



Insight

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Soldiers helping Soldiers

The Army Emergency Relief Fund Campaign is in full swing. The command's goal for this year is \$15,000. Currently, our fellow Soldiers and civilians have contributed almost \$3,500. However, there is still time to make more contributions and not only meet INSCOM'S goal but, more importantly, help Soldiers, retirees and their families in time of need.

In 1942, the Secretary of War and the Army Chief of Staff established AER as a private, nonprofit organization with one purpose - to help Soldiers and their families. AER provides assistance to Soldiers during financial hardships. Active duty, retirees and their families can reach out to AER when there is a valid emergency.

Since the program's inception, AER has helped more than 2.8 million Soldiers and their families overcome financial difficulties.

Army Emergency Relief is there for Soldiers when there is no other place to go for help. AER funds are made available to commanders, who have AER Sections, to provide emergency financial assistance. AER can assist with rent and utilities; emer-

gency transportation and vehicle repair; funeral expenses; medical/dental expenses; and personal needs when pay is delayed or stolen. Assistance is provided through a combination of no-interest loans and grants.

AER is only for legitimate emergency situations. Soldiers cannot get assistance to help pay for nonessentials; finance ordinary leave or vacation; pay fines or legal expenses; assist with house purchase or home improvements; or cover bad checks.

There are literally thousands of charities looking for donations, and some are less than reputable. AER, however, can be counted on to provide the assistance as advertised.

In fact, AER was awarded four out of four-stars by Charity Navigator, America's largest independent evaluator of charities.

I want to remind Soldiers not to be afraid to ask for help. We have all been in situations where assistance was needed. If you have a true emergency, talk to your NCOs and let them know you need help. As NCOs, a Soldier's welfare is our number one concern and we are all familiar with AER.



DA photo

I encourage every married Soldier to let their spouse know that AER funds are available. AER can assist them when Soldiers are deployed. But remember, the spouse must have a Power of Attorney, so he or she can sign on behalf of the deployed Soldier.

The campaign drive ends May 31. Every unit has an AER representative who can answer any additional questions. If you have trouble finding your AER representative, Master Sgt. Ricky Roberts at Headquarters, INSCOM can provide assistance. His phone number is (703) 706-1451.

Please, donate what you can and help the Army take care of its own.

Preston discusses Army's future

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (Army News Service) — The sergeant major of the Army explained to junior Soldiers that as the Army transforms to be more lethal, it is also going to put policies in place to keep them more informed and their families stable.

"This is the biggest transformation of the Army in the last 50 years," said Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston during his first visit to Fort Bragg, N.C.

"We're going to grow the Army from 33 brigade combat teams to 43. They will be smaller and more modular with the same capabilities, if not more lethal. By growing more units of action, we'll have more forces for rotational flow," Preston said.

He also talked about the Army's plan to give more predictability; for example, units will be notified up to one year before deployments.

"They'll go do their deployments and come back to their home station," Preston said. "Families stay in place. Kids stay in school."

Preston added that with the Army's transformation, deployments would be reduced to six months.

"From experience, we've learned what's the right amount of time for deployments. One year is too long," he said.

Another question Preston addressed was the actual need for troops in Iraq.

"I've had a lot of Soldiers ask me, 'Sergeant major, do you really think we can make a difference (in Iraq)? Do you really think that these people understand democracy?'"

"If you look at Europe in 1939, how many countries really were democracies?" Preston answered.

After World War II, Preston said Soldiers of the "Greatest Generation" set up a demo-

cratic government that is still working today. In the last 14 years, other European countries have converted to democracy and are now competing for enrollment into the National Atlantic Treaty Organization.

"Many of those countries have forces right now that are deployed to Iraq as part of that coalition," he said. "Who would have thought that possible 15 years ago?"

"You are the next 'Greatest Generation.' Be proud of your service to your nation," he said. "I am very proud of all of you. We are the greatest Army in the world. There's nobody that even comes close."



photo by Spc. Kamryn Jaroszewskis

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth Preston met and talked with dozens of paratroopers as they prepared to take part in an airborne operation.

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From Georgia to Georgia

by Spc. Leslie Pearson
513th MI Brigade

January 30 marked a special day for Tamara Tetradze, a native of the Republic of Georgia, USSR. After four years of waiting, filing and re-filing seemingly endless paperwork, she finally became an American citizen and was able to exercise her right to vote for the first time at this year's Primary Elections.

