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DECEMBER 2020

504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade

A year inside the most decorated military intelligence brigade in the U.S. Army

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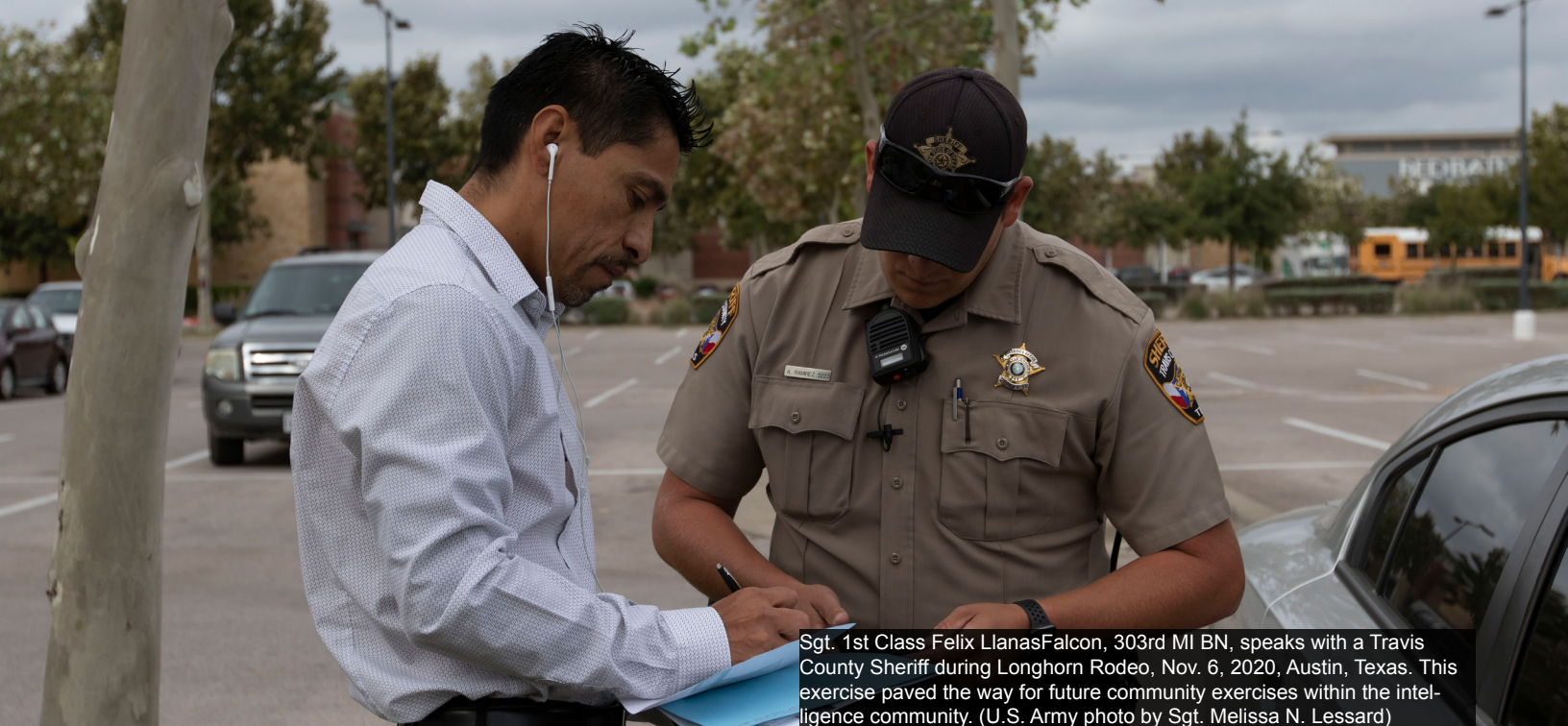
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Longhorn Rodeo

The 303rd Military Intelligence Brigade trains in a civilian environment, making history in intelligence training.



Sgt. 1st Class Felix LlanasFalcon, 303rd MI BN, speaks with a Travis County Sheriff during Longhorn Rodeo, Nov. 6, 2020, Austin, Texas. This exercise paved the way for future community exercises within the intelligence community. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)

Longhorn Rodeo

Story and photos by: Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

18 organizations including the 504th Military Intelligence Brigade, 163rd and 303rd Military Intelligence Battalions supported and participated in Operation Longhorn Rodeo, an intelligence operation, during the beginning weeks of November at Camp Mabry, Texas.

“It is a highly valuable training that far exceeds any other unit led military source operations (MSO) training that I have witnessed.”
Walter Gonzales

les, the Ft. Hood Foundry Military Intelligence

The Longhorn Battalion specializes in expeditionary intelligence operations, and trains for that role in a variety of settings. This is the first of its kind military source operations training conducted off post in an urban environment for Fort. Hood intelligence Soldiers. Military source

operations is primarily a human intelligence task for collection on foreign military and military related intelligence by humans from humans.

THE PRIMARY TEAMS focusing on the training were the human intelligence (HUMINT) and

counter intelligence (CI) teams. Counter intelligence agency focus on threats within the Army and international threats to the U.S. National Security. The human intelligence teams focus on enemy strength, weakness, and potential battle areas.

Mr. Walter Gonzales

les, the Ft. Hood Foundry Military Intelligence Training Strategy (MITS) Integrator said that recently the Army created this MITS certification strategy for commanders to train and assess their tactical intelligence warfighting function capabilities in an objective, quantifiable manner. It consists of four tiers of training.

He said that this exercise focuses on tier three and four, the fundamentals. Tier four is individual tasks, tier three is crew tasks.

“IT IS A HIGHLY VALUABLE TRAINING that far exceeds any other unit led military source operations (MSO) training that I have witnessed,” he said. “The planning and preparation of this event is truly remarkable and sets a high standard for HUMINT MSO training.”

Gonzales also said that at the end of this exercise, intelligence Soldiers should be prepared for their advanced training sources such as Source Operation Course, Defense Strategic Debriefing Course, and Defense Advanced Tradecraft Course.

Spc. Matthew Randol with B Company, 303rd MI BN, 504th MI BDE, said that it was exciting to get out and do something that was out of the norm.

“I WAS IN A ROLE AND IN CHARGE of what I was doing,” he said. “I realized how much I rely on technology when we had to get around without it.”

Randol and other human intelligence professionals who participated in the exercise had to learn how to orient themselves in an urban environment without the use of technology. He said that they were able to do their jobs in a real environment and experience real world complications.

The Soldiers worked with highly experienced role players who assisted and gave them feedback on a daily basis.

“It’s a mock version of the school we want to go to,” Randol said. “Most people go and it’s a shock. We will be a step ahead. We got to see what we will be doing.”

Many key players during the exercise said they saw a change in the Soldiers motivation due to the real world environment.



Soldiers from the intelligence community on Fort Hood role play a customs situation, Oct. 29, 2019. The exercise taught them what to expect during the deployment process. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)



Spc. Kurtlyn Lyons and Spc. Travis Breedon, 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment work with John Galvan, Caterpillar Defense and Federal Products, to identify faults, Aug. 29, 2019, Fort Hood, Texas. The Soldiers spent five days learning from Galvan in the classroom and in the maintenance bay. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)

Learning smart maintenance

Story and photos by: Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

Caterpillar Defense provided specialized training to 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade maintenance Soldiers on Fort Hood from Aug. 26-30. John Galvan, an independent Caterpillar Defense contractor, developed a system of training for all services, providing a better understanding of engine electronics.

“What I am out here to teach is what they haven’t been taught in any school. I ask this all the time, ‘Did you learn this at Leonard Wood or your trade school?,’” Galvan said. “I teach basic electronic engines.”

The basics apply to numerous Army and military vehicles.

“YOU MUST HAVE A BASIC understanding of how electronic things work these days,” he said. “I teach 101. I will start with a multi-meter or a basic tool.”

Galvan introduced the maintenance support device version three. The Soldiers have the special tools to prevent complete breakdowns, he said. The MSD V3 hooks up to the vehicle engine. Soldiers are able to find specific faults with a vehicle with just a click of a button. If the vehicle is running with low oil, has plugged up filters, is overheating or has wrong parts, the computer will identify these issues.

Sgt. Omar Gutierrez with 163rd Military In-

telligence Battalion was in the maintenance bay using the MSD V3 while working. He said he was introduced to the MSD V3 during his military occupational specialty training, but not the same way he is now. He said he has been learning a lot about the troubleshooting process.

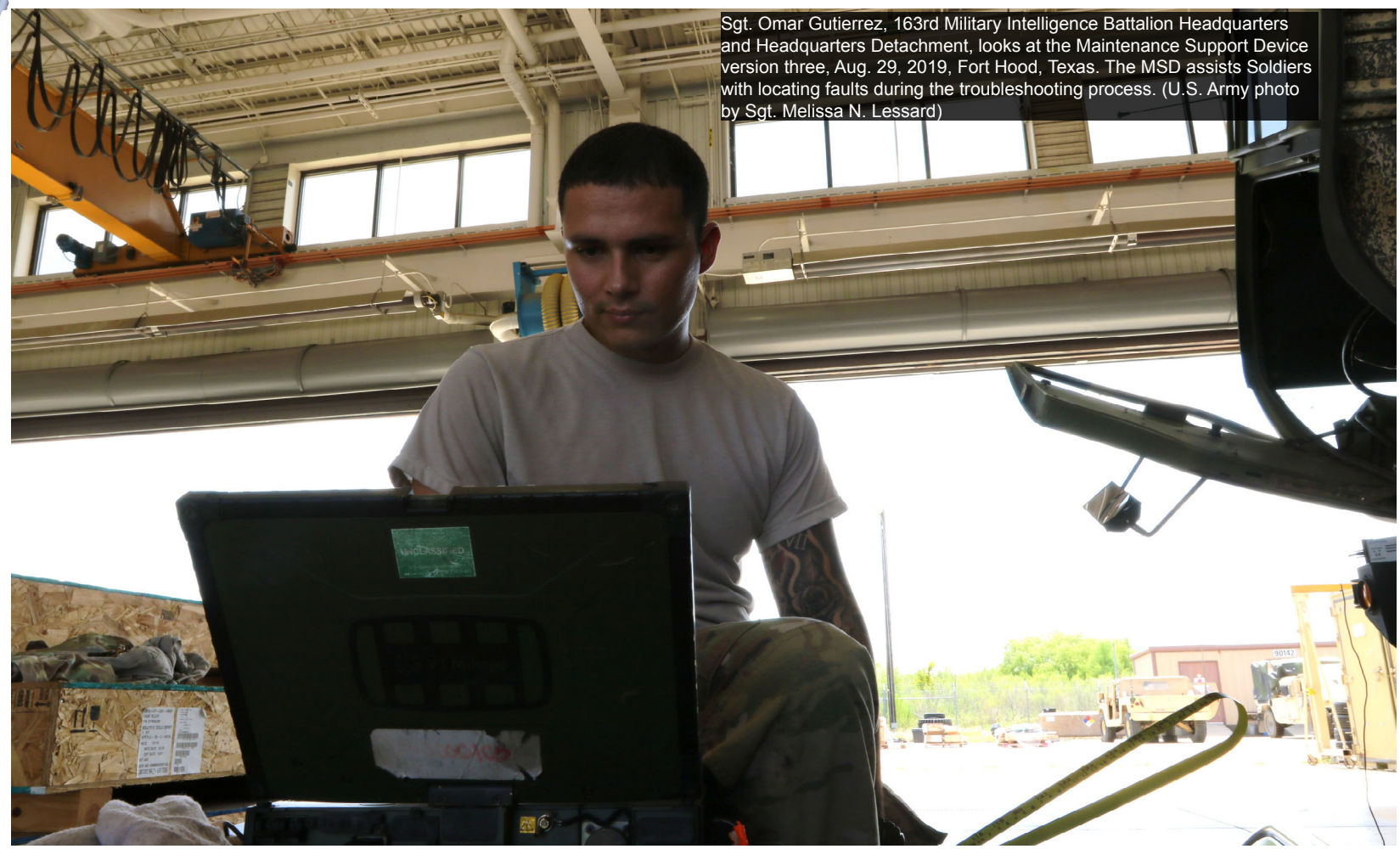
GALVAN SAID PEOPLE CAN physically look at a line of vehicles in the motor pool, do a simple maintenance check and say ‘good to go.’ In reality, the truck has a bad sensor and has been this way for over 300 hours.

