



Vol. I, Issue 15

# THE RESPONDER

Telling the Joint Task Force-Haiti story

*a call to duty*

April 3, 2010



Members of the 24th AEG SPEARR team unload casualties from an ambulance. The team conducted a mass casualty exercise April 1. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. William R. Begley/11th PAD)

## Medical team conducts mass casualty exercise

by Spc. William Begley  
11th PAD

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti—When the earthquake rocked Haiti on Jan. 12th, the medical need to handle large numbers of wounded was greatly magnified. Months later the urgent need for that type of critical response has declined, but that doesn't mean the service members here are resting on their laurels.

The 24th Air Expeditionary Group (AEG) and its Small, Portable, Expeditionary, Rapid Response (SPEARR) team conducted a mass casualty exercise in several locations

throughout the Port-Au-Prince area April 1.

The SPEARR team exercised their ability to work with the Army units in the area.

Maj. Jayson Dock, SPEARR team member, 24th AEG, commented on the humble clinic that he is helping to run.

"It's pretty amazing what you can do," said Dock. "You look at this stuff and it's all pretty primitive. But, its purpose is to save a life in a pretty austere environment. And, it does just that."

In a mass casualty exercise there is a mock scenario which the units involved are

given and then respond to as if it were the real deal. This exercise scenario was an auto accident in which nine Soldiers ended up at the SPEARR being treated for everything from critical wounds to minor injuries.

The day started off like any other day with the SPEARR team going about their normal routine.

Then the call came in. Ambulances were dispatched to the scene where casualties were triaged. Triage, a French word that means "to sort," is the process of determining those patients who need

immediate care and those who can wait.

The patients were then transported to various locations determined by the complexity of the trauma.

When the ambulances arrived at the SPEARR, several doctors were waiting and the triage process quickly placed patients in the intensive care unit or operating room depending on their wounds.

SPEARR team leader Lt. Col. Terence Lonergan, an emergency room physician with the 24th AEG, quickly

**see EXERCISE on p. 4**

## “Assuaging the Different”

by Col. Richard Gary Moore  
JTF-Haiti Chaplain

Earlier this week I spoke with a gracious Haitian lady who was about to stand up and talk to a large crowd.

The gathering of people was to remember the crushing loss of life, to hope for a new future and to express gratitude to all those who helped after the Jan. 12 earthquake.

I prayed with her on the spot then asked her to take three deep breaths just before she stood up to share a few words from her heart. She and her sister spoke and connected with all of us.

She set the conditions to bulwark her capacity for a very sad, but important mission that day under the 200 year old mahogany tree she and her sister played around as children.

In the middle of things on that day, she found a person, the Living God, who is the same yesterday, today and forever.

She looked to the author and finisher of her faith to walk with her through her very different day. I am still so proud of her... she's got "Fizz in her Pepsi!"

We have different days with different people that cumulate in making us different... we grow and strengthen on the inside.

Nelson Mandela in *A Long Walk to Freedom* relates, "There is nothing like returning to a place that remains unchanged to find the ways in which you yourself have altered."

So, where did you play as a child...around a tree in your yard, at a beach, at an elementary school playground...and how have you changed?



Lt. Col. Edward Grice, Army Reserve Chaplain, deployed with 377th Theater Sustainment Command from Belle Chasse, La., celebrated a Mass for service members and civilians in a field chapel at a military camp near Toussaint L'Ouverture Airport. Grice, a priest at the Our Lady of Prompt Succor in Westwego, La., is deployed with his unit in support of Operation Unified Response. (U.S. Army photo by Cpt. Jose R. Emperador/377th Theater Sustainment Cmd)

## JTF- Haiti Worship Services for Easter Sunday

	EMBASSY	377 <sup>TH</sup> JLC	LSA HOPE	USAF CHAPEL	209 <sup>th</sup> MP Co	SPOD
EASTER VIGIL MASS Sunday				1900		
Easter Sunday Mass	0900	1130	1730			1400
Protestant Services Sunday	0800	1030	1100 & 1900	1200		1400
LDS- Mormons Sunday				1300		
Easter Sunday night Mass					1900	



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# Chow time gets little hotter, little better

by Pvt. Cody Barber  
11<sup>th</sup> PAD

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti – Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) are not the only option service members have to choose from when wanting something to eat.

