



Coyote Courier

Celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Golden Coyote training exercise

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By SGT. LUIS DELGADILLO/Army Photographer

South Dakota National Guardsmen from the 200th Engineer Company from Chamberlain, Pierre, and Mobridge S.D., stage boats and equipment in the Missouri River near Chamberlain, June 6 during the 2009 Golden Coyote training exercise.

No beach out of reach

*By Staff Sgt. Carlos Lazo
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
and Sgt. Mike Getten
106th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

CHAMBERLAIN, S.D. – Overcoming natural obstacles has always been a challenge for military forces. Similarly, crossing the Missouri River is one such hurdle many Golden Coyote training exercise participants faced June 6 and 7 near Chamberlain, S.D.

The 2,540 mile-long Missouri River,

which runs through central South Dakota, is an obstacle the Soldiers of the 200th Engineering Company of Chamberlain, Pierre and Mobridge, S.D. have become familiar with.

The unit has been training for years on how to complete a bridge crossing as part of the Golden Coyote training exercise.

“We’ve been tasked to maneuver units across a water obstacle,” said 1st Lt. James R. Forbes, executive officer, 200th Eng. Co. “Our goal is to safely get [units] across.”

While the well-being of Soldiers is a priority for 200th troops, speed and efficiency are also highly valued.

“We give them a good safety briefing and get them across as quickly as possible so these commanders can drive on and go do what they need to do,” said Forbes.

By using improved ribbon bridge rafts controlled by combat support boats, the unit’s engineers and bridge crew members

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We were there

37th anniversary of Rapid City flood disaster

By Maj. Wayne Asscherick
Detachment 1, Joint Force Headquarters

CAMP RAPID, S.D. – The weather in the Black Hills has always had the reputation of being unpredictable, but residents have gotten used to its changing moods. No one could have predicted the devastation and loss of life 37 years ago when the sky opened up and the rains came.

On June 9, 1972 the day started out much like the overcast weather servicemembers have experienced since the Golden Coyote training exercise began a few short days ago, but it quickly became what is

referred to as the greatest natural disaster to ever occur in South Dakota.

The loss of life was the most devastating – 238 were killed – including three South Dakota National Guard Soldiers.

As luck would have it, the National Guard was in the midst of its annual training exercise at Camp Rapid, S.D. when this disaster struck the Black Hills area. Guardsmen immediately halted their training and focused on their new mission of rescue and recovery.

Units were dispersed throughout the Black Hills to search for victims, clear debris, install bridges and hold back dams from flooding.

During rescue operations along Nemo Road, 2nd Lt. Gary M. Engelstad of the 740th Transportation Company, Milbank and Pvt. 1st Class Freeman Franklin Phillips of the 235th General Supply Company, Rapid City were attempting to rescue a motorist in a creek and lost their lives. In downtown Rapid City, 1st Sgt. Myron H. Corbin lost his life attempting to rescue others caught in the flooding.

In just a few short hours the Black Hills received 1 billion metric tons of rain; enough water to fill the Pactola Reservoir more than fourteen times. The city of Keystone had 15 inches of rain dumped on it in just six hours.

This year, Golden Coyote is hosting more than 3,600 servicemembers and the weather



Photos Courtesy WWW.RAPIDCITYPUBLICLIBRARY.ORG

is still as unpredictable as it has always been. Flash floods can occur in seconds and in a training environment, safety is a priority.

For servicemembers to avoid becoming flood victims, stay clear of streams and other waterways during large storms, and never cross a river or stream if the depth is not known.

Ensure all electronic equipment is grounded, cease all use of communications equipment until the thunderstorm passes and dial 9-1-1 if an emergency occurs. Medical emergencies in the field will be evacuated to the nearest civilian medical facility. Monitor radio stations to be aware of any updates on storm conditions and evacuations.

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Below: Sgt. Joanne Hight, of Pierre, S.D., member of Detachment 1, 200th Engineer Company of Chamberlain, S.D., keeps the combat support boat in place during the 25th anniversary of the Golden Coyote training exercise.



Photos by SGT. THEANNE TANGEN/Army Photographer

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safely transported 290 vehicles.

"After an hour of operation, the unit had transported 45 vehicles and 96 personnel across the river using five rafts," said Forbes. "Each raft used for the mission consisted of six individual pieces, or bays, commonly referred to as a six-float. Up to seven bays

can be added together to make a raft with a maximum weight capacity of 140 tons," said Forbes.