“This machine or truck can go anywhere in the world,” Galvan said. “You are the Army, you can get deployed. You want to make sure the tires are full of air. I want to know how the engine is doing. We don’t want to go on a convoy and five miles down the road the thing breaks down; because this thing has been putting around the motor pool for two years and falls on its face.”

Galvan pulled several vehicles from the

line and had the Soldiers work on them. Several Soldiers were able to identify faults immediately, such as faulty sensors or the wrong computer installed on a truck.

Gutierrez said “I can be better at troubleshooting by knowing exactly what is wrong, so things get fixed faster.”



Sgt. Omar Gutierrez, 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, looks at the Maintenance Support Device version three, Aug. 29, 2019, Fort Hood, Texas. The MSD assists Soldiers with locating faults during the troubleshooting process. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)



Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade, learn to recognize critical signs during suicide prevention training, Sep. 20, 2019, Fort Hood, Texas. Understanding what resources are available was a key takeaway. (U.S. Army Photo by Capt. Manuel Lugo)

Knowing your Soldiers is life or death

By: Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

“One of my troops just had a series of unfortunate events,” 1st Sgt. Tron Gentry, first sergeant of Company A, 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Military Intelligence Brigade, said. “He was hanging out with his battle buddies one weekend which resulted in some legal actions. Once he made it through that, his wife told him she wanted a divorce. He just took a turn for the worse.”

Sgt. 1st Class Ralph Martin, first sergeant of Headquarters and Headquarters Company ran into a similar situation. “I had a Soldier who had a hard time adapting to the military life,” Martin said.

HIS SOLDIER WAS RECYCLED from a military occupational specialty-producing school and became a mechanic. Coming into the unit, he was already upset and depressed. After that his mother died in a house fire, he said. While on leave, he got involved with a girl who caused more problems for him.

“He told his supervisor that he wanted to commit suicide,” he said. “We intervened and got him to behavioral health.”

Gentry had a different experience getting his Soldier the help he needed.

“At the time, I had him stay with one of his battle buddies on post because I did not

want him to stay by himself. Every night before he went to bed, we would talk,” Gentry said. “There was one night that I called him, and he just sounded bad. He was mumbling and it was hard to make out what he was saying. So, I am like, ‘Okay this doesn’t sound good,’ and I went and picked him up.”

GENTRY TOOK HIS SOLDIER to the hospital and was unable to get in because they were backed up. He drove his Soldier to another hospital, but they also had no room, he said. At this time the pair went back to the battalion parking lot to spend a few hours before work started and they could get more help. Gentry said it took over eight months before his Soldier recovered from his series of unfortunate events.

Martin recalled that it took a long period of time for his Soldier to recover as well.

Both leaders explain the importance of knowing the Soldiers in their formations.

“Before you are able to identify any signs, you have to know that Soldier. Knowing your people is not the score of their APFT, date of rank, NCOES schools or what is on their SRB,” Gentry said. “To be able to effectively lead your people, you need to know those things that are not on the SRB. Who that person really is. Knowing their habits, characteristics, all those things. When they deviate from their baseline then you know there is something going on.”

Martin told his Soldier that he could contact him morning, noon and night and that was what he did. “One night he had rigged up his belt to hang himself. He called me over and I stayed with him.”

MARTIN HAS LOST A SOLDIER due to suicide and wanted to make sure that all the recourses were available to this Soldier.

Both Soldiers were able to receive the help they needed through two caring leaders who got to know their Soldiers and intervened immediately.

Martin said he recently received a message from his Soldier who expressed thanks because without his care he would not be here today.

SUICIDE PREVENTION NUMBERS
FORT HOOD
254-287-7575
SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE
1-800-273-8255
DoD SAFE HELPLINE
877-995-5247

Maj. Nicole Hash, left, 504th Military Intelligence officer and Capt. Manuel Lugo, right, Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander, participate in the suicide prevention ruck march, Sep. 30, 2019, Harker Heights, Texas. Losing one Soldier in the ranks is too many. (U.S. Army photo by PV2 Tyler Tanaka)



Reunited after 34 years

Story and photos by: Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

The 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade celebrated their 75h anniversary on Nov. 22 at the Phantom Warrior Center on Fort Hood.

The 303rd MI BN is the U.S. Army's most decorated MI BN with 25 campaign streamers, nine unit commendations, and three foreign unit decorations. They trace their lineage back to their parent company 3253rd Signal Service Company which was activated on April 29, 1944. Their primary mission, at the time, was to gain intelligence from intercepting radio communications.

Going forward, the battalion was then redesignated as the 303rd MI BN in 1978.

During the ball, the unit had a special guest, Retired Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Morelock, native of Texas. He originally joined the Army in 1968 as an Electronic Warfare Equipment Operator. While he served from 1968-1990, it has been 34 long years since Morelock last saw the Longhorn Battalion.

He said he was a part of the 303rd MI BN on

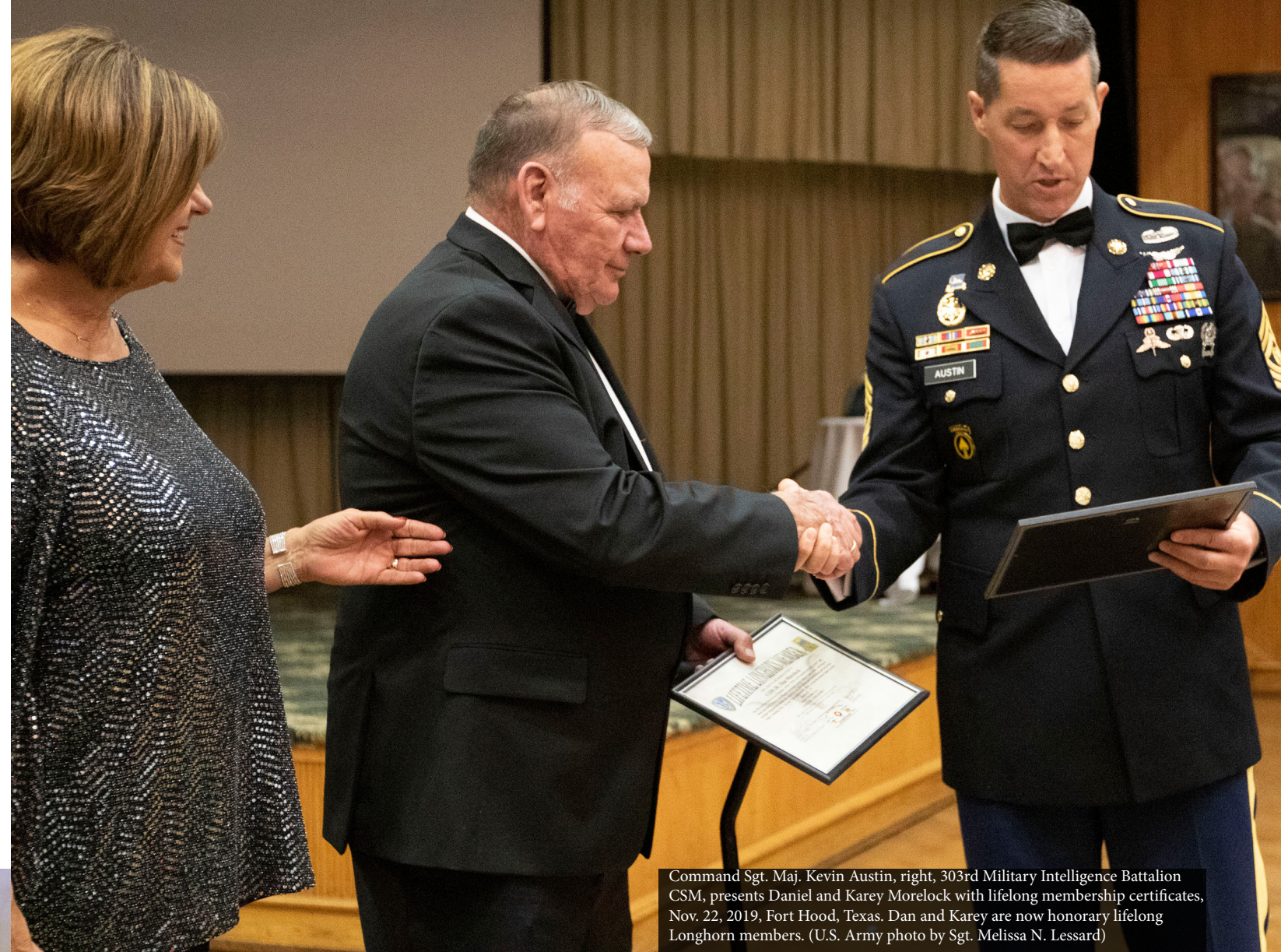
two separate occasions. The first was in 1978 as the unit was making their transition to Fort Hood. It wasn't an easy transition, but they made it.