With the combined efforts of cooks deployed from both U.S. Army South and 209th Military Police Company, both breakfast and dinner are served at LSA Dragon for service members wanting a fresh, hot meal.

Staff Sgt. Calvin Anderson, a food service specialist deployed from U.S. Army South, is in charge of giving the troops an alternative to MRE's.

"The purpose of our job is to put out hot meals to the Soldiers on a daily basis," said Anderson.

The containerized kitchen (CK) unit currently used is a 20-foot container customized into a kitchen. When closed up, it looks like nothing more than a conex on wheels. It's loaded with equipment such as two refrigerators, two stoves, oven, sink, warming trays, air



Spc. Amanda Lucas, food service specialist, 209th Military Police Company, prepares dinner for the Soldiers at LSA Dragon on April 2. She is placing the freshly made teriyaki chicken onto a warming tray so service members can enjoy a hot meal. (U.S. Army photo by Cody Barber/11<sup>th</sup> PAD)

conditioner and 10k generator.

The CK has yet to let them down and they have not, thus far, missed a meal.

"It is working perfectly," said Anderson. "It's performing way beyond the Mobilized Kitchen Trailer that was formerly at LSA Dragon. The CK puts out a greater quantity of food and

holds twice as many people."

In the morning they serve a variety of foods such as eggs, bacon, sausage, pancakes and donuts. For dinner, they have an assortment of foods from steak, chicken, corn, rice and spaghetti.

"We prepare everything," said Anderson. "We make

the punch, coffee, food and deserts."

Each day brings a new meal and each day service members line up minutes prior to serving time. They can then take their meal to an air conditioned tent and sit down to relax. They can chat, laugh and talk about the day.

"It's a great improvement from MRE's and Heater Meals," said Senior Airman Joseph D. Meade, communication technician, deployed from the 49<sup>th</sup> Communications Squadron, "...they change it up every day and keep it new."

The Heaters Meals and MRE's are dreaded, said Meade. Knowing they have a hot meal cooked is a morale booster.

Serving out hot meals for breakfast and dinner has become greatly appreciated among the service members, said Anderson.

"We are thanked on a daily basis," said Anderson. "It feels good to know that we are appreciated and people notice the hard work we put into it every day."

## Military continues to support recovery in Haiti

by Judith Snyderman  
*Office of the Secretary of  
Defense Public Affairs*

WASHINGTON - The deputy commander of the military task force set up after a devastating Jan. 12 earthquake in Haiti said the U.S. military will continue to support the work of Haiti's government and international agencies after the task force is deactivated at the end of May.

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Simeon G. Trombitas, deputy commanding general, Joint Task Force-Haiti, noted during a DoD Live Bloggers Roundtable on April 1 that the mission in Haiti is out of the usual military lane.

"In a traditional military mission, we can designate

the enemy and do those things easily," he said. "Here, really, the adversaries are the forces of nature and time."

Another difference, Trombitas explained, is that instead of commanding and controlling the mission, the U.S. military has played a support role, "coordinating and collaborating" with lead agencies such as the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti, which provided security.

Trombitas said he is impressed by how well combat skills have transferred to the relief mission.

He observed that service members' experiences working with civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq have paid off in Haiti.

The general recalled that the Haiti mission started with work to bring "order from chaos" at the airport. He added that the Seabees performed "a Herculean effort in fixing the main pier [and] the south pier, with some underwater engineering there, bolstering the pylons that the pier stands on."

Current efforts are focused on preparing for the coming rainy season by relocating some of the 1.3 million displaced people from camps that are at risk for flooding, Trombitas said. He described the greatest needs as shelter, settlement and sanitation.

"We have the Seabees doing construction projects," he said. "We have the Air Force [helping at] the airfield and

one of the hospitals here. We have Marines integrated into the staff, as well as the Coast Guardsmen, and everyone's still doing their share."

At the peak of the crisis, some 20,000 U.S. service members were involved in the mission. A phased withdrawal has reduced that number to 2,300.

"Every Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine and Coast Guardsman that I have had the opportunity to talk to is extremely proud to be a part of this mission," Trombitas said. "And the leadership here is really proud to lead these folks and really even prouder to serve alongside them."

