

ALUMNI NEWSLETTER



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Not your father's Combat Survival Training

Story and photo by Tech. Sgt. Joseph Harwood
179th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

MANSFIELD, Ohio - The need for aircrew combat survival refresher training has been around for as long as the Air Force has been flying aircraft, yet on a recent weekend something noticeably different was happening in the woods of north central Ohio.

"I had the opportunity to hear Secretary James discuss the need to embrace diversity of thought. That encouraged us to look for innovative ways to conduct reoccurring training," said Col. Mark "Kahuna" Auer, commander of the 179th Operations Group.

"We knew battlefield Airmen in Tactical Control Air Party (TACP) units possessed finely-honed land navigation, tactical movement and survival skills. And since TACPs attend the same basic survival course as aircrew, we knew they could speak the same language and our aircrew would benefit from their recent ground combat experience. We were all anxious to see what could be achieved by combining mobility air forces (MAF) aircrew and aircrew flight equipment (AFE) personnel with battlefield Airmen from the Combat Air Forces (CAF)," Auer said.

Four TACPs from the 169th Air Support Operations Squadron, 182nd AW Peoria, Illinois, combined with seven members of the 179th Operation Support Squadron, Aircrew Flight Equipment section to offer Combat Survival Training that was not your usual affair.

"Having the TACPs work to enhance our field skill instruction and play the role of aggressors elevated the training to a whole new level," said Tech. Sgt. William Hamilton, who took lead on organizing the training, and whose family hosted the event on its property near Butler, Ohio.

Senior Airman Matthew Denault, a joint terminal attack controller (JTAC), was one of the visiting TACPs, "We were impressed right from the start; from the planning and coordination, to the level of engagement by the aircrew. Everyone was committed to making the training as realistic and valuable as possible, plus it was great to train together – we hope to continue the relationship."

The Ohio Airmen received valuable training on land navigation, shelter building, fire craft, food and water collection, camouflage and concealment, signaling and evasion techniques. This type of refresher training aims to enhance the survivability and combat readiness of aircrew.

Capt. Ryan McMaster, an intelligence officer with the 179th OSS, who started his career as an AFE technician, said, "I have seen lots of Combat Survival Training in my career, and this was as good as anything I have ever seen."

Based on feedback received, the 179th plans to expand the training next year.

"We are already looking at how to bring even more assets into the scenarios next year," said Master Sgt. Trevor Shaw of the 179th OSS.

Coming from the birthplace of aviation, no one should be surprised if further innovation is just around the corner.

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Senior Airman Matt Denault, a Tactical Air Patrol (TACP) member, trains members of the 164th Airlift Squadron as they perform ground survival training July 12, 2014 in Butler, Ohio. The 169th Air Support Operations Squadron (ASOS), of the 182nd Airlift Wing, Peoria, Ill., assisted the Ohio Air Guard aircrew with the training. Four members of the 169th ASOS Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) teamed up to share their expertise in this training. The aircrew members are required to stay current in survival tactics and procedures on both land and water.

The Affordable Care Act, VA and You

Your Enrollment Means You Don't Need to Take Additional Steps

If you are enrolled in any of VA's programs below, you have coverage under the standards of the health care law:

- Veterans health care program
- Civilian Health and Medical program (CHAMPVA)
- Spina bifida health care program

You don't need to do anything more. The health care law does not change your VA benefits or out-of-pocket costs. You can continue to enjoy VA health care, which means you have:

- ◆ Medical care rated among the best in the U.S.
- ◆ Immediate benefits of health care coverage. Veterans may apply for VA health care enrollment at any time.
- ◆ No enrollment fee, monthly premiums, or deductibles. Most Veterans have no out-of-pocket costs. Some Veterans may have to pay small copayments for health care or prescription drugs.
- ◆ More than 1,700 places available to get your care. This means your coverage can go with you if you travel or move.
- ◆ Met the new requirement to have health care coverage that meets the minimum standard.

The goal of the VA health care system is to achieve excellence in patient care and customer satisfaction. VA's medical mission is singular — to serve Veterans by providing the highest quality health care available anywhere in the world. America's Veterans deserve nothing less.

For more information about your health benefits, visit www.va.gov/healthbenefits anytime or call 1-877-222-VETS (8387), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. or Saturdays 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., Eastern.

Source: <http://www.va.gov/health/aca/EnrolledVeterans.asp>

September is National Hispanic Heritage Month

During **National Hispanic Heritage Month** (September 15 to October 15) we recognize the contributions made and the important presence of Hispanic and Latino Americans to the United States and celebrate their heritage and culture.