THE SECOND TIME he was with the 303rd was from 1981-1985. During this time the battalion went through another change; becoming fully activated with a mission to provide intelligence, electronic warfare, and intelligence communications support to III Armored Corps.

Morelock said he worked his way from a Sgt. 1st Class through Command Sgt. Maj. while serving with the battalion.

Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Austin, the 303rd MI BN CSM, gave a speech where he spoke about his and Morelock's correspondence over the past weeks. He also went through many historical documents where he found documents that Morelock composed.

"IT IS REALLY VERY INTERESTING to see what the unit was doing back in the ear-



Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Austin, right, 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion CSM, presents Daniel and Karey Morelock with lifelong membership certificates, Nov. 22, 2019, Fort Hood, Texas. Dan and Karey are now honorary lifelong Longhorn members. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)



Lt. Col. Patrick Miller, left, 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion commander, Ret. Command Sgt. Maj. Dan Morelock, middle, former 303rd MI BN CSM, and Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Austin, right, 303rd MI BN CSM, pose for a photo, Nov. 22, 2019, Fort Hood, Texas. All were reminiscing about the early days of the 303rd MI BN on Fort Hood. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)

ly 1980s," said Austin. "It wasn't much different from what we continue to do each and every day - Which is training, executing administrative requirements, plan for the next terrain feature...then do it all over again."

"CSM Morelock and I spoke about work-days that began at 0430 for him, as he opened up the company headquarters," Austin said. "Then prepared to have his platoon sergeants wake up their Soldiers in the barracks. But they did the same thing we do at 0630 - Salute the flag and go do some PT. His days did not often end until well after 9:00 p.m. Such is the sacrifice to be a 1st Sgt. in the United States Army."

"But as I have spoken with CSM Morelock I can easily tell it was the most satisfying job that he had in the Army, and that he truly, truly loved his Soldiers."

Austin said that Morelock thanked the unit for their continuous support and deployments today.

Austin said that Morelock fought one of the mightiest battles - the Cold War. "We all owe you a debt of gratitude," Austin said.

The night of the 75th anniversary of the 303rd MI BN, Morelock and his wife Karey became lifelong longhorn members. They were both awarded with certificates from the BN commander and CSM as well as the longhorn coin.



GIVE THANKS AND DECK THE HALLS





MI Week 2020

The future



Lt Col. Patrick Miller, 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade tests out a virtual reality set, Feb. 27, 2020, Austin, Texas. The brigade took a trip to Army Futures Command as a part of the MI Week events. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Tyler Tanaka)

Col. Timothy Parker, deputy chief of staff of FORSCOM G2, and Capt. Dylan Hendy, B Co, 163rd MI BN, company commander, places a new streamer on the company guidon in celebration of winning the 2019 Brigadier General Strom Award, Feb. 25, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Barnes, 7th MPAD)



163rd MI BN accepts Brig. Gen. Strom Award

Story and photos by: Pfc. Richard Barns, 7th MPAD

Soldiers with Company B of the 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion gathered at the Howze Auditorium to accept the Brigadier General Strom Award Tuesday.

This award is presented annually by United States Army Forces Command to the Best Echelons Above Division Military Intelligence Company in the Army.

Col. Timothy Parker, deputy chief of staff of FORSCOM G2, presented the award to Capt. Dylan Hendy, company commander of the 163rd MI Bn., during Tuesday's ceremony.

"THE TRUST AND THE UNITY that we've established in this company have enabled us to be successful," Hendy said. "(This award) is a testament to the camaraderie and hard work that our company has shown over the past fiscal year."

The ceremony was held in front of the 504th

MI Brigade and fellow command teams who were in attendance to support the 163 MI Bn.

"The commitment that these Soldiers have to bettering themselves is why we're here today," Lt. Col. Gregory Worden, battalion commander of the 163rd MI Bn., said. "Because when one person succeeds, it becomes contagious, and others immediately want to share in those same achievements."

The ceremony began with a few remarks from Col. Deitra Trotter, the 504th MI Bde. commander, who praised the 163rd MI Bn. for their efforts in 2019.

Before presenting the award, Parker placed a blue streamer onto the company guidon to recognize them for their excellence.

"It was a great display of appreciation to recognize all of the time and effort that was put in by these Soldiers," Worden said.

After receiving the award, Sol-

diers with 163rd MI Bn. were given individual certificates of appreciation for their role in the company's success.

"IT REALLY COMES DOWN to the team leaders and small unit leaders," Hendy said. "If they didn't put in the work that they do, we would not be standing here today accepting this award."

The Brigadier General Strom Award Ceremony took place to celebrate MI Week as well as the 163rd MI Battalion's achievements over the past fiscal year.

"At the end of the day, it was trust and camaraderie that enabled us to succeed," Hendy said.

"It really comes down to the team leaders and small unit leaders." Capt. Dylan Hendy

In support of MI Week on Fort Hood, this award was presented to the 163rd MI Bn. for their outstanding efforts in 2019.

Through Friday, the 504th MI Brigade Combat Team held MI Week, which included a golf scramble, tactical dine-in and an Army Futures Command Applied Lab Tour in Austin.



Soldiers receive certificates of achievement from Col. Timothy Parker, deputy chief of staff FORSCOM G2, during Tuesdays Brigadier General Strom Award Ceremony at Howze Auditorium. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Richard Barns, 7th MPAD)



Col. Deitra L. Trotter, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade commander, speaks during the MI Week dine-in, Feb. 28, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. Soldiers were able to dress as any type of military, real or imagined, during the event. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Tyler Tanaka)

WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard

Date last updated: 2020-12-15, 5:01 pm UTC

[Overview](#)

[Data Table](#)

[Exp](#)

Country

Region

Total

496,156

100,000

71,581,532

100,000,000

1,618,374

1,000,000



📌 Download

Source: World Health Organization

COVID-19 is most compared to the H1N1 influenza pandemic of 1918. This was also known as the Spanish flu. While reporting may have been a bit spotty during this time, it is estimated that over 500 million people, or 1/3 of the world population be-

came infected with the Spanish flu.

As of December 15, 2020, a mere 11 months after the CDC started tracking the illness, 71,581,532 people have tested positive for the virus and 1,618,374 people have died from it world-wide.

303rd Military Intelligence Battalion change of command



Headquarters and Headquarters change of command



Commander’s Cup continues amidst COVID

Story by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

Photos by 1st Lt. Jausia Baltazar

During a hot and humid morning Friday, more than 10 squads participated in the Commander’s Cup for 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Military Intelligence Brigade.

It is not uncommon to see groups of Soldiers conducting physical training on West Fort Hood. But as Fort Hood opens up for training in the wake of COVID-19, it was a sight to see Soldiers running excitedly to different check points during the competition.

Staff Sgt. Justin Liebman, Company B, 303rd MI Bn., 504th MI Bde., was a team leader for the winning team. He said they were given a list of coordinates and a blank map of West Fort Hood. They plotted five points, ran roughly half a mile to each, and then answered board questions. If the answer was wrong, the team had to conduct physical exercise.

“THE STRATEGY OF IT WAS TRYING to do it in a way that made the most sense because they were spread out so much,” Leibman said. “We didn’t get any

questions wrong so we did not have to do the alternate exercises.”

Soldiers answered questions such as: What are the four instances you would use a 15-inch step? What are the protected equal opportunity categories and what chapter are they from? What are the three categories of sexual assault?

Spc. William Schenkel with B Co., 303rd MI Bn., 504th MI Bde., said that everyone on the team had different strengths and weaknesses. They used this knowledge to their advantage.

“For instance, once you answer a board question you had to get a paper signed,” Schenkel said. “While the paper was getting signed the people who struggled with running would start running to the next point. That way the people who could run faster were holding the paper, getting it signed, then catching up.”

“THE MOST CHALLENGING PART,” Leibman explained, “was maintaining our speed and stamina



Soldiers with 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Expeditionary MI Brigade, plot land navigation points, June 5, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. It was the first group competition since COVID-19 started. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Jausia Baltazar)



Soldiers with 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade are asked a question during the commander’s cup competition, June 5, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. Soldiers had to answer the questions correctly or commit to designated exercises. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Jausia Baltazar)

throughout. You would get to a point and answer a question. That process probably took less than two minutes. So we weren’t resting hardly at all. At the end we were pretty gassed. For me personally, it was a mental battle towards the end, trying to keep going as fast as I could.”