# U.S. Army South OSJA Information:

## Tax implications of Operation Unified Response deployment

- The Secretary of Defense has declared Operation Unified Response (OUR) a “contingency operation.” As such, taxpayers who deploy to Haiti in support of Operation Unified Response (OUR) will have the same tax filing extension advantages applicable to Afghanistan and Iraq deployments. However, as OUR is not a combat zone, the Combat Zone Exclusion of pay does not apply.
- 180 day deadline extension
  - Service in the Armed Forces on deployment outside the United States while participating in a contingency operation
  - Also applies to civilian personnel acting under the direction of the Armed Forces in support of those forces
  - Applies to all actions with the IRS including: filing tax returns, paying taxes, filing claims for a refund, etc.
  - 180 day extension runs from the date you last served in the contingency operation
- In addition to the 180 days, your deadline is extended by the number of days that were remaining for you to file your taxes when you entered the contingency operation
- Tax Power of Attorney
  - IRS Form 2848
  - Does not need to be notarized
  - Fill it out, sign it, and mail it to the person who will be your representative
- This is an automatic extension
- There is no requirement to notify the IRS
- If desired, IRS can be notified directly of status through a special e-mail address: [combatzone@irs.gov](mailto:combatzone@irs.gov) (This email address is also used for notifications given to the IRS stemming from presence in a combat zone).
- **\*Do not include Social Security Numbers in the e-mail.\***



- Notification may be made by the taxpayer, spouse, or authorized agent or representative.
- Be prepared to provide IRS with:
  - Name
  - Stateside address
  - Date of birth
  - Date of deployment to the combat zone
- For more information, please go to [IRS.gov/newsroom](http://IRS.gov/newsroom). If you have any questions, please discuss them with your site coordinator, contact your local IRS relationship manager or email [partner@irs.gov](mailto:partner@irs.gov).

### EXERCISE continued from p. 1

snapped into action.

“It’s always challenging to have a large volume of patients in a short period of time,” said Lonergan.

Lonergan’s team quickly handled the casualties and some members of the team walked through the actions they would take to treat certain types of injuries.

If this were a real-life scenario, the Critical Care Air Transport, (CCAT), would take any patients who could not be treated locally back to a hospital in the United States.

“Up until the recent Gulf wars, transporting patients by aircraft just wasn’t done,” said Dock. “You stayed

in country until you got better or died.”

Thankfully, that fate never entered the picture for the patients treated by the SPEARR.

One patient who was observant of the SPEARR team’s efforts was Lt. Col. Joyce Dallas, operations officer, 377th Joint Logistics Command. Dallas was playing the role of one of the casualties for the day.

“These guys worked hard to make sure we were alright,” said Dallas. “They are in tune with what’s going on with the patient and that’s important.”

After all was said and done, Maj. Jamison Elder, anesthesiologist, SPEARR team, commented on what he thought about the exercise.

“I think in terms of our capacity, this

definitely pushes what we can do here,” said Elder.

The SPEARR team leader was very pleased with the way that the exercise went.

“The main portion that we were all concerned with was the communication between all parties and that went well,” Lonergan said.

“Everybody worked well together, everybody knew their roles, and the patient transition from each area went very smoothly,” he said.

Understanding the team dynamic is crucial during a mass casualty exercise, and this team was exactly that, dynamic.



# Troops assist local orphanage

by Pvt. Cody Barber  
11th PAD

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti—Foyer L'Escale is an orphanage located in Bon Repo. This orphanage is home to 75 kids who have lost or have been separated from their parents in the earthquake that devastated Haiti on Jan. 12.

The U.S. military began volunteer efforts with this orphanage a few weeks ago. Maj. Aaron Jones, operations officer, Communications Division, JTF-Haiti and Cpt. Jenell Macias, knowledge management officer, Communications Division, JTF-Haiti, visited the camp on March 27 to hand out some gifts.

Walking out with opened boxes full of goodies, the kids swarmed them with smiling faces, trying to be first to receive what goods they were handing out.

"We gathered some supplies, both that were mailed in and



Cpt. Jenell Macias, knowledge management officer, Communications Division, JTF-Haiti, embraces a group of orphaned children at the Foyer Escale orphanage. She and many other service members went to the orphanage located in Bon Repo to hand out clothes, candy and toys. (U.S. Army photo by Pvt. Cody Barber/11th PAD)

store bought," said Macias. "We had about 30 boxes worth of stuff, from clothes to shoes, candy, coloring books, food and toys and we started giving them out."

The children's faces gleamed with happiness as they flipped through the coloring books or threw a new Frisbee around.