Hispanics have had a profound and positive influence on our country through their strong commitment to family, faith, hard work, and service. They have enhanced and shaped our national character with centuries-old traditions that reflect the multiethnic and multicultural customs of their community.

Hispanic Heritage Month, with roots back to 1968, begins each year on September 15, the anniversary of independence of five Latin American countries: Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. Mexico, Chile and Belize also celebrate their independence days during this period and Columbus Day (Día de la Raza) is October 12.

The term Hispanic or Latino, refers to Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race. On the 2010 Census form, people of Spanish, Hispanic and/or Latino origin could identify themselves as Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or "another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin."

According to this Census, 50.5 million people or 16 percent of the population are of Hispanic or Latino origin. This represents a significant increase from 2000, which registered the Hispanic population at 35.3 million or 13 percent of the total U.S. population.

Please share in this special annual tribute by learning and celebrating the generations of Hispanic Americans who have positively influenced and enriched our nation and society.

DID YOU KNOW?

Suicide is a tragic event with strong emotional repercussions for its survivors and for families of its victims. More than 36,000 people in the U.S. kill themselves every year, according to a 2010 study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Although most federally-funded suicide prevention programs focus on helping teenagers, recent years have seen a spike in rates among middle-aged people. Men seem to be especially at risk, and have nearly four times the suicide rate as women. There are also major disparities amongst ethnic and racial groups, with American Indian and Alaskan Natives being the highest risk groups.

If you or someone you know is suicidal or in a state of crisis, please visit the Military Crisis Line online or call 800-273-TALK (8255).

SEPTEMBER 5**Change of Command**

811th Engineer Company (Sapper)
Tarlton Armory
11495 Chillicothe-Lancaster Road
Amanda
1100 hrs.
Outgoing: Capt. Thomas Race
Incoming: Capt. Tyler Hoffman

SEPTEMBER 6**16th Engineer Brigade Annual Iron Castle Ball**

Aladdin Shrine Temple
3850 Stelzer Road, Columbus
1800 hrs.

Special Troops Battalion, 37th IBCT

Dining Out
Crown Plaza
33 East Fifth Street, Dayton
Social Hour - 1800 hrs.
Dinner - 1900 hrs.

SEPTEMBER 7**Change of Commands**

*Headquarters & Headquarters Company,
16th Engineer Brigade*
DSCC, Bldg. 2
3990 E. Broad Street, Columbus
1000 hrs.
Outgoing: Capt. Gene Hancock
Incoming: Capt. Bret Green

112th Engineer Battalion
Brook Park Armory
6225 Engle Road, Brook Park
1400 hrs.
Outgoing: Lt. Col. David Rhoads
Incoming: Lt. Col. Teri Williams

*Company D, 1st Battalion,
148th Infantry Regiment*
117 Woodlawn Avenue, Sandusky
1500 hrs.
Outgoing: Capt. Bradley Wagner
Incoming: Capt. Matthew Viers

SEPTEMBER 14

1485th Transportation Company
24680 Airport Road, Coshocton
1100 hrs.
Outgoing: Capt. Sean Minor
Incoming: 1st Lt. Stephanie LaFratta

SEPTEMBER 27

OHARNG Military Police Ball
The Hilton Akron/Fairlawn
3180 W. Market Street, Akron
Social Hour - 1730 hrs.
Dinner - 1900 hrs.

Hearing aids for military retirees

The DoD sponsored Retiree-At-Cost Hearing Aid Program (RACHAP) is designed to help retirees purchase hearing aids through the Audiology Clinic at a special government negotiated cost. The hearing aids available through this program are the same state-of-the-art technologies available to active duty service members. The program is open to all military retirees who have hearing loss or tinnitus (ringing in the ears). Dependents of military retirees are not eligible for this program.

Retirees can buy hearing aids at a significant savings by using the program. For example, a set of hearing aids (one of the best available) that retails for about \$5000 costs a retiree as little as \$755 or about 15 percent of the retail costs. Services for the hearing evaluation, hearing aid fitting and follow up hearing aid checks are part of the retiree benefits and are available at no costs to you.

Not every medical facility is able to provide the RACHAP program and we are fortunate to be able to offer it at Fort Gordon. If you are traveling from out of town, you need to compare your travel costs and purchase savings to the costs of purchasing hearing aids privately in your local community. Travel and overnight expenses are not covered. Generally, at least 2 visits are required for you to get hearing aids; one for your hearing evaluation and one for your hearing aid fitting.