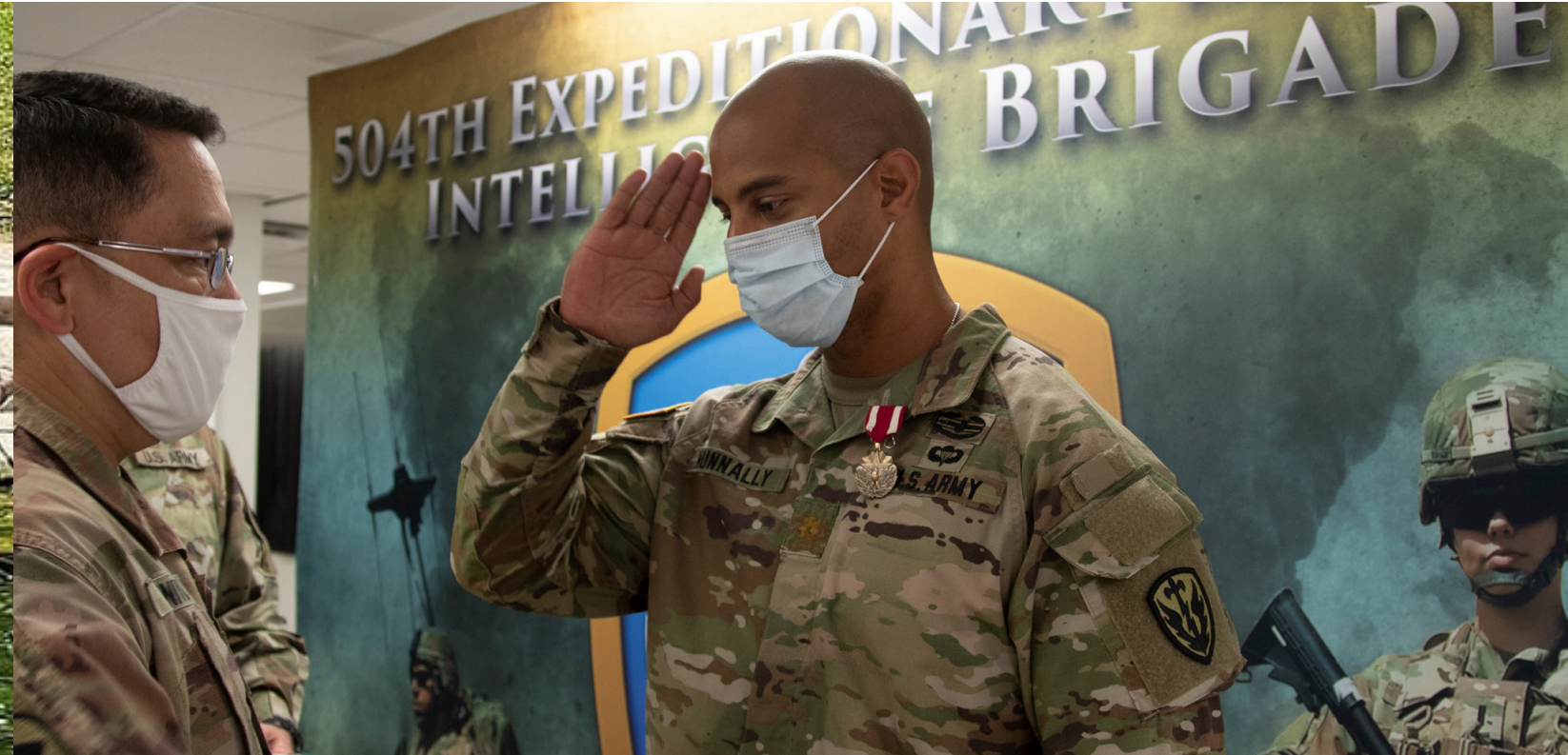
“The best part was finishing and them telling us ‘What time did you leave,’” Schenkel said. “We said we left with the second heat and they were like, ‘oh, you are the first ones back.’ That was a cool feeling.”

Leibman said that since COVID-19, he has been able to work with his squad more in depth which has built better cohesion amongst his Soldiers. As a result, they were able to perform better.

The 1st place team won a streamer for their company guidon. Their winning time was 34 minutes and 21 seconds. Second place was 40 minutes and 31 seconds. Third place was 42 minutes and 31 seconds.

“The most challenging part was maintaining our speed and stamina throughout.”
Staff Sgt. Justin Liebman

June happenings across the brigade



Top: In June 2020 Capt. Stephanie Schmidt was promoted! Her family flew in for the special occasion to pin her during a ceremony. Congratulations (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon)

Right: June 5th was a bittersweet day as we said goodbye to Maj. Joshua Nunnally and his wife Charmaine. Maj. Nunnally received the Meritorious Service Medal as well as other tokens during a ceremony held at the brigade. Charmaine was awarded the Yellow Rose of Texas award which is given only through the Office of the Governor to recognize women for their significant contributions to their communities. Both have made tremendous impacts whether it was military or community service. We wish them well on their future endeavors. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)



Rising to the challenges of tomorrow

Editorial by Col. Deitra L. Trotter

Two hundred forty-four years ago on July 4, 1776, the Continental Congress voted to adopt the Declaration of Independence for America's first 13 colonies, in effect, claiming they were no longer subject to the rule of England. This seminal event led to the formation of the United States of America, now 50 states and territories, and the evolution of America herself. As Americans, particularly in the 20th century, we have stood as a beacon of hope and humanity. Traditionally, we honor our nation's birthday with baseball, picnics, concerts, carnivals and fireworks.

Independence Day 2020 will not look quite the same as our country wrestles with multiple efforts. A global pandemic plagues communities worldwide, racial and civic unrest has our attention, and economic uncertainty overshadows it all. Many service members and families struggle with uncertainty as our senior leaders untangle the PCS knots the pandemic generated. Some wonder if there is anything to celebrate as we seemingly move from one crisis to another or as social media reveals fissures in our society.

Of course there is. Our country is not perfect, but we inarguably continue to improve. Our citizens are free to voice for their beliefs, to advocate for change

and we have the rule of law to enact such changes to guarantee justice to all. That is what makes Independence Day 2020 all the more important and significant. Despite the many differences that exist, Americans unite in the belief that our country and the principles upon which it was founded – freedom, justice and equality for all – are worth defending.

When compared to most countries, even at 244 years old, our nation is still pretty young. We continue to mature in order to face the trials of an evolving and complex environment. There have been many past struggles this country successfully faced in almost every facet of life. There will always be a new test over the horizon for us to meet. Americans are resilient. We will prevail.

While this Fourth of July may not see large crowds gathering to view fireworks (unless with face coverings), or filling ballparks, I encourage you to look for alternate ways to reconnect with others, to count the blessings that we have as a country, and resolve to work together through the challenges that present themselves today so that we may rise tomorrow stronger as a Nation.

As Soldiers, we take an oath to support and defend the Constitution of the United States. As we honor America's founding, it is truly an honor to serve.

July happenings across the brigade



Top left: 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion leaders recon of Camp Bullis I2TC to meet with INSCOM Intelligence Training Center staff and for unit leaders to identify the training areas, and sustainment resources available (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon) Top right: Soldiers with the 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade conducted off site casualty operations training for leaders time training at the Cooper Field Memorial, 1 Cav Division Headquarters. They shared personal experiences regarding casualty operation both garrison and deployed. (Courtesy photo) Bottom left: Ready Deuce recently held intelligence analyst, 35F, skills week at the Mission Training Complex. Approximately 15 intelligence analysts throughout the brigade participated in Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield training and systems familiarization. Soldiers were excited to participate in MOS specific training and shared great tactics, techniques and procedures to improve the team. Soldiers look forward to future iterations in the near future. (Courtesy photo) Bottom right: 1st Sgt. Gentry received 504th EMIB HHC going away token. "The best investment a leader can make is in their Soldiers. The only way the Army is going to get better is by investing in their Soldiers," -- 1st Sgt. Gentry (Courtesy photo)



Modernization changes made at West Fort Hood

Editorial and photos by Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Mabanag

If you run into construction activity and multiple detour signs or noticed something that was not there a couple of months ago after driving through one of the West Fort Hood access control points, then you have witnessed some of the on-going changes at WFH.

WFH is located less than two miles southwest of main post near the Killeen-Fort Hood Regional Airport. It is home to the Operational Test Command, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade, 15th MI Battalion, 206th MI BN, 3rd Weather Squadron (U.S. Air Force), 7th BN, 158th Aviation Regiment, 11th Expeditionary Combat AVN BDE. (U.S. Army Reserve), Troop F of 227th Aviation Regiment, and elements of 166th AVN BDE. As the largest III Corps intelligence element, led by Col. Deitra Trotter, the 504th EMIB maintains oversight and liaison with all tenant organizations.

There are two different ways to get to WFH. Travelers can either drive past several restaurants and businesses along Clear Creek Road to access the Mohawk Gate or take the quicker route along I-14 to access the Clarke Gate on South Clarke Road. Occasionally, Fort Hood Garrison opens the Old Copperas Cove Gate, a third way, where travelers can drive along a narrow road lined by cattle to access WFH near the Russell L. Collier Health Clinic. The ongoing South Clarke Road construction limits access to the main cantonment area from the north and the Old Copperas Cove Gate is

closed. This road construction is one of many modernization efforts conducted by Fort Hood’s Directorate of Public Works. Upon completion, South Clarke Road will have wider shoulders, new bicycle lanes, more street lights, new landscaping, and a better road surface.

WHEN ENTERING CLARKE GATE, you find Montague Village, home to close to 560 families. The immediate area includes Montague Elementary School, a community center, child development center, youth center and an AAFES shoppette with a gas station. Montague Elementary enjoys a stellar reputation for academics and student outreach. The school partners with the 303rd MI BN, which garnered Most Volunteer Hours honors for this school year. 1st Lt. Connor Waldron, 303rd MI BN’s Adopt-A-School liaison remarked, “I enjoy the rapport with the school’s educators and the students’ connection with our Soldiers.”

The close ties his battalion has with the school made it easy and enjoyable for Soldiers to volunteer over 570 hours.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Slayden of F Troop, 227th AVN. REGT., 1st Combat AVN BDE., a Montague Village resident, shared the same outlook of the school.

“I love how the school communicates with parents through social media and phone messages, and I also appreciate the quality of education,” Slayden said. “I love how my son has a lot of friends.”

QUALITY OF LIFE IMPROVEMENTS are visible everywhere on WFH. In the past year, the Texas De-



West Fort Hood obstacle course. (U.S. Army photo by Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Mabanag)

fense Economic Adjustment Assistance Grant funding provided security improvements to Robert Gray Army Airfield and Killeen-Fort Hood Regional Airport, adding more than 150 cameras and two monitoring locations. The South East ramp project, a \$9.1M effort, also nears completion. OTC built a new building structure for the Army Test Evaluation Command Technology Integration Center. Additional upgrades include the 504th EMIB Bde. Sensitive Compartmented Information Facility, language lab for Soldier self-study training, Montague Village home roof repairs, light posts for the Always Ready Field, new outdoor grills for the barracks, and barracks water line construction for all troop units. Last, in April, the 504th EMIB Bde. partnered with the 36th Engineer Bde. to repair the WFH Obstacle Course.

In the past nine months, WFH modernized to improve physical fitness. The WFH Physical Fitness Center completed a few internal renovations in parallel with the 504th EMIB Bde. Resiliency Center refit. Military units acquired Army Combat Fitness Test sets and gym-in-the-boxes to resource Soldiers to prepare Soldiers for the Army’s new physical fit-

ness test. These facilities, in addition to a paved running track behind the Russell Collier Health Clinic and an outdoor swimming pool, offer Soldiers and civilians with a wide range of options to stay fit.

Sgt. Jonah Conarro, assigned to A Company, 303rd MI Bn., expressed his delight of the track.

“I enjoy running with the different terrain, rolling hills and the changes of the open Texas scenery,” Conarro said. “It keeps my mind clear and thinking.”

THERE ARE ALSO HIDDEN GEMS offered only at WFH. There is a travel camp, which is home to several military recreational vehicle owners. Like many who prefer a nomadic life, they enjoy the camp’s services and close proximity to main post and other family attractions within the surrounding area.

Also, WFH is home to the motorcycle and privately owned vehicle campus. Soldiers can attend courses aligned with the Army Traffic Safety Training Program.