The boats control and propel across the river on the floating platforms from opposite sides of the rafts in pairs. The five floats and two ends of the ribbon bridge that create the raft can be a challenging undertaking.

Pfc. Randy Martin, of McLaughlin, S.D. and Spc. Cody Allen, of Herreid, S.D., members of Detachment 2, 200th Engineer Company of Mobridge, S.D., raise the ramp of an improved ribbon bridge during the 25th anniversary of the Golden Coyote training exercise.



By SGT. MIKE GETTEN/Army Photographer

Above: Vehicles from the 185th Combat Services Support Battalion, of Johnston, Iowa are ferried across the Missouri River in support of the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise. The 200th Engineer Company of Chamberlain, Pierre and Mobridge, S.D. is supporting the exercise on June 6 in the Black Hills of South Dakota. The exercise takes the 200th Eng. Co. one day to set up, two days to ferry nearly 200 vehicles across the river, then an additional day to retrieve their equipment from the water.

"Everyone does everything to cross-train," said Sgt. Kris Mullen, boat driver and Rapid City, S.D. native from Detachment 2, 200th Eng. Co. of Mobridge. "Even if it's cold it's fun. This is something the 200th looks forward to. When the water is open we get out here and train."

Movement across the Missouri River takes the visiting units one-step closer to the completion of their Golden Coyote missions.

On the beachhead, a noncommissioned officer designated as beach master guides the vehicles into position prior to loading, before the raft commander takes over vehicle loading.

Many units moving across the waterway come from all over the country.

"A lot of them are coming from the east; Minnesota, Iowa, and the eastern part of South Dakota," said Sgt 1st Class Darrell K. Beck, platoon sergeant, 200th Eng. Co. of Pierre, S.D.

This training also translates very well into the company's mission in wartime, said Beck.

"We had this very similar mission in

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Iraq," said Beck. "You learn how to deal with a lot of military convoys."

According to Beck, the unit was deployed in 2003 and help set up a bridge north of Baghdad, near the city of Balad.

Along with preparation for wartime, Forbes also sees this operation as a good way to train new personnel in the unit, especially young Soldiers.

"My first drill as an officer was with this unit," said Forbes. "It was their first drill after deployment ... and after an hour, we had still not built a six-foot. We had brand new boat operators, the build crew was new ... you had all those factors in there."

Now they take about 12 minutes to complete setting one up.

"That just comes from everybody knowing their job and working together," said Forbes.

"It's one of the most enjoyable aspects of being in a leadership position – watching the growth of a unit – and getting more proficient."



By SGT. MIKE GETTEN/Army Photographer

During the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise, Soldiers of the 200th Engineer Company of Chamberlain, Pierre and Mobridge, S.D., drive combat support boats, which maneuver a raft carrying several military vehicles across the Missouri River in South Dakota on June 6.

Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, assistant adjutant general for the South Dakota Army National Guard, looks out of a Blackhawk helicopter window at Forward Operating Base Custer State Park Airport on June 8. Reisch spoke with servicemembers participating in the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise held in the Black Hills of South Dakota.



SD ARNG assistant adjutant general tours Golden Coyote



Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, assistant adjutant general for the South Dakota Army National Guard, presents a Golden Coyote coin to Spc. Marcus A. Martin, generator mechanic, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Pierre, S. D., at Forward Operating Base Custer State Park Airport on June 8.

*Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Carlos Lazo
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

CUSTER STATE PARK AIRPORT, S.D. – Task Force Commander Brig. Gen. Timothy Reisch, assistant adjutant general for South Dakota Army National Guard, and Brig. Gen. Jeffrey E. Bertrang, assistant adjutant general for Minnesota, visited Forward Operating Base Custer State Park Airport (CSPA) to assess the progress of the units training and speak to Soldiers.

Reisch's visit comes two days after the units set up and began training operations as part of this year's Golden Coyote training exercise in

the Black Hills.

Reisch said he was impressed with how great it looked. During his visit Reisch presented Spc. Christopher M. Julius, information system specialist, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 139th Brigade Support Battalion of Brookings, S.D., with a coin for his outstanding support of both the wireless and land-based computer networks that were set up for FOB CSPA.

The 139th and 152nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Pierre, S. D., are two units training at FOB CSPA. There are 62 units participating in this year's Golden Coyote training exercise.