Also, retirees may be eligible for hearing aids from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and receive hearing aids from the VA free of charge – in most cases there is no costs to the patient. The Audiology Department can provide you with more information about VA services or you may contact the VA directly at 1-877-222-8387 or 1-800-827-1000.

Dependents of retirees are not eligible for hearing aid services from military treatment facilities (including RACHAP) or from TRICARE. The family member is eligible for hearing evaluations and the audiologist can provide them with more information about hearing aids or local providers.

Source: U.S. Coast Guard Retiree Newsletter

TRICARE for Life program provides coverage for 65 and older

TRICARE for Life (TFL) originated to fulfill a promise of life-long health care many were given when they first joined the military.

Prior to 2001, TRICARE coverage expired at age 65 forcing military retirees, their families, and survivors to rely solely on Medicare. TFL provides military health care coverage to TRICARE beneficiaries 65 years of age or older.

TFL Update: Prior to Aug. 20, 2012, U.S. Family Health Plan enrollees were not required to participate in Medicare or TFL. However, due to a change in the law, anyone who enrolls after the August deadline will be required to exit the USFHP on their 65th birthday. All those who enrolled prior to the deadline may remain in the USFHP system.

When TRICARE beneficiaries (other than eligible active duty family members) become entitled to Medicare Part A, on the basis of age or disability/end-stage renal disease and purchase Medicare Part B, they do not experience a break in TRICARE coverage. TRICARE For Life (TFL) pays secondary to Medicare.

TFL is available for all dual TRICARE-Medicare-eligible uniformed services retirees, including retired members of the Reserve Component who are in receipt of retired pay, Medicare-eligible family members, Medicare-eligible widows/widowers, certain former spouses, and beneficiaries under age 65 who are also entitled to Medicare Part A because of a disability or chronic renal disease. Dependent parents and parents-in-law are not eligible for TRICARE benefits, except TRICARE Senior Pharmacy benefits, and they may continue to receive services within a military treatment facility on a space-available basis. In order to be eligible for TRICARE Senior Pharmacy benefits, they must be entitled to Medicare Part A, and if they turned age 65 on or after April 1, 2001, be enrolled in Medicare Part B.

Source: <http://www.military.com/benefits/tricare/retiree/tricare-for-life.html?comp=7000022860874&rank=1>

Celebrating TRICARE Awareness Week



Earlier this year, the Ohio National Guard TRICARE Working Group's TRICARE-awareness campaign earned the Central Ohio Public Relations Society PRISM Award in the non-profit category for its multifaceted community relations campaign. Last year, Ohio increased the number of In-network TRICARE providers by 13.5 percent and Non-network providers by 2.23 percent, moving Ohio in the opposite direction of the national trend.

Retirement Packets

Retirement packets are mailed to your last known mailing address. If you change your address before your 59th birthday, make sure you contact the office below so they will know where to send your packet.

You will need to send the packet back to receive your retirement pay. Make sure to include the following: NGB Form 22, DD Form 214(s), NGB Form 23, 20-year letter and SBP election. If you are missing any documents, contact Ms. Jeanette Coughenour at 614-336-7038 (ONG HQs).

**U.S. Army Human Resources
Center of Excellence - Fort Knox
ATTN: AHRC-PDR-RCR
1600 Spearhead Division Ave.
Dept. 420
Fort Knox, KY 40122-56402
1-800-318-5298 or 502-613-8950**

If you are an Army Guard/Reserve or an Air Force Guard/Reserve retiree, and need help completing your retirement pay packet, contact Sgt. 1st Class Richard Wright at 614-336-7277.



International Association for Suicide Prevention



World Health Organization

September 10, 2014

World Suicide Prevention Day

● *Suicide Prevention: One World Connected*



Another successful Camp Kelley's Island teen camp concluded earlier this month, as a group of about 400 counselors, staff and campers spent Aug 4-8 at Kelley's Island on Lake Erie. The weeklong camp is for children of Ohio service members and includes varied activities such as canoeing, swimming, crafts, team building and military demonstrations. On Aug. 6, Ohio National Guard senior leaders flew in on a CH-47 Chinook helicopter to visit with and interact with campers. Operation: Military Kids started in Ohio in April 2005 and is administered through the Ohio 4-H Youth Development program, which is part of The Ohio State University, and is a partnership of Army Child, Youth, and School Services; National 4-H Headquarters in the U.S. Department of Agriculture; Ohio 4-H Youth Development; and the Ohio National Guard.