As the 504th EMIB Bde. command sergeant major for these past 15 months, I observed many positive changes. WFH’s future is very bright, and modernization projects will continue to improve readiness and quality of life. I discovered that my time serving tenant organizations, families, and Soldiers on WFH a very humble and fulfilling experience.

“I love how the school communicates with parents through social media and phone messages, and I also appreciate the quality of education.”

Staff Sgt. Joseph Slayden



Welcome to West Fort Hood. (U.S. Army photo by Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Mabanag)



Col. Deitra Trotter, left, 504th EMIB outgoing commander, Maj. Gen. Scott Efflandt, middle, III Corps deputy commanding general, Col. Bryan Leclerc, 504th EMIB incoming commander, stand at parade rest during a ceremony July 8, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. Trotter lead the brigade for two years. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon)

504th EMIB command changes hands

Story by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

Photos By Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon

The 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade switched hands from Col. Deitra Trotter to Col. Bryan Leclerc during a ceremony July 8 at Sadowski Field on Fort Hood.

The in-person attendance was limited due to COVID-19 precautions, but the brigade offered a virtual attendance via their Facebook page where family members and Soldiers from the unit and across the world attended.

“TODAY IS A GREAT DAY FOR OUR ARMY as we recognize the accomplishments of the Army’s most decorated intelligence unit and the men and women, of all ranks, from every background imag-

inable,” Col. Deitra Trotter, the outgoing brigade commander, said. “From small towns and big cities, of every race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, naturalized, and home grown. American Soldiers, intelligence professionals second to none, the eyes and ears of America’s Hammer. They are trained, disciplined, fit, and resilient. They are ready now, and I am so very humbled to have been a part of this unit and serve with these Soldiers.”

Trotter served with the 504th EMIB for two years where she stared with the question of “what do you want to be?”

“The word picture that emerged, junior Soldiers, NCOs, warrant officers, platoon sergeants, command-

ers, leaders; created our collective vision, our standards of excellence,” she said.

DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, Trotter said the unit has made several accomplishments. They adapted the MICO, Military Intelligence Companies, MI training strategy for the unit, then validated a pilot program to become MI trainers for III Corps. The unit spearheaded improvement in intelligence readiness reporting in Global Combat Support System-Army as U.S. Army Forces Command’s pilot unit for the individual action plan. Intelligence systems are now captured in Army systems if record providing commanders with increased visibility of true readiness.

Soon, the brigade will begin an assessment of the latest version of the tactical ground station that will weigh in the Army’s fielding criteria. In addition, the unit will pilot the Interrogation Performance Test which is a FORSCOM and U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command initiative to improve tradecraft.

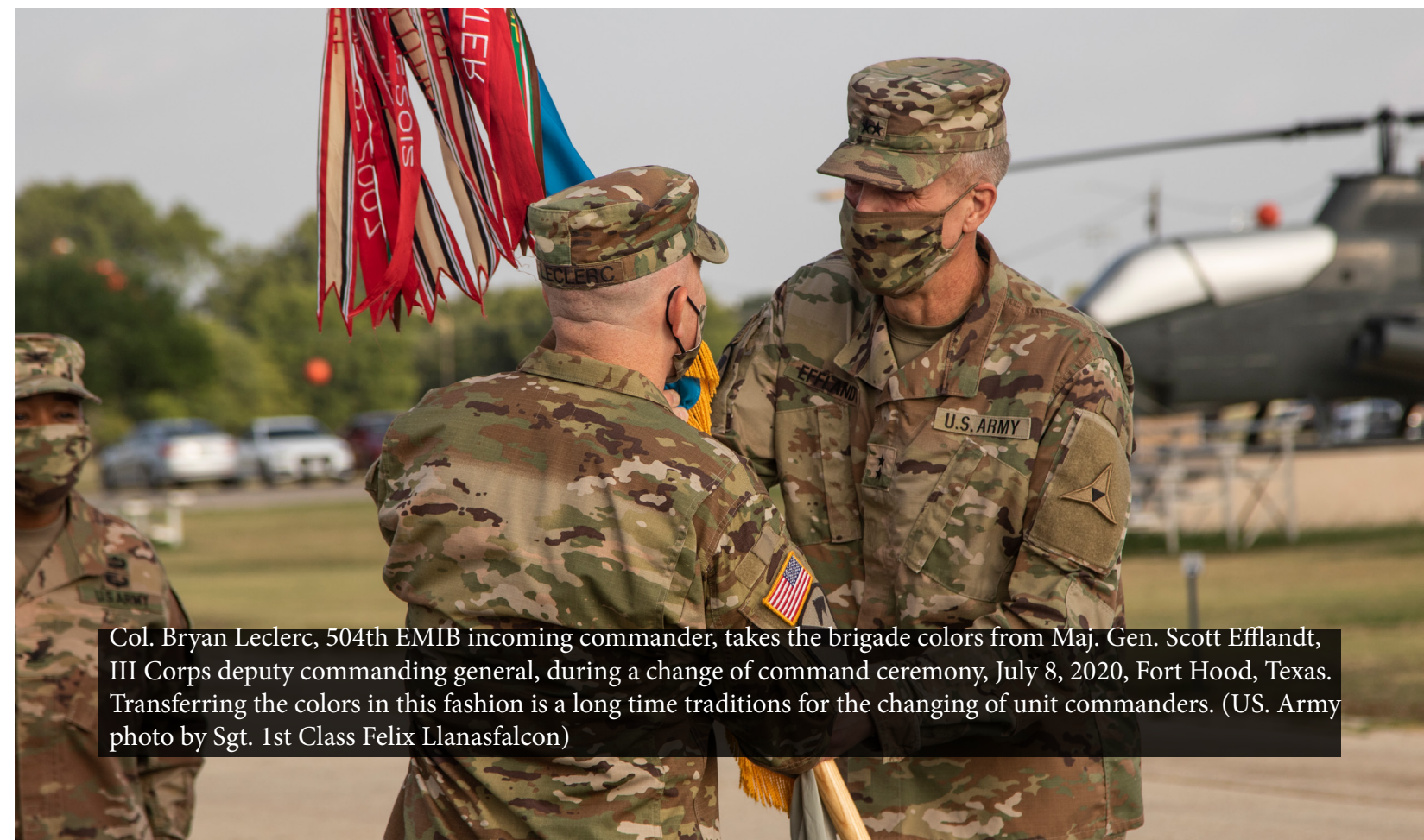
“The Always Ready Brigade was first in other ways,” Trotter said. “We lean forward on reform and set conditions for modernization. Also, sustaining lethality and providing trained teams to III Armored Corps, America’s 1st Corps, CJTF OIR, and others ... This is what I meant when I called us small but mighty. In size, the 504th MI Brigade is one of the

smallest units in III Armored Corps, but the impact is profound.

“FROM THE MOMENT THAT I ACCEPTED the colors at Bagram Airfield, until today, my focus and my promise has been to the Soldiers and families of the unit, to the proud history and legacy that brought us to this moment,” the outgoing commander said. “I have given you my best.”

Col. Bryan Leclerc has served a part of III Corps in the past. He is back to serve again.

“Thank you for the opportunity to command this great brigade and to be a part of the Phantom Corps again,” Leclerc said. “This is a tremendous honor and I’m looking forward to the opportunity. To the Soldiers of the 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade, you look great this morning. It is such an incredible honor to be a part of this team. Army intelligence has been around as long as the United States Army has existed. From Washington’s Spies and Kowltons Rangers in the Revolutionary War to our unmanned systems and multifunction teams, among many other new and emerging capabilities in our Army today. There is not place I would rather be.”



Col. Bryan Leclerc, 504th EMIB incoming commander, takes the brigade colors from Maj. Gen. Scott Efflandt, III Corps deputy commanding general, during a change of command ceremony, July 8, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. Transferring the colors in this fashion is a long time traditions for the changing of unit commanders. (US. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon)



Col. Bryan Leclerc, 504th EMIB commander, stands in front of his COVID-19 compliant reduced in person formation, July 8, 2020. During the pandemic, Soldiers were not allowed to gather in large groups. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon)



Bridging the gap in our community through art

Story and photos by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

The 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade and community members from the town of Nolanville, held a ceremony Saturday to unveil their Military Mural Tribute.

The Nolanville Economic Development Corporation commissioned local Artist Rudy Calooy and 12 other artists to capture the spirit of the military population. The project is intended to honor veterans, Soldiers and families by acknowledging the area history influenced by the military population. The murals showcase generations of Soldiers and units that have called Fort Hood home.

“I REMEMBER WHEN PEOPLE used to ask, ‘Where is Nolanville?’ Mayor Andy Williams said. “Now, when I talk to them, they say, ‘What’s going on in Nolanville?’ It doesn’t take

long for locals to find a commonality amongst each other in this area. Almost every person that you run into in Nolanville has some affiliation with

the military. Whether they are currently serving, retired, contractor or married to someone who is. That is why it is fitting for our surroundings to reflect our patriotism. Public art is one of the best ways to do it.”

Col. Bryan Leclerc, the 504th EMIB

“Public art strengthens community and pride. It imparts a broader understanding.”

Mayor Andy Williams, Nollanvile

commander, acknowledged the importance of a good relationship between Fort Hood and the surrounding communities.

“Bridging the gap between your community and the local military community is very important,” Leclerc said. “I think these murals are an absolutely beautiful way of doing that.”

“PUBLIC ART STRENGTHENS community identity and pride,” Williams said. “It imparts a broader understanding. Public art is accessible to everyone. The murals demonstrate our strong cultural influence from our military members. If you served in the military you probably already started conversation before the ceremony like, ‘Hey, I used to be in that unit’ or ‘I went to Iraq twice with that unit.’”

After the ceremony was complete, community members assisted with handing the final piece of art which showcased the 504th EMIB.

If you are interested in viewing the public art visit Monarch Park, 101 Gold Star Ave, Nolanville.