"I'd been waiting for so long," Tetradze said. "I'd taken all the tests and filed all the paperwork; I was just waiting to be sworn in. When I finally got the call I just thought, 'I can't believe this is really going to happen'."

"I am glad to see that this has finally happened for Tamara," said Maj. Jason Hayes, former 513th MI Brigade, Headquarters and Headquarters Company commander who was instrumental in helping Tetradze on her quest for citizenship. "She has been working at it for a long time and it is well deserved. I was fortunate to see how much this meant to her, how much work she put into it and I'm glad to see that it finally happened."

"At the swearing in ceremony they played the song 'I'm Proud to be an American' and I bawled my eyes out," Tetradze said. "There were 30 people there from 15 different countries so it was pretty touching because we said the oath together and all of a



photo by Spc. Leslie Pearson

Tamara Tetradze, a budget analyst supporting the 513th MI Brigade, prepares to cast her vote at the 2004 Primary Elections.

sudden we were Americans."

In 1991, as the Soviet Union dissolved, Tetradze and her father came to the United States on an invitation visa to see what things were like here. Their short visit turned into an extended stay when a civil war broke out in Georgia which prevented them from returning home.

"We were cut off," she said, "it was like they were self contained; you couldn't get in and you couldn't get out." With only the clothes on their backs, the two went to Atlanta to start a new life. Tetradze's mother was still stuck in the USSR and it was nearly three and a half years before the family was reunited.

"When I arrived in the States I was only 16," Tetradze said, "so I had to have a guard-

ian to go to school here. Our entire school burned down with all of my records so my dad and I lived with my guardian while I went to school."

Adjusting to a new life was a bit of a culture shock for Tetradze, who spoke very little English at the time. She worked hard and after graduation went on to Georgia State University where she studied chemistry. It was around this time that Tetradze and her father received their green cards which gave them official immigration status (lawful permanent residency) in the United States.

Tetradze met her husband, Staff Sgt. James Combahee, a training NCO in the 442nd HQ & A Signal battalion, at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta where he was pulling security with his

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National Guard unit and she was volunteering as a Georgian translator. The two fell in love and were soon married. In 1999 Tetradze decided to join the Army as a Military Police Officer and realized the impact of not having her citizenship. "When I was already 12 weeks into my training at Fort McClelland, someone asked me what my plans were and I told them I planned to get my citizenship so I could become an officer. When they found out I wasn't a citizen I couldn't go on with the training. There's a limited amount of MOSs available for people who aren't citizens and Military Police Officer isn't one of them," she said.

Still eager to serve her newly adopted country, Tetradze didn't let this challenge discourage her. She wrote her Senator requesting that the two-year waiting period be lifted so she could join the Army again, this time as an accounting specialist. In 2001, she became part of the 513th Military Intelligence Brigade, a highly deployable unit.

"Without my citizenship I couldn't get a security clearance and without a clearance I couldn't deploy so I felt like it was hindering my job on many levels. I wasn't employed to my full potential," she said. According to Tetradze, the Army represents a certain comradery that she really admires and respects.

"My husband and I are extremely patriotic and we're raising our children to be

patriotic, too. I want them to understand that not everyone experiences the same kind of freedom that Americans do," Tetradze said. "In other countries, people can be killed if they speak out against their government. I believe in the cause, I believe in the Army."

Now, as a civilian, Tetradze works as a budget analyst for the 202nd MI Battalion, 513th MI Brigade.

"I really love my job, partly because I'm still in touch with the Soldiers. I love the fact that I'm supporting Soldiers who are deployed all over the place," she said.

The second milestone in

Tetradze's journey was getting the opportunity to cast her vote during the Republican Primary. "It was an amazing experience. I wanted to vote for our President because I think he's done an incredible job. It's easy for people to say, 'if I were the President I'd do things differently'," Tetradze said. "I wanted to exercise my right to vote and for the first time in my life I had a chance to choose my own government. No matter how the election turns out at least I know I had the right to make my own choice. So many Americans have the privilege to vote but don't do it, I just can't understand that."



photo by Pvt. 2 James Felkins

Sen. Saxby Chambliss (R-Ga.) took time out of his busy schedule to visit the 116th Military Intelligence Group, Fort Gordon, Ga., March 17. During Chambliss' visit, he received a tour of Gordon Regional Security Operations Center, and participated in an award's ceremony.

Real 'Band of Brothers' honored

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) The personal experiences of six Soldiers will be highlighted as part of the airing of the "Band of Brothers" mini-series on the History Channel.

The segments connect the Soldiers fighting for their country today to the men who fought with Easy Company during World War II.

The Soldiers' stories began airing last week as promotional segments for the mini-series, which is based on the best-selling book by Stephen Ambrose that features the Soldiers of "Easy Company."

The promotional segments will vary in length from one to 10 minutes. A half-hour preview program, now showing on the channel, caps the segments. The Soldiers will give lead-ins and recaps of most episodes in the series.

The program ties together the historical and modern Army by tracing a lasting set of values. The footage features Soldiers who have recently returned from Iraq and Afghanistan talking about their experiences serving overseas and what their Army service means to them. Their stories are paralleled with those of the men of Company E, 506th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division.

Four of the featured Soldiers in the stories also are from the 101st Abn. Div.



photo courtesy of HBO

The HBO show "Band of Brothers" followed the Soldiers of "Easy Company" during World War II.

They are Pvt. 1st Class Cameron Sharp, Sgt. 1st Class David Ainslie, 1st Sgt. Charles Haley and Capt. Kevin Williams.

Also featured is Spc. Richard A. Jacob of the 3rd Squadron, 7th U.S. Cavalry with the 3rd Infantry Division, the lead unit to enter Iraq; and Sgt. Josiah "Bret" Blalock of the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), who participated in cave-clearing operations in Afghanistan.

"The Army is a bond -- it's a band of brothers," Williams said in one segment. "It just can't be recreated in any other situation. I'm very proud to be a part of the Army."

Jacob agreed that fighting

for the Army is a unique experience.

"Once you put on this uniform you feel like you're doing something a lot of people can't do," said Jacob. "You're fighting for a country that's given you just about anything and any opportunity you want. It's the most exciting thing on the planet."

The "Band of Brothers" series will begin airing in April, during ongoing national welcome-home events, known as "Operation Tribute to Freedom," for Soldiers returning from overseas duties.

For information on when the program airs, visit the History Channel Web site at www.historychannel.com.

NCO recognized by peers

by Pfc. Jason A. Merrell
501st MI Brigade

Loyalty, discipline, professionalism and caring. In the U.S. Army, these qualities define more than just good character, but exemplify the very blood and bones of the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club - a society comprised of outstanding noncommissioned officers.

One member of the 501st Military Intelligence Brigade, Staff Sgt. Donald A. Hartley, was welcomed into the prestigious club during the Sergeant Audie Murphy Induction ceremony at Balboni Theater in Yongsan, Feb. 18.

"(Hartley) has been recognized by his leaders because he exemplified the outstanding qualities of Audie Murphy," Command Sgt. Maj. Valentin Caraballo, a senior member of the Audie Murphy club, said at the beginning of the ceremony.

Audie Leon Murphy, son of poor Texas sharecroppers, rose to national fame as the most decorated U.S. combat soldier of World War II. Among his 33 awards and decorations was the Medal of

Honor, the highest military award for bravery that can be given to any individual in the United States of America, for "conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty."

In honor of the war veteran, Hollywood actor, writer and outstanding American, the Sergeant Audie Murphy club was forged, originating in Fort Hood, Texas, 1986. After only a few years, the club spread Army-wide and is now one of the most prominent societies for NCOs.

"I never expected anything like this," Hartley said. "I feel proud to be part of such a prestigious club."

Inductions into the Audie Murphy club are quarterly, where multiple junior and senior NCOs may be inducted. The SAMC is designed to recognize those NCOs who exemplify Audie Murphy's characteristics and set the standard for leadership, excellence and NCO professionalism.

"They represent our



photo by Pfc. Jason A. Merrell

Staff Sgt. Donald A. Hartley of the 501st MI Brigade was inducted into the Audie Murphy club Feb. 18.

commitment to build a better place for those who come after us," Caraballo said.

One of Audie Murphy's most prized quotes is "You lead from the front." Taking this proverb into account, Hartley explained his take on being an NCO.

"It's all about taking care of your Soldiers," Hartley said. "I couldn't ask a Soldier to do anything that I wouldn't. You lead from the front, it's that simple."

New award

Soldiers who were deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism may be eligible for a new award. The Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal will be awarded on a case by case basis to soldiers who deployed abroad for service in the Global War on Terrorism Operations on or after Sept. 11, 2001.

Soldiers must submit a copy of a completed travel voucher to their personnel section, verifying deployment for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days to one or more of the countries listed in paragraph three of Executive Order 13289, March 12, 2003. For more information, go to: https://www.perscomonline.army.mil/tagd/awards/GWOT_Medals_17Mar04.doc