Most of the purchased items wouldn't have been made possible if it were not for the donations made by numerous giving people. One such person was country singer William K. Alphin, professionally known as "Big Kenny". Kenny held shows for the service members and visited orphanages in Haiti.

"The day he left, he gave \$2,000 dollars cash, which jump started the donations," said Jones.

The staff requested a refrigerator as well as school supplies for the children. They used Big Kenny's money to buy the refrigerator and the school supplies as well as many other essential such as a freezer, beds, bed sheets and tarps for the floors.

"We brought a lot of school supplies so the staff could start teaching the kids," said Jones. "They wanted to teach the kids geography so we brought them maps of Port-au-Prince."

After everything was handed out, the children were happily running around with toys in hand. The service members left the orphanage knowing that they had done a good deed and had made a connection with the children.

"Every time we arrive at the orphanage, the kids were in a good mood," said Jones. "They were always happy to see us and that's a good feeling."

## Joint Network Node keeps JLC-Haiti connected

by Lt. Col. Michael J. Perez  
377<sup>th</sup> TSC Public Affairs

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti - The Joint Network Node team of the 529<sup>th</sup> Network Support Company from Fort Sill, Okla. was deployed in support of Operation Unified Response in two groups, March 11 and 12.

Their mission was to set up and maintain a communications backbone for the Joint Logistics Command-Haiti, recently taken over by the 377<sup>th</sup> Theater Sustainment Command from Belle Chasse, La. in February.

To accomplish this mission, the JNN team used its satellite capabilities to establish secure and non-secure modes of communications. A local area computer network, voice over internet protocol phone network (digital telephone system with advanced calling features), regular phone network, and DoD internet access was set up on non-secure networks. Secure video teleconference and secure

internet access was set up on the secure network.

This gives JLC-H "a full array of clear communications and real time data capabilities to allow them to conduct their mission," said Spc. Benjamin Ehrlich, satellite transportable terminal operator, 529<sup>th</sup> NSC.

When not deployed to Haiti, the 529<sup>th</sup> NSC is part of the 168<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion at Fort Sill, Okla. When the JNN team found out they needed to support a separate forward operating base with communications, Sgt. Michael Washington, joint network node senior operator, 529<sup>th</sup> NSC, replied with 168<sup>th</sup> BSB motto, "We make it happen."

Even though this is the first deployment for the team, Sgt. Robert McKee, satellite transportable terminal operator, 529<sup>th</sup> NSC, said the team came down highly motivated and eager to show that the JNN array is a "highly mobile, highly reliable source of communications anytime, anywhere."

"We can set up the satellite and JNN within two hours and wire the end users in over one to two days depending on the number of drops", said 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Victoria Maynard, officer in charge, 529<sup>th</sup> NSC.

It is mission essential that the JLC-H maintains a global vision at all times. Providing a solid communications backbone is a necessity to that mission, and the JNN team provides the JLC-H with their window out to the world.

"Computer communications deals with several things: networking, servers, laptops, and data connectivity. You have to put all of these things together to make the mission a success," said Capt. Brian King, officer in charge, Communications Division, JLC-H. "The JNN team provides the data connectivity, and they are dedicated to their mission. It is reassuring though that the first person to know communications are down is the JNN platoon, and they are already working on a solution. It instills a great deal of faith in people to know signal Soldiers are there to get the job done".



# POSTCARDS FROM HAITI



Camp officials communicate the plan to relocate some Haitians within Petionville Golf Club, an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp so that improvements can be done before the start of the rainy season in April. Seabees from the Air Detachment, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Seven, assigned to Joint Task Force-Haiti are helping improve the living conditions of more than 40,000 homeless Haitians at the camp. (U.S. Navy Photo by Chief Mass Communications Specialist James G. Pinsky)



The National Cathedral of Haiti was partially destroyed in the Jan. 12 earthquake. Yet, citizens continue to attend church services just outside the building. (U.S. Army photo by Cody Barber/11th PAD)



Construction Electrician 3rd Class Andres Rubio Perez runs caution tape along the prospective path where heavy equipment will be working to improve the main road at Petionville Golf Club, an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp, so that improvements can be done before the start of the rainy season in April. Seabees from the Air Detachment, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Seven, assigned to Joint Task Force-Haiti, are helping improve the living conditions of more than 40,000 homeless Haitians at Petionville Golf Club IDP camp. (U.S. Navy Photo by Chief Mass Communications Specialist James G. Pinsky)