Soldiers with the 504th EMIB hold a piece of art in place while it is secured to a fence, Aug. 8, 2020, Nolanville, Texas. The Nolanville Economic Development Corporation commissioned local Artist Rudy Calooy and 12 other artists to capture the spirit of the military population. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)

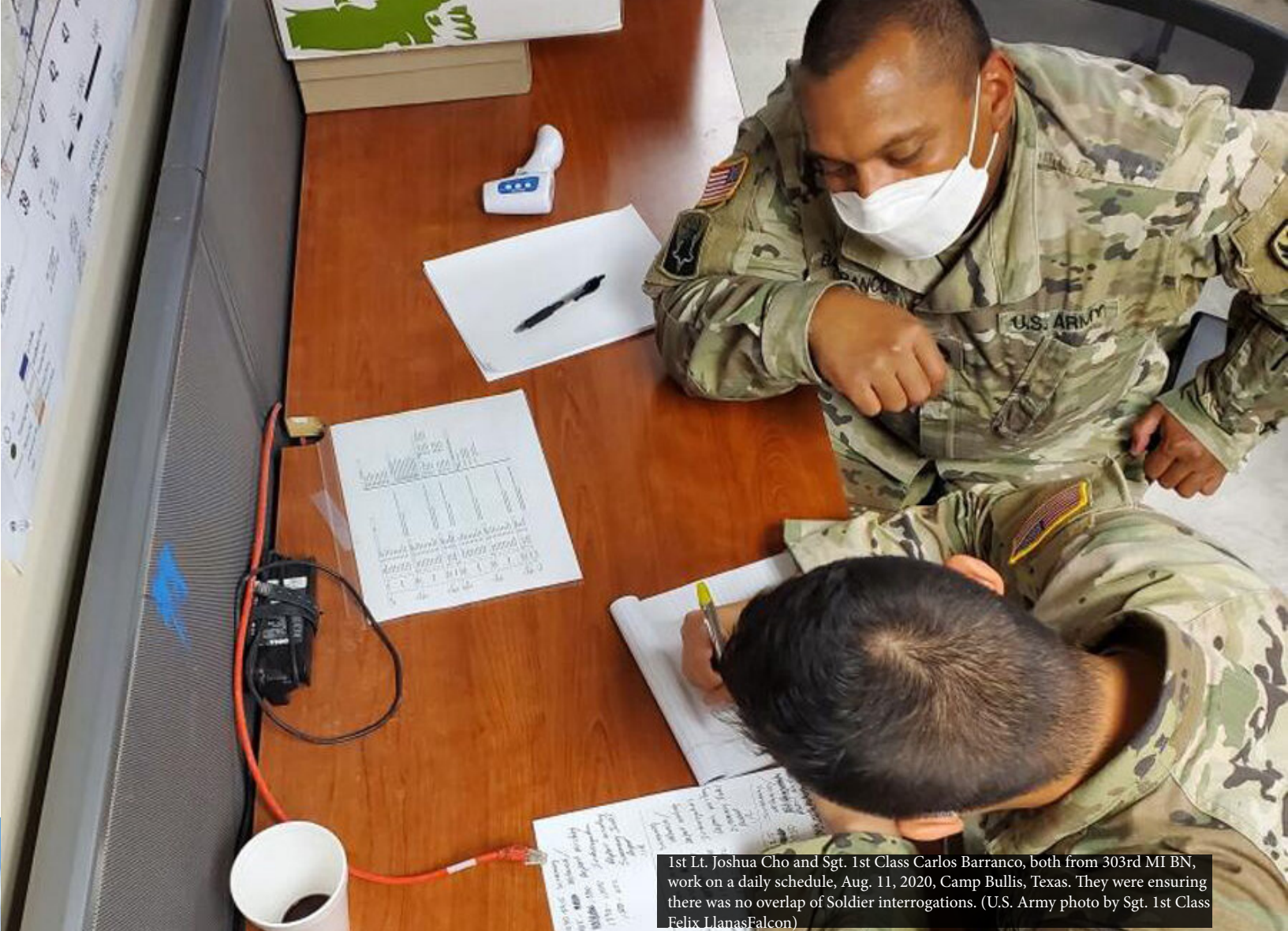
303rd MI BN conducts team training
Story by Sgt. Lessard
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon

During the hot sweltering weeks of August the 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Expeditionary MI Brigade, conducted training here. The 504th routinely trains here throughout the year, but this time the battalion tested several processes, such as the new integration to multi-function teams and a pilot program called FORSCOM Interrogations Performance Testing. “OUR UNIT RECENTLY REALIGNED to the format of MFT,” Sgt. James League, Company B, 303rd MI Bn., 504th EMIB, said. “It was more like a test to see where we are at as far as accomplishing tasks, bringing out (signals intelligence) and (human intelligence) and see how they work together.” The signals intelligence uses various equipment to examine foreign communications and relay the information back to higher command. Human intelligence collectors gather intelligence from humans and send the information to higher command.

ONE OF THE KEY DIFFERENCES with this recent training is that it’s on a COVID environment. “It was definitely different,” Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon, 303rd MI Bn., said. “Interrogations used a divider made from PVC pipe. Masks were taken off to see facial expressions but there was a barrier. We utilized the entire building so Soldiers were able to have distance. There was one door for going in, and one door for going out. There were also temperature checks. Hand sanitizer was everywhere.” For the Soldiers in the field and not in the building, it was a little different, especially with outside temperatures on the rise. “Obviously, we have to take steps to make sure we are not spreading COVID,” League said. “I don’t think much changed, we accomplished everything that we needed to. Just everything was done wearing masks. It was hot, so wearing masks was not optimal. Every day was a heat CAT 5.” League said that during missions there



Capt. Newell, 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Expeditionary MI Brigade, leads a convoy out for a road test Aug. 10, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. The unit is preparing for an exercise later this month. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon)



1st Lt. Joshua Cho and Sgt. 1st Class Carlos Barranco, both from 303rd MI BN, work on a daily schedule, Aug. 11, 2020, Camp Bullis, Texas. They were ensuring there was no overlap of Soldier interrogations. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Felix LlanasFalcon)

were times that Soldiers were able to take their masks off because of social distancing. Soldiers perform with the equipment. They were able to use older signals systems. He said that skills can depreciate over time and it is important to train at the individual and collective levels. Both Llanasfalcon and League saw more cohesion with teams as a result of more quad level training. “Each day we were swapping leadership levels,” League said. “That tied into movement, planning chow, and executing the mission. It put people in a position to gain perspective on the collective mission.” “A lot of team leaders took pride and ownership in what they were doing,” Llanasfalcon said.

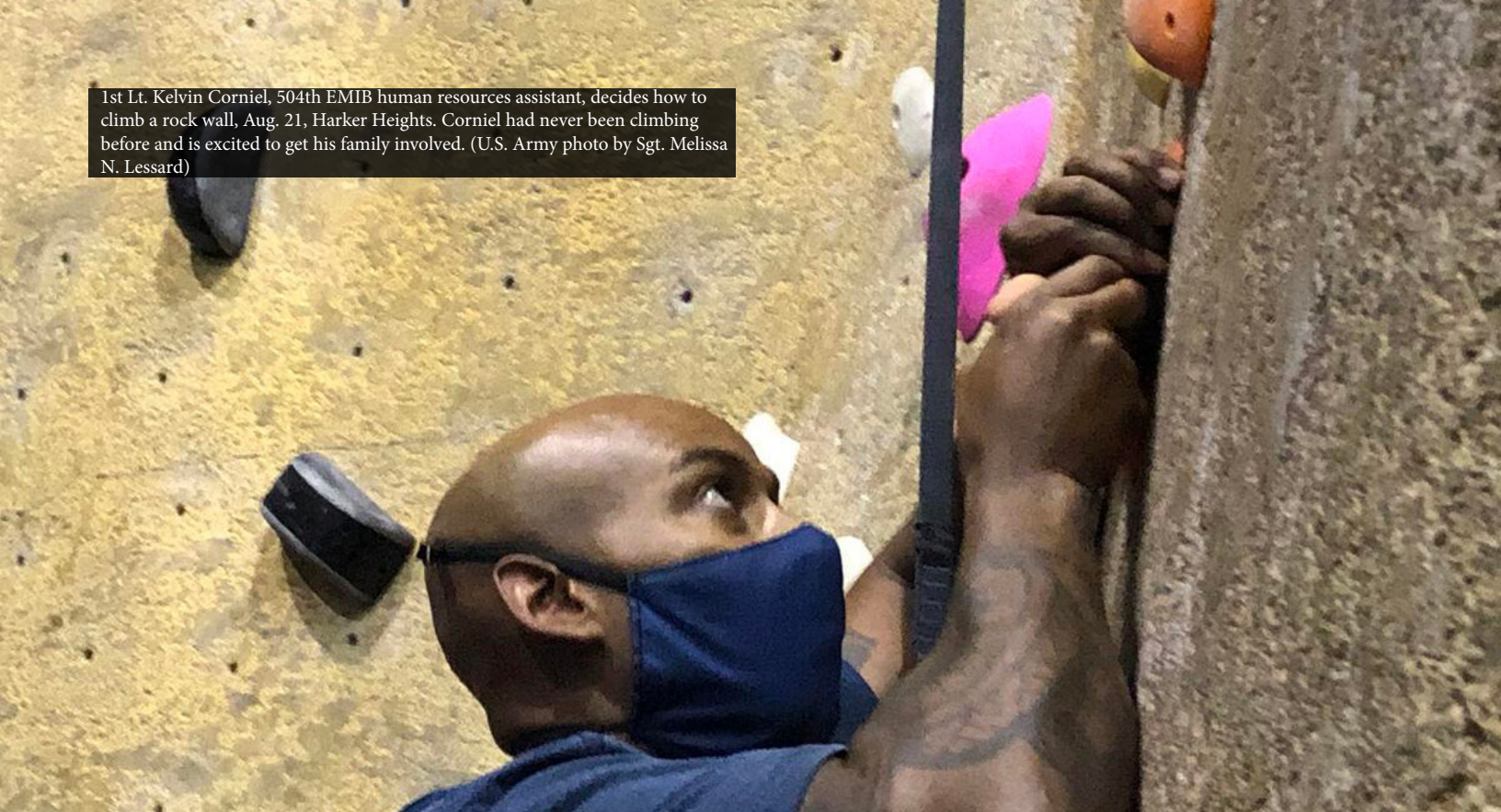
“Everyone came out there with a willingness to learn.”
Sgt. James League

“EVERYONE CAME OUT THERE with a willingness to learn,” League said. “Our platoon only became an MFT platoon a few months ago. We saw a lot of growth on both sides of the house. A lot of knowledge was shared between SIGINT and HUMINT. A lot of faces out there amazed at what we are capable of.” League said that it is important to continuously train so teams are able to assess where they



Lt. Jesus Ortiz, 303rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 504th Expeditionary MI Brigade, briefs B Company Soldiers, Aug. 11, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. Ortiz briefed safety, concerns, clarity, double checked loads, and last minute Soldier questions. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Felix Llanasfalcon)

1st Lt. Kelvin Corniel, 504th EMIB human resources assistant, decides how to climb a rock wall, Aug. 21, Harker Heights. Corniel had never been climbing before and is excited to get his family involved. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)



‘Rocking’ creative and critical thinking

Story by: Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

Photos by CH (Maj.) Lim

Look down, the ground is 20 feet away. Look up, the top is 20 feet away. Chalk dust is the only element keeping clammy hands from slipping on simulated rocks. Critical and creativity thinking skills are at the forefront, trying to figure out how to reach the top.