Fueling the Golden Coyote force

By Spc. Joseph Bungert
129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CUSTER STATE PARK AIRPORT, S.D. – Petroleum specialists with Company A, 139th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) from Watertown and Redfield, S.D., are currently keeping vehicles full of fuel during the 25th annual Golden Coyote training exercise in the Black Hills.

“Our unit is operating retail fuel points, or mobile gas stations, on the five tactical forward operating bases (FOBs) created for Golden Coyote,” said Sgt. Dennis Benthin, a Watertown native with Co. A, 139th BSB, and the noncommissioned officer in charge of the fuel point on FOB Custer State Park Airport.

Fuel for Golden Coyote is drawn from a fuel storage area on Ellsworth Air Force Base by the 593rd Transportation Company from Reno, Nev. and transported in 5,000-gallon tankers to distribution companies, like Co. A, 139th BSB. Once delivered the fuel is then transferred as needed into smaller tankers.

“Right now we are pumping fuel from one 2,500-gallon Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) tanker into our customers’ vehicles and gas cans, and have a 5,000-gallon tanker standing by,” Benthin said.

As soon as Company A, 311th BSB, from Lexington, Mo. arrives, two small tankers will be operating on each FOB, he explained.

“So far we have issued 1,600 gallons of fuel,” Benthin added. “This includes refueling our own vehicles during the trip from Watertown to the Black Hills.”

Spc. Ryan Jorgensen, a fuel specialist from Watertown, with Co. A, 139th BSB, and a full-time student, explained how a typical refueling operation works.

“When a vehicle pulls up for fuel, the first thing we do is ground the receiving vehicle to prevent electrical shocks,” Jorgensen said.

“We then have one fueler handling the hose from the tanker to the vehicle and another operating a fuel control lever that

can cut off the flow of fuel to the hose in case something happens to the hose operator.”

“We then record the gallons of fuel issued, the bumper number of the vehicle and the name of the unit receiving the fuel. The driver then signs for the fuel and drives off,” he added.

According to Spc. Joe Landers from Watertown, also a fuel specialist with Co. A, 139th BSB, unit members can refuel anything the Army has from five-gallon gas cans to aircraft.

“Our tankers can pump up to 300 gallons of fuel a minute. That’s the same rate that a fire truck can pump with two people handling the hoses,” said Landers.

“Over the next two weeks we’re projecting to pump around 20,000 gallons of fuel at each FOB, and over 100,000 gallons just to keep all the vehicles, generators and stoves running throughout Golden Coyote,” said Benthin.



By SPC. JOSEPH BUNGERT/Army Photographer

Pfc. Jess Krantz, a Watertown, S.D. native, refuels a 915 tractor-trailer. Krantz, a petroleum specialist with Detachment 1, Company A, 139th Brigade Support Battalion from Watertown and Redfield, S.D. is attending annual training in the Black Hills during the 25th annual Golden Coyote exercise from 6-20 June.



By SPC. JOSEPH BUNGERT/Army Photographer

(Left to Right) Spc. Ryan Jorgensen operates the fuel control lever while Spc. Joe Landers fills gas cans from a 2,500-gallon Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) tanker during the 25th annual Golden Coyote exercise from 6-20 June. Jorgensen and Landers are residents of Watertown, S.D., and members of Detachment 1, Company A, 139th Brigade Support Battalion located in Watertown.



By SGT. THEANNE TANGEN/Army Photographer

Spc. Christopher Olson and Pvt. Shawn Stanford of Sioux Falls, S.D., members of the 1742nd Transportation Company, carry a pallet of bread to a field dining facility, June 8, at Custer State Park Airport forward operating base during the Golden Coyote 2009 training exercise.

Golden Coyote food services on a roll

*By Staff Sgt. Stephanie Abdullah
302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Twelve hundred Meals Ready to Eat, a combined 2,400 breakfast and dinner meals, 80 pounds of fruit, 80 loaves of bread, 100, 20-pound bags of ice, six trucks, dozens of Soldiers, and countless hours is what it takes to feed the more than 3,600 Golden Coyote training exercise participants.

Soldiers from various elements of South Dakota's 139th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) of Redfield, S.D., work feverishly to make this happen.

Staff Sgt. Grant Evans, who works as a general supply squad leader in Company A, 139th BSB, explained a bit of the process.

"Each forward operating base (FOB) has to send over a food request through the FOB mayor," said Evans. "Once we know what each FOB needs, 'Chief' Urban creates the menus, being certain to rotate the menus for variety. Then we print up a ticket for the request, pull and wrap the items and store properly."

