question, and then a different board member asked each Soldier a different question on a different topic. Questions continued rapid fire until they were complete, Bender said.

Not knowing the board results from the previous day, Bender and the four remaining competitors met back at the Ironhorse Dining Facility for the cooking finale the morning of Jan. 9.

Just like an episode of the reality TV series "Chopped," the Soldiers were to cook an entrée and dessert with ingredients from mystery baskets, with each meal having an added mystery ingredient they had to use.

"It's going to be something to make them think outside the box," said Master Sgt. Mack Julien Jr., III Corps and Fort Hood culinary arts team chief.

The entrée basket for each Soldier contained a chicken breast, an egg, a russet potato, a carrot, spinach, an avocado, an onion, a red pepper and cilantro. The dessert basket contained a puff pastry, an apple, blueberries, a kiwi and marshmallows.

After seeing the ingredients, Bender immediately knew what he wanted to make for his entrée.

"I am going to do an herb baked chicken with veggies on top," he said. "I haven't baked it before but I am confident it's something I can do."

The twist for the Soldiers was the mystery ingredients they had to incorporate in their meals. The entrée mystery ingredient was escargot and for the dessert, wasabi beans.

"I didn't even know what escargot was before they pulled it out," said Bender.

With only two hours to complete both meal portions, every second counted.

When a grader called out the 15-minutes-left warning, Bender was just completing his pie and had placed it in the oven. His chicken entrée was plated, warming and waiting to be presented.



*After hearing a grader yell "hands up," Sgt. Kory Bender, Alpha Company, 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, throws his hands up and steps away from his dishes. During the Culinary Arts NCO of the Year board at Fort Hood, Texas, on Jan. 8 – 9, Soldiers needed to have completed plating their meals and have them ready for presentation when that command was given.*





*Sgt. Kory Bender, Alpha Company, 40th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, listens to the judges as they critique his dishes during the competition. Bender left Fort Huachuca to compete in the Culinary Arts NCO of the Quarter board at Fort Hood, Texas, on Jan. 7. After winning the board, he went on to the Culinary Arts NCO of the Year competition on Jan. 8 – 9.*

When the grader finally yelled, “hands up,” Bender had just finished plating his dessert and had just completed wiping off the plate so the presentation was near perfect.

He was the first to present his meals to the three judges and they were immediately impressed with his chicken and vegetables.

“The chicken is very moist,” said Woods. “I like what you did to the carrots. They are good.”

Moving on to his pastry, Bender talked about his usage of the mystery ingredient.

“I have never messed with wasabi beans a day in my life,” he said. “I decided to use it as a garnish.

Although it was close, Bender did not end up winning the III Corps Culinary Arts NCO of the Year award, but he felt good knowing he tried something new, and still won the quarter board.

“The experience I learned here was great for me,” said Bender. “I was glad I won the Initial board and I will be back to compete again next year.”



# 40th ESB Kuwait Reenlistments

Photos By: Sgt. Kalie Jones









## **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:**

**1-800-273-8255(TALK) PRESS "1" for the Veteran's Crisis Line**



### **A**sk your buddy

- Have the courage to ask the question, but stay calm
- Ask the question directly:  
Are you thinking of killing yourself?

### **C**are for your buddy

- Calmly control the situation; do not use force; be safe
- Actively listen to show understanding and produce relief
- Remove any means that could be used for self-injury

### **E**scort your buddy

- Never leave your buddy alone
- Escort to chain of command, Chaplain, behavioral health professional, or primary care provider
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

TA - 095 - 0510

**USAPHC** <http://phc.amedd.army.mil/>





## 62nd ESB EDRE



*Pfc. Cummings helps ground guide as Staff Sgt. Abraham backs his vehicle onto the aircraft. On November 21, 2014, Soldiers from the 62nd ESB conducted an Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise (EDRE) to have the Soldiers better trained for possible missions in the future.*

On November 21, the 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion conducted an EDRE at the Robert Gray Army Airfield on West Fort Hood.

An EDRE is designed to exercise the movement plans of a unit or higher level to deploy to an overseas theater of operations. All deployable units normally participate in an EDRE annually. If executed realistically, an EDRE can be the most valuable evaluation process for commanders at all levels to determine their strengths and weaknesses in a deployment. An EDRE can be conducted at the company level or as high as the highest level of command.

A successful EDRE gives each command level the opportunity to experience the challenge associated with equipment readiness and equipment transfers in deployment. Units with a short notice deployment may have to acquire equipment from sources on the installation. Units must consider the inspection criteria for receiving filler equipment, training needs, new lines of PLL (if filler equipment is issued in lieu of an authorized item), and subsequent alterations to the unit movement plans.

A no-notice battalion emergency deployment readiness exercise (EDRE) is a realistic operation testing all aspects of a battalion's readiness. An EDRE is a rapid deployment exercise for air and ground forces in response to an emergency threat situation. The objective is to minimize response time for deployment while achieving maximum benefit from testing and training opportunities. During an Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise the battalion simulates a rapid deployment.





*Civilian workers help load containers for the Soldiers of 62nd ESB during their EDRE train-up.*



*Soldiers march out on the airfield simulating them leaving for deployment during the EDRE November 1, 2014.*



*Capt. Mynatt and 1st Sgt. Rivera wish the Soldiers well as they board the plane. An EDRE helps the unit simulate real-time deployment preparation for future operations.*



# Fort Hood Soldiers, volunteers make helping community a team effort

Story and Photos By: Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold



*Staff Sgt. Mark Davis, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade, helps sort donations that were dropped off during the Food and Families food drive on Nov. 21 at the Special Events Center in Killeen.*

Fort Hood Soldiers and other community members from the Killeen area assisted during the 25<sup>th</sup> annual Food and Families food drive on Nov. 21 at the Killeen Special Events Center.

The regional food drive is a single day event and helps food banks and organizations around Central Texas with food they can donate to those in need for the holidays and the upcoming year.

Along with other community volunteers, Command Financial Specialists (CFS) from various units on post volunteered their time and were instrumental in helping sort through and organize the plentiful donations that were dropped off throughout the day.

“Being a CFS means going beyond the boundaries of just doing a job,” said Staff Sgt. Mark Davis, 62<sup>nd</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade. “You have to actually genuinely care about the Soldiers and their families and push the envelope trying to make a honest change in a Soldier’s life.”

Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Daniel R. Northington II, 1st Battalion, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, and his spouse Bellah were among those there supporting the food drive and enjoy doing charity work together.

“It’s one of the good parts of the job where you get to give back and help people,” said Northington.



The donations will also be used for holiday baskets that will be given to preselected personnel and will contain enough food for a full holiday meal.

"It's a rewarding experience being able to give the Soldiers these baskets," said Northington.

In the Killeen area, one of the organizations that will benefit from the food drive is the Killeen Food Care Center. The center is responsible for helping many families throughout the year and will be putting together the holiday baskets.

"We will distribute 1300 Thanksgiving baskets," said Dr. Ann Farris, director, Killeen Food Care Center.

1000 baskets will be handed out to soldiers and their families on Wednesday and 300 will go to civilians and their families on Tuesday, said Farris.

Farris has been involved with the food drive for ten years and is always enamored with how quickly and effectively people work together.

The fastest way to build a team is to work together, serve together, or have fun together, said Farris. Today we had some fun working together which resulted in a great team effort.

It's not always current soldiers that want to give back and help their surrounding communities. There was also a strong veteran presence eager to help during the food drive.

After serving in the Army for five years and being out for three months, Thomas Best, formerly of 502nd Human Resources Company, 4th Special Troops Battalion, 4th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), wanted to make sure he volunteered for the food drive.

"I love volunteering," said Best. "The community supports us and I'm still a soldier no matter what. It's good to give back."

Last year, 103,000 pounds of non-perishable goods were received through the Food and Families food drive. With the help of the local community and businesses such as Walmart and HEB, this year's final total increased to 107,431 pounds.

"It was great to see the local agencies come in and deliver such great amounts of food," said Davis.

With Thanksgiving coming up in a few short days, Soldiers and civilians in need will be able to have their Thanksgiving baskets ready giving the annual food drive another successful year.

"The food drive is a great opportunity to show Soldiers and their families how much they are appreciated and how much people actually do care and want to help out during the holiday season," said Davis.



## **11th Signal Brigade NCO of the Quarter**



**Sgt. Eric O. Evans**  
**ACO, 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion**





# Spotlight Soldier

## 62nd Expeditionary Signal Battalion



**Spc. Walter J. Celestine**

Spc. Walter J. Celestine became part of the Thunderbird family on June 13, 2014 and hit the ground running. He was thrust into HHC orderly room operations and immediately proved to be an asset to the team. Setting himself apart from his peers, he was quickly given more responsibilities. Spc. Celestine attended Unit Armor School in October 2014. After graduating he became primary armor for the company. He worked diligently alongside his colleagues and company Commander to receive a first time "excellence" on a crucial DES arms room inspection.

Spc. Celestine's attention to detail and work ethic shows in all tasks handed to him. Weapons gauging and services on over one-hundred and forty weapons systems has been prompt and precise. Spc. Celestine has increased productivity in the arms room and set up an iron clad service system for all weapons.

Spc. Celestine continues to train those around him to a high standard. His overall performance and devotion to any task placed in front of him has always been impeccable. He remains a valuable resource and a superb Soldier, and sets the example for his fellow Soldiers, leaders and brigade.





***Do what's right, legally and morally.***

*"The truth of the matter is that you always know the right thing to do. The hard part is doing it."*

— General Norman Schwarzkopf



**U.S. ARMY**

**ARMY STRONG:**

**★**  
**CALL TO DUTY**  
**BOOTS ON THE GROUND**

# ARMY VALUES



## 86th ESB's New Commander



**Lt. Col. Elizabeth Casely**

Lieutenant Colonel Elizabeth Casely was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant in the Signal Corps in 1996. Prior to her arrival at Fort Bliss, she served as the Operations Deputy in the USPACOM Joint Cyber Center.

LTC Casely's initial assignment was as a 58<sup>th</sup> Signal Company Tactical Satellite Platoon Leader, 72d Signal Battalion, 7th Signal Brigade in Mannheim, Germany. Shortly after, she served as the 58<sup>th</sup> Signal Company Executive Officer, and deployed to Croatia in support of the mission in Bosnia. Upon her return, she was the 7<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade Assistant S3 until her departure from Germany in 2000. Following completion of Signal Captains Career Course, she served as the Battalion S1 in the 122d Signal Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Infantry Division, Camp Red Cloud, Korea. Following her assignment in Korea, she assumed command of Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Satellite Control Battalion (now 53rd Signal Battalion), Fort Detrick MD. Upon completion of command, LTC Casely was assigned to the Pentagon, in the Office of the Administrative Assistant to the Secretary of the Army. Subsequently, she attended Command and General Staff College (CGSC) in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. After graduation from CGSC, LTC Casely was assigned to the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division as the G6 Plans Officer, the Network Operations Officer, and the Deputy G6. During this period she deployed twice with the 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn.

LTC Casely's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star (1OLC), the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (3OLC), the Army Commendation Medal (1OLC), the Army Achievement Medal (2OLC), the Air Assault Badge and the Army Staff Identification Badge.



## 86th ESB Assumption of Command







ARMY SAFE  
IS ARMY STRONG

**Do you really  
think your child  
doesn't know  
where you hide  
your weapons?**



**Always** keep guns unloaded, locked  
and out of a child's reach.



**1 in 3** U.S. families with children have  
at least one gun in the house.

**More than** 22 million children live in a  
home with guns.

**Most** of the victims of unintentional shootings are boys.  
They are usually shot by a friend or relative, most likely  
a brother.

**Nearly** all unintentional shooting deaths among  
children occur in their home, or in the home of a friend  
or relative.



## 57th ESB Soldiers Supporting the Community



Sgt. 1<sup>st</sup> Class Shantell Williams, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade, helps sort donations that were dropped off during the Food and Families food drive on Nov. 21 at the Special Events Center in Killeen.





# Signal soldiers support community; help school

Story and Photos by- Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold, 11<sup>th</sup> Signal Brigade Public Affairs Office

Soldiers from 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion, 11th Signal Brigade, participated in the annual Flagpole Ceremony at Tarver Elementary School on Nov. 6.

The Flagpole Ceremony originated eight years ago when the Belton Rotary Club dedicated a flagpole in front of the school for its inaugural event.

With a large population of the school's attendees and staff having some sort of military connection, the flagpole was a perfect opportunity for them to honor that bond.

"The school wanted a patriotic way to honor our veterans," said Michelle Tish, principal, Tarver Elementary School.

The ceremony is usually held earlier in the year, but the school wanted to have it a little later this year.

"This year we moved it from September to November to be closer to Veterans Day," Tish said.



*Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice S. Greening, Staff Sgt. Erica L. Mitchell and Spc. Emily M. Porras, 57<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion, fold the American flag in preparation for the Flagpole Ceremony. During their annual ceremony, the Soldiers helped the students and teachers at Tarver Elementary School Nov. 6, 2014 raise the American and Texas flags in honor of service members past, and present.*





*The members of the 57<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion's Color guard prepare to march to the school's flagpole to raise the American and Texas flag as part of the school's annual ceremony. Nov. 6, 2014 marked the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Flagpole ceremony where the teachers and students show their appreciation to those that have served in the military, both past and present.*

When Lt. Col. David Gill, battalion commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice Greening, 57th ESB, were approached about the ceremony, there was no hesitation in giving support to their adopted school.

"I think it's good for Soldiers to get off of Fort Hood and interact with the surrounding community," Gill said.

The units on Fort Hood get the opportunity to sponsor a school in the community and it is a mission in which the 11th Sig. Bde. takes great pride.

It's a good opportunity to volunteer and give back to the community the unit is a part of," Gill said.

The 57th ESB color guard team, led by Staff Sgt. Erica Mitchell, platoon sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 57th ESB, marched up to the flag pole, unfolded the American and Texas flags and ran them up the flagpole.

"I have done color guard at numerous events in previous units," Mitchell said. "I just absolutely love drill and ceremony."

After the flags were raised, the students sang patriotic songs and the faculty read inspirational verses.





*The members of the 57<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion's Color guard prepare to attach the Texas flag in preparation for running the American and Texas flag up the flagpole. Nov. 6, 2014 marked the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Flagpole ceremony where the teachers and students show their appreciation to those that have served in the military, both past and present.*



*The members of the 57<sup>th</sup> Expeditionary Signal Battalion's Color guard salute after raising the American and Texas flag during the ceremony. As the students, teachers, and others in attendance looked on, the Soldiers complete their portion of the ceremony and prepare to march back to their positions after rendering the proper salute during the flagpole ceremony on Nov. 6, 2014 at Tarver Elementary School.*

As the morning concluded, it proved to be a great way of showing everyone that the students, teachers and parents appreciated those in the military.

"I'd like to thank our past and present military service members for what you do," Tish said. "We truly appreciate what you do for us," she added.

As the teachers and students retreated indoors to continue the academic day, the Soldiers had time to reflect on the morning's events.

Mitchell said it's always an amazing feeling to be able to assist and inspire children.

"The children see the Soldiers in their uniform and their little faces light up. It feels good to be a positive influence on them."



## **Brigade Soldier of the Quarter**



**Spc. Jorge A. Savaglia**  
**BCO, 57th Expeditionary Signal Battalion**



# safe today, alive tomorrow

Making good safety practices into habits can save your life.



Every time you operate a motor vehicle there is risk involved. Tons of steel and glass are flying by you, often at high speeds.

Pay 100 percent attention to your driving, drive at a reasonable speed, never drive impaired and always use safety equipment properly.



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ARMY SAFE  
IS ARMY STRONG

101  
CRITICAL  
DAYS OF SUMMER  
26 May - 1 Sept 2008



## 16th TIN Change of Command

Photos By Staff Sgt. Kelvin Ringold

Capt. Anthony Severson took over 16th TIN after the unit returned from deployment, and officially fell under the 11th Signal Brigade.

Almost immediately after returning from a 9 month deployment to Afghanistan in late 2013, the 16th Signal Company quickly got to work supporting missions on Ft Hood and multiple other installations. Beginning in the summer of 2014 the Renegades assumed support of the Army's Installation Information Infrastructure Modernization Program (I3MP) mission. By the end of 2014 a total of 36 Renegades had been employed across five different installations in support of the



*Col. James Parks, Capt. Anthony Severson, and Capt. Jamale Ellsion march toward the formation as they prepare to pass the company guidon during the change of command ceremony.*

Army's "Network 2020 and Beyond" effort. The 16th Signal Company also developed and assumed the NEC Integration Program on Fort Hood which became a blueprint for the 106th Signal Brigade to integrate Soldiers and civilians at various NECs. In all more than 20 Soldiers worked side by side with civilian counterparts in the helpdesk, desktop support, inside plant, and tactical support divisions to gain valuable training and experience.

The Company also balanced various other missions including support of the corps warfighter exercise, installation of a Fiber Optic backbone cable and the wiring of a 3000 sq. ft. building on north Ft. Hood, and training support to the 820th TIN as they prepared for deployment.

After his successful tenure, Capt. Jamale Ellison took over as company commander on January 15, 2015. Capt. Severson will be missed by the Renegade family.





Clockwise from above:

- (1) *Capt. Severson passes the guidon to Col. Parks signaling the beginning of the transfer of command.*
- (2) *Col. Parks passes the guidon to the incoming company commander, Capt. Ellison.*
- (3) *Capt. Ellison passes the guidon back to 1st Sgt. Duggard which completes the transfer of command.*
- (4) *Capt. Severson thanks the Renegade family for all their hard work and dedication during his time as their company commander.*
- (5) *Capt. Ellison officially stands as the company commander for the 16th TIN Renegades!*