The 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade Deputy Commander Lt. Col. Yukio Kuniyuki took a small group of staff officers to conduct leaders time training at a local rock climbing gym Aug. 21.

“THE PURPOSE WAS TO BUILD cohesion, conduct physical fitness and to raise awareness that, in our diverse, multigenerational Army, there is a lot of hidden potential that we can cultivate,” Kuniyuki said. “I think that it is important that we put leaders in situations where they must challenge themselves and encour-

age each other to overcome obstacles. Sometimes, we focus too much on things we can’t do, and don’t realize that each of us has the innate ability to learn a new skill or get stronger.”

The activity gave leadership time to learn about themselves and others.

1st Lt. Kelvin Corniel, brigade human resources assistant, said he didn’t trust the process at first. He went all the way to the top of the wall. A participant told him to let go and rappel down. Corniel paused for a minute or two, not

wanting to let go. In the end, he had to learn to trust the process, let go and rappel down.

“YOU CAN’T JUDGE SOMEONE based on their outward appearance. Everyone has an internal strength that you may not see. You won’t often see determination,

“You can’t judge someone base on their outward appearance.”

Lt. Col. (Ret) Yukio Kuniyuki

heart or courage until they are given the right conditions to manifest,” Kuniyuki said.

“Rock climbing is one of those abilities that you can’t learn overnight,” he added. “It take patience, repetition, and dedication to get better every day. Most importantly, it teaches thoughtful decision making with elements of critical and creative thinking. These are all important attributes that are also the foundation of building resiliency.”

Kuniyuki said that creative thinking is essential to solving future problems.

“IT IS EASY TO SOLVE THINGS that you have experienced before, but new problems require new insight or innovation,” he said. “Across

the military, innovation is becoming a key line of effort to improve organizations and prepare us for the complexity of tomorrows challenges.”

Corniel said that it was his first time participating in rock climbing. He said that rock climbing fosters critical and creative thinking, when he and the other Soldiers assisted with guiding the climbers on where to put their hands and feet.

Both Soldiers said they enjoyed their time and are looking forward to the next event.

August happenings across the brigade



Left: Chief Warrant Officer 4 Anthony Dobresnski, 504th Military Intelligence Brigade property book officer, was promoted Aug. 13! His family had the honor of attaching his new rank to his Army Service Uniform. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Lim)

Bottom: What do you do when COVID interrupts your daily schedule? This Soldier didn’t let it happen. Cpl. Nicholas Jones received an impact Army Achievement Medal Aug. 24 for his superior leadership actions June through July. He took on the role as Human Resources noncommissioned officer in charge. (U.S. Army photo by Maj. Lim)





West Fort Hood NCO Induction

Story and photos by: Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard

The 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade hosted a multi-service Noncommissioned Officer Induction Oct. 29 at the Howze Auditorium. Soldiers and Airmen from West Fort Hood, gathered to celebrate their new status as an NCO during a ceremony.

37 Soldiers and Airmen who were inducted were from the following units: 504th EMIB Headquarters and Headquarters

Company, 303rd MI Battalion, 163rd MI BN, 1st Cavalry Division F/1-227th Aviation BN, Observer Trainer Control (OTC), and 3rd Combat Weather Squadron.

Soldiers and Airmen were able to experience the lighting of the red, white, and blue symbolic candles, the historic “birth” of an NCO, walking under the NCO arches, and receiving the Charge of the Noncommissioned Officer.

“For an enlisted Soldier, there are what I consider

three big moments in their careers,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Veronica Regalbuti, 89th Military Police Brigade CSM. “The first one is when we raise our right hand and took an oath to volunteer to serve in the United States Army.”

“The second biggest moment is what we are recognizing today. Becoming a noncommissioned officer and being inducted into the Corps,” she

said. “The third is when we reach and earn the title of senior noncommissioned officer.”

Sgt. Seungkyul L. Park, an intelligence analyst with Observer Trainer Control (OTC), said he felt incredibly proud to be a part of the NCO induction ceremony. He said it generated a positive outlook about his future in the Army.

“Over the past several years, Soldiers and leaders have asked me why I continue to serve,” said Regalbuti. “Well, I always made a promise to myself that as

long as I’m still having fun, and able to do the things that I need to do, that I’ll keep going. So I’m still having fun and I am still able to do the things that I’m asking my Soldiers to do.”

She said, to put it into context, that if she is asking her soldiers to qualify on weapons, pick up trash, or work weekends, then she will be there right by them doing the same.

“Never as a Soldier to do anything that you are not willing to do yourself,” she said. “In order to build mutual trust and cohesive teams, we must all have shared adversity.”

Park said that being able to develop other people, Soldiers, is the most significant part of his Army career. He said that he has a leader, Staff Sgt. Miguel Ramierez, who has left a lasting impact on Park.

“He is an influential leader. He is kind, attentive, and a genuine leader,” Park said.

Regalbuti said that knowing her Soldiers inside and out she could anticipate their needs should the occasion arise.

“They know I was invested in them, and their families. So, in return, they gave me everything when it came to training and our mission,” she said.

“In order to build mutual trust and cohesive teams, we must all have shared adversity.”
CSM Veronica Ragalbuit



SrA Chase Himes, 3rd Combat Weather Squadron, walks under the Noncommissioned Officer arches as he participates in an NCO Induction ceremony, Oct. 28, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. The 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade hosted a multi-service induction ceremony. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)

III Corps command team announces People First plan

By III Corps Public Affairs November 19, 2020



III Corps’ “Operation People First” continues for Soldiers, families and civilian workers across all III Corps units and their communities.

“We are announcing “Operation People First,” an initiative that ensures Soldiers, families and civilians are always at the core of what we do. Throughout this initiative, Soldiers should expect engaged, personal leadership,” Lt. Gen. Pat White, III Corps and Fort Hood commanding general, said here, Nov. 17. “Leadership is a contract between the leader and the led. Ultimately, Soldiers should expect that leaders know their teams; are invested in taking action to solve problems; and are committed to both demonstrate and enforce standards.”

“Operation People First” prioritizes a back-to-basics, people-first approach to leadership and will focus on restoring the fundamentals of engaged personal leadership to restore trust with Soldiers, families, civilians and military communities.

“Our goal is to promote a positive culture across our formations. Soldiers should demand that leaders put



their welfare, professional development and readiness first,” Command Sgt. Major Cliff Burgoyne, III Corps and Fort Hood command sergeant major, said. “Our Soldiers, families, and civilians across our teams can expect that leadership will seek your input and listen to your concerns. We will be highly trained, disciplined and fit, and give our people time with their loved ones.”

Operation People First will be conducted in three phases. The first phase focuses on getting to know Soldiers and building trust; it began Oct. 19 and runs through early December and concludes with a III Corps-wide People First Action Week. Phase two will incorporate leader certification programs and a servant leadership forum. Phase three will culminate in assessments that analyze the effectiveness of the initiative. This is a 12-month initiative that will be refined based on bottom-up feedback.

Operation People First is for all III Corps Soldiers which includes Fort Hood and Fort Bliss, Texas; Fort Carson, Colorado; and Fort Riley, Kansas and Fort Sill, Oklahoma.

Fort Hood Review



Secretary of the Army Ryan D. McCarthy and the five civilian members of the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee unveiled the results of a three-month examination of the command climate and culture at Fort Hood and the surrounding military community on Dec. 8, 2020.

The independent review, which was directed by Secretary McCarthy, arose from the questions and concerns voiced by family members, Congress, and

diversity, and freedom from sexual harassment.

Committee members Chris Swecker, Jonathan Harmon, Carrie Ricci, Queta Rodriguez and Jack White conducted a two-week fact-finding mission to the Texas base, meeting with unit leaders, Soldiers, members of the Guillén family, local officials, law enforcement and community groups.

The 136-page Report of the Fort Hood Independent Review Committee offers findings and recom-

“Leaders, regardless of rank, are accountable for what happens in their units and must have the courage to speak up and intervene when they recognize actions that bring harm to our Soldiers and to the integrity of our institution.”

-Secretary of the Army Ryan McCarthy

various Hispanic advocacy groups during the investigation into the disappearance and murder of Spc. Vanessa Guillén.

The committee examined the command climate and culture at Fort Hood and the surrounding military community to determine whether they reflect the Army’s commitment to safety, respect, inclusiveness,

mendations intended to benefit Fort Hood and the entire Army. In response, the Secretary McCarthy has taken significant measures to hold leaders accountable at Fort Hood, instituted a new policy on missing Soldiers and formed the People First Task Force to map out a plan to tackle issues identified in the report.



“Soldiers are entitled to outstanding leadership, and we need to live up to that expectation.”

~Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Mabanag



#Thisismysquad PT from maintenance and S1



Ready Warrior Gauntlet

Story by: Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Fleix Llanasfalcon

On the dark morning of Oct. 8, seven teams from the 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade representing each company stood ready to start their morning competition called the Ready Warrior Gauntlet.

“ON YOUR MARK, GET SET, GO,” yelled Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Dunn, brigade security section noncommissioned officer in charge. The Soldiers started in line with their guidon bearers leading the way through the starting point and into a gauntlet of unknown challenges.

Soldiers executed a short run and then started competing on the Always Ready Field in an event called the “house of pain.” They completed dead lifts, bear

crawls, drags, and rowing. After the Soldiers completed this event they moved on to an event called “hell on wheels.”

Dunn said during this event Soldiers lunged for 50 meters ensuring they were fatigued before pushing a HMMWV for another 50 meters.

After this event, Soldiers ran to the West Fort Hood Obstacle Course to complete their final event called the “slaughter house.”

“The goal for today was to try to invoke esprit de corps and unit morale for the whole brigade,” Dunn said. “The victors get some morale prizes.”

“After my first event, the bear crawl and t-push up, it took most everything that I had to keep pushing,” said Spc. Paul Guadian, B Company, 163rd MI Battalion.



A Soldiers with 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade pushes a sled during the Ready Warrior Gauntlet, Oct. 8, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Fleix Llanasfalcon)

He said that what kept him motivated to continue was knowing that it wasn’t going to last all day, the fun of the event, and the bonding with his teammates.