Warrant Officer Jeff Urban of Co. A, 139th BSB, who works as a food service technician for the South Dakota Army National Guard said "feeding more than 3,600 personnel doesn't come without challenges."

"The biggest challenges we face are trying to get the right amount of food without having excess or shortages and making sure that I have all of the workers that I need and equipment to get the food downrange," said Urban.

This delicate balance means getting up bright and early. During yesterday's mission preparation, Soldiers began loading rations into transportation vehicles in the early-morning hours. Frozen and perishable foods were loaded into refrigerated trucks and non-perishable items were loaded onto trucks. The labor continued until thousands of pounds of rations were ready for shipment and delivery to the remote forward operating bases of Golden Coyote including Railroad Buttes, Fisherman's Flats, Custer State Park Airport (CSPA) and Tee Pee-which is a half hours drive from the Wyoming border.

Sgt. Matthew King, Detachment 1, 740th Transportation of Aberdeen, S.D., is a truck driver who volunteered for the ration delivery mission when his original mission was scaled back.

"I didn't even know what I was volunteering for at first. But, I was very happy to find out that we'd be running this (ration delivery) mission every other day," said King. "It allows me to get a lot of driving time and give some

driver's training to some junior Soldiers."

King even gets time during his ration deliveries to find alternate training opportunities. "It has been great practice going into the FOBs and practicing gate security procedures with the challenge and password," he said.

King's ration convoy traveled to three FOBs and covered hundreds of miles in about eight hours.

Each stop required the assistance of many Soldiers to get the vehicles unloaded and the rations stored. Additionally, recent rain in the area caused the drop-off locations to be muddy havens.

"We knew it would be wet out there," said King. "Getting around the FOBs in the mud was a challenge, but we didn't get stuck."

Even in the muddiest location, which was CSPA, Soldiers came together and worked as a team and got the job done. Some Soldiers wore black rubber boots, others had on full wet weather gear, others worked feverishly in wet and muddy Army Combat Uniforms with thick globs of muck on the bottom of their boots.

Urban admits that it's a lot of work to receive, store, and deliver more than 100,000 meals, but said "It's worth it. The most rewarding part of my job is that the Soldiers get fed."



By SPC. NICOLE SULLIVAN/Unit Public Affairs Representative

Retired chaplain fills Soldiers with hope, prayer

Guest speaker gives prayer breakfast attendees words of strength and religious wisdom

*By Spc. Nicole Sullivan
and Sgt. 1st Class Kristi Palmer
Unit Public Affairs Representatives, 109th
Regional Support Group of Rapid City*

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Attendees at the second annual Golden Coyote Prayer Breakfast filled their breakfast cups with hope and strength at the Camp Rapid Chapel on June 8.

The lighthearted Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Lynn Wilson, Joint Force Headquarters of Rapid City, S.D., led the morning service with songs of praise and prayer requests from service-members.

"We wanted to start Golden Coyote with an emphasis on prayer and spirituality. Sol-

diers are most ready when they are strong in a relationship with both their family and their God," said Lynn.

The breakfast was hosted by the South Dakota Guard Chaplain Corps, and retired Chaplain (Col.) Herbert Cleveland was the guest speaker. His message was based on Jeremiah 29:11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Cleveland has a distinguished career in the ministry, both as a local pastor ministering to the needs of South Dakotans, dating back to the 1950s, and on a national level. Three U.S. Presidents have appointed him to various positions in the Department of Veterans Affairs.

He is no stranger to the difficulties of war. Cleveland led local and national efforts to develop a system to address post-traumatic stress disorder, substance abuse and psychosocial issues. He said he enjoys attending

military events like these. "I am honored to be the guest speaker and spread the word to keep hope alive in our troops," he said.

"Any Soldier from the rank of private all the way to the top leader needs a strong foundation. God gives you hope and strength," said Cleveland. "There are times where it looks very bleak and you need a sense of personal hope."

The training exercise reminds every service member they are training for the time when they are called to duty, and Cleveland reminded them of how difficult life in the military can be. "It is one thing to live it. It is another thing to read it in history," he said during his sermon.

Sgt. Gregory Fritz of the 109th Regional Support Group of Rapid City, S.D. was in the crowd Monday.

"This was a great opportunity to hear a message of hope and strength, to not only get us through the next two weeks, but for the rest of our lives."