“1STPLACEORNOPLACE,IamgladIwas with my team the whole time,” Guadian said.

Dunn said that the morale and motivation was phenomenal. The teams were supported by their companies. Fellow Soldiers ran alongside them the whole way.

He said that he and the command sgt. maj. had been planning the event for over a year but COVID-19 delayed it.

“Everyone was pumped and excited to be here,” he said.

B Company, 163rd MI BN, 504th EMIB placed first in the Ready Warrior Gauntlet. They earned a streamer, which they have so many streamers, it didn’t fit. They also won a shield and sword.

Guadian said he plans to come in first again during the next competition.



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Mabanag, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade senior enlisted advisor, explains the physical training course, Oct. 8, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas.. The course involved many challenges for the teams. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard)



A Soldiers with 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade performs a rowing event during a physical fitness competition, Oct. 8, 2020, Fort Hood, Texas. Members of the team had the option of tagging out and taking over the event. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Fleix Llanasfalcon)



Soldiers with 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade pose for a group photo with members of the Nolanville First United Methodist Church, Nov. 20, 2020, Nolanville, Texas. The food will be transferred to the food pantry for distribution. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Tyler Tanaka)

The season for giving

Story by: **Sgt. Melissa N. Lessard**

Photos by **Spc. Tyler Tanaka**

In this quaint town, a place where the small town connections are very strong, Soldiers from the 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade conveyed to the Nolanville First United Methodist Church to donate 4,874 lbs. of nonperishable food on Nov. 20.

Spc. Dayna Fyffe, the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers representative with the 504th EMIB, connected with the church, which is often the first place donated food goes to before it goes to the food pantry. She said that she made a list of nonperishable food items and worked with brigade leadership to make the donation happen.

After her battalion's turkey trot, she and a crew of Soldiers loaded between five to seven vehicles of food.

"I gave Ms. Warden a call saying, 'Hey, we are going to have a little more than you expected,'" Fyffe said.

Patricia Warden, who has been a Methodist pastor since 1977, said she has worked for the church for a little over six years. She receives donations regularly, sorts them, and then gives the food to the Nolanville Food Pantry.

Warden said that the more food items they have, the easier it is to meet on the spot needs. On the spot needs are emergency situations such as domestic violence cases or other cases that warrant the need.

When the Soldiers arrived at the church, unloading commenced.

"I wasn't sure how big of a turn out it was going to be," Fyffe said.

"Seeing their faces, it brought a smile to my face. I think they were a little overwhelmed, at first, with everything. But hearing her talk about how happy she was made it worth it."

Warden said the food pantry feeds generally 70 families per week. This past week, they fed 104 families. This equals to about 600 people because of the children involved.

"Knowing how many family members we potentially helped is very heartwarming," Fyffe said.

The food pantry is open 2 p.m.-6 p.m. on the second and fourth Thursday of the month, January through October. November and December the pantry is open on the first and third Thursday of the month.



Top: Spc. Flores Jimenez, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade, sets donated nonperishable food down, Nov. 20, 2020, Nolanville, Texas. The brigade donated 4,874 lbs. during this event. (U.S. Army photo by Tyler Tanaka) Bottom: Soldiers with 504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade wait in line with nonperishable food items, Nov. 20, 2020, Nolanville, Texas. Food items needed to be weighed prior to entering the church. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Tyler Tanaka)





Santa's Workshop opens for the season

Story and photos by: Brandy Cruz

The “Happiest Place on Fort Hood” has officially opened its doors for the season, ready to provide thousands of toys to families across the installation.

Fort Hood's Santa's Workshop began its shop days Monday, giving out toys to 160 children on the first day. By the end of the season, they will have given presents to more than 2,600 Fort Hood children.

“We're able to give some peace of mind and give back to the Soldiers here on Fort Hood,” Kathryn Light, president of Santa's Workshop, said. “For us, there's really nothing greater.”

Shop days at Santa's Workshop is the culmination of a year of hard work. As soon as the Christmas season is officially over, Light said they are already thinking and preparing for the next Christmas. However, she explained that for the safety of everyone, shop days will be different this year.

“If just one of us tests positive (for COVID), our whole operation shuts down,” she explained. “We are taking every precaution we can to keep our families

safe, our board safe and we're able to continue to operate.”

They limit the number of hands that touch the toys, instead of the parents shopping for their children, Santa's Workshop elves will be shopping, with the help of a revamped application, where the parents could include their child's interests and even specify what their child has been wanting.

Using the applications, Light said Lisa Redford, Santa's Workshop toy buyer can target her buying needs. The non-profit organization also receives help from Fort Hood units, who host toy drive ruck marches in support of Santa's Workshop. She said it is a joy to see the Soldiers ruck to the facility to deliver the toys and seeing firsthand how happy it makes the Soldiers.

“They'll have Christmas lights and garland on their rucks, elf hats and Christmas suits or decked out in ugly sweaters,” she said. “It's a fun morale boost for the Soldiers and it's very helpful to us.”

Soldiers from the 303rd Military Intelligence Bat-

talion, 504th Expeditionary MI Brigade, conducted a four-mile ruck march to Santa's Workshop Nov. 13 to deliver several hundred toys for Fort Hood families. Staff Sgt. Jonathan Tradem, command financial specialist, said small gestures, like the ruck march, show how much they care about the entire Army family.

“It is important as members of command – leaders – that we make sure we engage with Soldiers,” he said. “To build that trust ... This event, and others like it, are a main way to do that. It shows that we care about their family. Not just at work, but at home as well.”

Light said they are able to communicate with the units what items were needed. This year, they received more than 2,000 toys from units across post, including several Baby Yoda toys, which she said are Christmas must-haves right now.

When families arrive during their designated time to pick up toys, they will be greeted by Santa Claus, who has a seat positioned near the entrance. After checking in, their pre-bagged toys will be brought up. The hard work of the volunteers at Santa's

Left: Santa Clause sits at the entrance to Fort Hood Santa's Workshop, to greet families as they pick up toys for their children. (U.S. Army photo by Brandy Cruz, Fort Hood Sentinel Editor) Left: A Christmas ordainment is displayed on the 1st Calvary Division Christmas tree that sits inside Santa's Workshop. Units across post adopt these trees each season. (U.S. Army photo by Brandy Cruz, Fort Hood Sentinel Editor)



Workshop make shopping for Christmas one less thing for the more than 1,400 families to worry about this season.

“Whether the families are in person or we're shopping for them, we want to provide a world-class shopping experience for them. I don't think it will hamper the gratitude and excitement about being able to get something for their kids,” Light said. “It's not the number of families we serve each year, it's just knowing that our fellow military families are going to have their kids wake up and have something under the tree and that's hugely satisfying.”

Light said they are still in need of some elf volunteers, especially during the afternoon hours, when families are picking up their children from school. To volunteer as an elf at the “Happiest Place on Fort Hood,” visit <https://tiny.cc/SWSvolunteer>.

“How could you not be happy around Christmas presents and Christmas trees? This is our most exciting time,” Light added. “There's no greater privilege than to serve Soldiers and families.”

Editor's note: Sgt. Melissa Lessard, 504th EMIB

Celebrate the holidays at a safe social distance

By: Col. Bryan Leclerc



It's that time of year – the holiday season! By this point, most of the leftover Thanksgiving turkey is gone; Christmas music is playing on the radio (and not just in the stores), and holiday decorations are up. It's time for family and spending time with those we love. It's time for homemade fudge, cookies and pies. It's time for hot chocolate, warm blankets and watching our favorite holiday shows on TV. It's time for giving gifts, sending cards and reconnecting with friends we might not have heard from in a while.

But this holiday season is different. This year has been unprecedented in terms of the challenges we have faced including: continuing unit rotations overseas, social and racial tension across the country, a global pandemic that seems to be surging again and forcing more into quarantine and isolation, and a bitter and divided election season that has left some with hope and others feeling disappointed.

We need the joyous holiday season and that holiday spirit now more than ever. Whatever your religion, whatever your tradition – indulge! Put up a few more decorations – go all out like Clark W. Griswold! Eat one more piece of fudge or just a little more pie. Go ahead and watch “A Christmas Story” on loop a few times. And make that phone call to your friends and loved ones – reconnect and make plans for the future.

Unfortunately, the holiday season can instill some with loneliness, especially our single Soldiers, deployed Soldiers, and geographical bachelors. This

is why cohesive teams and knowing our Soldiers is so important – check on your battle buddies and see what their plans are for the holidays. If they don't have plans, include them in yours if possible. This is also a great time for units to ramp up their Family Readiness Group events and encourage participation from all. Get the team together to celebrate the holidays and all our accomplishments from this past year and make some care packages for our deployed Soldiers so they remember how much we miss them.

Whatever you do – do it responsibly. Wear a mask. Practice social distancing. Pay attention to the COVID-19 trends in your area and where you plan to spend time or go on leave. If you are ill or symptomatic, stay at home until you feel better.

With this in mind, to boost your holiday spirit even further, go check out Nature in Lights at the Belton Lake Outdoor Recreation Area. Nature in Lights has occurred annually for the past 24 years and given that it's a five and a half mile automobile tour it's also an awesome way to get into the holiday spirit while also staying socially distanced! Nature in Lights is open now through Jan. 3, 2021 from 5:30-11:00 p.m. daily to include Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. Monday thru Wednesday you can receive the 13th edition Nature in Lights ornament, but only while supplies last – so get there early! Check out Fort Hood MWR online (www.hood.armymwr.com) for more details. Have a very happy holiday and stay safe!

BDE Career Counselors



My name is Sfc. Wallace, and I grew up in the great state of Arizona. I joined the Army as a Human Resources Specialist. Years into my career, I was selected for recruiting duty. While on recruiting duty I found a new passion in helping change civilians lives. I then decided to stay in the recruiting and retention field by changing my MOS to Career Counselor. Every day brings a new and rewarding challenge and I look forward to each one. When I'm not working, almost all of my free time is spent with my family.



My name is SSG Lewis. In August 2018, I reclassified to be a Career Counselor. Prior to that, I was a Financial Management NCO and I served as the Retention NCO as additional duty which made me desire to be a Career Counselor. Upon graduation, I was assigned to 163rd Military Intelligence Battalion and been exceeding the mission which led to the 504th EMIB commendation for completing the mission first among DRU III Corps. Nothing can compare the fulfillment I feel not only when the mission is completed but most importantly when I am able to help the Army keep the best Soldiers.



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504th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade