The Bullet'n

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World Class Excellence

ARDEC selected as 2007 Baldrige Award winner

Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center
News Release

PICATINNY ARSENAL, N.J. -- On Nov. 20, the Armament Research, Development and Engineering Center became the first Department of Defense organization in history selected to receive the prestigious Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

President George W. Bush and Secretary of Commerce Carlos M. Gutierrez announced ARDEC's selection in a joint news release.

"I am pleased to join President Bush in congratulating the five outstanding organizations that have been named to receive this year's Baldrige Award," Gutierrez said. "The organizations we recognize today have given us superb examples of innovation, excellence and world-class performance. They serve as role models for organizations of all kinds striving to improve effectiveness and increase value to their customers."

The Baldrige National Quality Award is presented annually to a small group of elite businesses and organizations deemed to have world-class performance excellence and quality achievement practices.

ARDEC Director Joseph A. Lannon was notified Nov. 19 of the center's selection in the non-profit category.

"We are absolutely thrilled by our selection as a 2007 Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award recipient," Lannon said. "Each member of our workforce is responsible for bringing this honor to our organization.

"The men and women of ARDEC earned this award as a direct result of what they are doing for our warfighters," he said. "I couldn't be prouder of each and every ARDEC employee."

"Awesome news," said Brig. Gen. William N. Phillips, commander of Picatinny Arsenal and the Joint Munitions and Lethality Life Cycle Management Command. "On behalf of the entire Picatinny community, I congratulate Dr. Joe Lannon and his entire ARDEC workforce for becoming the first organization in DoD to earn this prestigious honor."

Computer scientist Nancy L. Terrat reacted similarly to word of ARDEC's selection.

"That's terrific," she said. "People were thrilled to be nominated and compete for the award. They actually wanted the Baldrige examiners to visit their work areas. That's great news!"

The award is the nation's top prize for performance management and quality achievement. Leadership, strategic planning, customer and market focus, information and analysis, human resource focus, process management and business results are among the criteria for the award.

ARDEC officials now will prepare to accept the award at a ceremony to be held in Washington, D.C. in early 2008.

The center, the Army's principal researcher, developer and sustainer of current and future military armaments systems, is focused in particular on developing and improving the technical capabilities of U.S. service members fighting the Global War on Terrorism. Headquartered at Picatinny, the center employs more than 3,000 personnel at its five different locations in the U.S.

Army News

Safety Center issues "Family Engagement Kit" for Redeployment

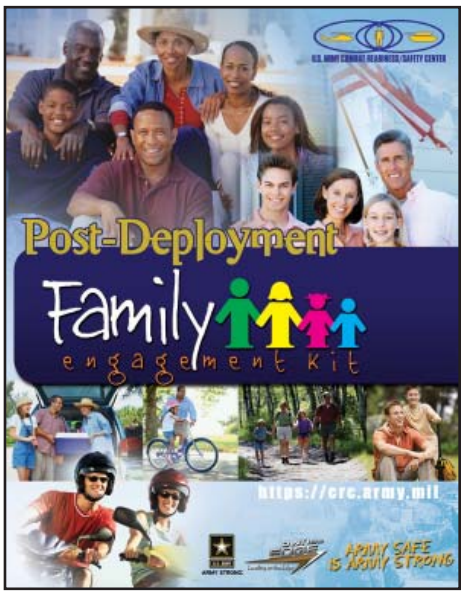
By U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

FORT RUCKER, Ala. -- The Army's new Redeployment Family Engagement Kit raises awareness of the leading indicators in accidents while passing along the "what" and "how" of best practices, Army Safety Center officials said.

The U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center "Study of Accident and Associated Statistics" indicates that when Soldiers return from a deployment or controlled environment, the rigors and oversight provided by leaders is diminished.

In the last five years, 186 Soldiers died within a year of returning from deployments. Approximately 30 percent of the deaths occurred within the first 30 days of post-deployment and 63 percent within the first six months. Of the 186 fatalities, 145 involved privately-owned vehicles during off-duty hours.

Army safety officials are convinced that oversight, control and structure are beneficial to achieve an accident-free environment. The USACRC's collective challenge is to formulate tools that target safety and risk management as a "way of life" for



application when Soldiers are off duty.

"As leaders, we know that direct engagement with our Soldiers makes a positive difference in their safety," said Brig. Gen. Bill Forrester, director of Army Safety and commanding general of the USACRC. "No one knows Soldiers better than their Families and there are few organizations better positioned than Families to influence Soldiers to make safer choices and take fewer risks."

Forrester added that the USACRC believes it is extremely difficult to look a spouse or child in the eye and tell them you are not going to wear your helmet or a seat belt because you don't care enough to stay alive for them.

"The Family Engagement Kit features tools that Family members can use to engage their loved ones in best safety practices in order to help protect them," said Forrester. "Many take very little time or effort, and the payoff is huge."

In all, the kit includes six tools for post-deployment best practices. One such tool is the Travel Risk Planning System, better known as TRiPS. The aim of TRiPS is to reduce the risk of accidents when traveling by POV, the No. 1 killer of Soldiers.

Another potentially life-saving tool included in the kit is the Motorcycle/ATV Agreement. This tool encourages Families and their Soldiers to discuss the hazards and safety measures associated with riding motorcycles or all-terrain vehicles.

These Web-based tools are self-explanatory, self-supporting with PowerPoint briefs containing associated talking points.

The Army's goal is to put these tools into the hands and empower Army Family Team Building trainers, Family Readiness Group leaders,

"Family" continued on page 11

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The editorial content of **The Bullet'n** *is the responsibility of the Public Affairs Office at Joint Munitions Command headquarters. Contributions to* **The Bullet'n** *are welcome; contact information follows.*

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Blue Grass selected for critical mission

Blue Grass Army Depot
News Release

RICHMOND, Ky. -- "Lives are at stake. Every month troops go without MRAP's could indeed cost lives," said Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates to Congress in July.

Gates was requesting approval to transfer $1.2 billion to the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle program. Gates' request, and Congress' subsequent approval, are about to hit home in central Kentucky.

Blue Grass Army Depot Commander Col. Richard J. Mason Jr. announced Nov. 21, that the installation was selected as one of the key U.S. military installations in the hi-tech cutting, storage and distribution of the armor plating component of the MRAP program.

BGAD, along with two other military installations, is ramping up facilities, laser and water jet cutting equipment and personnel to process the large number and variety of metals needed to up-armor three categories of MRAP vehicles being produced by various manufactures. The Defense Department's goal is to get 1,500 MRAP vehicles to Iraq by year's end, with many more following in 2008.

Besides cutting armor, BGAD's mission includes serving as the hub for the other two installations. Armor kits produced at the Rock Island Arsenal's Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center in Rock Island,Ill., and the Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, Ga., will be shipped to the depot for final assembly, storage and global distribution.

"This is a crossroads event in the history of Blue Grass Army Depot," said Mason. "MRAP is a high-profile, critical mission with top-level priority that will add invaluable capabilities, experience and value to the depot's ongoing military mission both now and well beyond the completion of this particular effort."

Mason added that an immediate economic impact can be expected as a result of the 100 or more new employees that need to be hired and trained across a wide spectrum of jobs within the coming weeks and months. The depot will be working with the Bluegrass Area Development District and Depot Development Coalition to partner with local industries and educational institutions to rapidly accelerate and sustain the production requirements.

Department of Defense photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Molly A. Burgess

Media representatives and other visitors examine a mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle, or MRAP, during an orientation by the Army Test and Evaluation Command at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., Aug. 24.

Planning retirement? Start now!

By Pamela Proper
JMC Public Affairs

ROCK ISLAND, Ill. -- Planning to retire from your government job? It's a tough decision for some, but for others it's just a process and the key is having a plan. That is the message from some retirees who recently transitioned from the federal workforce into the world of retirement.

Ann Mulligan retired in July after working 30 years as a Department of the Army civilian. Ann and her husband, Joe, also a DAC, started planning their retirement six years prior when they purchased property in rural Ohio. Their plan centered on the renovation of that propert; they looked forward to having a project to take on as they retired from federal service.

"We talked to a friend," said Mulligan, "who had retired years ago who did not have a plan. He retired, got bored and went back to work. That's when we decided we needed a plan."

That plan included fiscal considerations too. Mulligan's advice, "Sock away as much as you can in the Thrift Savings Plan before you retire. Don't live paycheck to paycheck and be prepared to live for a couple of months until that first retirement check comes in."

Ann and Joe experienced a glitch in the pay system when they changed banks just before retiring. It took a few months to sort out the check problem and get it directed to their new bank, but they were prepared because they had savings to rely on.

Despite that initial payment problem, the Mulligans found the retirement process from the federal government occurred with ease.

"Federal paperwork was easy. The problem was the federal government assumes everyone retires in place, but many people move when they retire," Mulligan said this created a problem receiving retirement checks. "They were sending the checks to an account we had closed. Fixing that was a bit tedious because the 1-800 number they give you has a long, tiresome menu and, of course, did not include the service we needed."

U.S. Army photo by Darryl Howlett

Whether you're new to the federal government or an experienced employee, it's never too early to plan for retirement.

They eventually made human contact and got the problem resolved. They also made plans to involve themselves in community volunteer work and a massive renovation of their country home, so there is no chance they'll be job hunting after retirement with so many projects to keep them busy.

Bill Swisher, 60, retired in January after 34 years of government service. His retirement plan also included a move. Swisher spent five to 10 years planning where he wanted to retire, Clearwater, Fla., then three years out started planning specifics, dates, finances, etc.

He immersed himself in retirement materials. He found the following the most useful:

A subscription to "Retirement & Financial Planning Report," a free weekly e-mail publication, from http://www.fedweek.com

The articles and FAQs on the Web site of the National Institute of Transition Planning,

http://www.nitpinc.com/news.shtml, especially the articles by Tammy Flanagan: http://www.nitpinc.com/gov_ex_archives.html

The articles and free daily e-mails by former Washington Post columnist Mike Causey, who's now with Federal News Radio:

http://www.federalnewsradio.com/index.php?nid=7

The retirement annuity calculator at the Army Benefits Center Web site, https://www.abc.army.mil. — also available by phone as described at http://cpolrhp.belvoir.army.mil/ncr/Pacesetter/Iss01-04/benefits01-04.htm

"This (retirement annuity calculator) was very helpful in planning finances and it was very accurate. Part of your research," according to Swisher, "should include looking into the best time of year to retire." Swisher advises researching the benefits of retiring at the beginning of the year rather than mid, or end of the year.

"I retired in January and that was a benefit for moving because rates were lower in the dead of winter than in summer. I saved maybe 10 to 20 percent on relocation costs. January is also a good time to cash in annual leave because if you retire within the first few days of January you cash in leave at the new year rate, which usually includes the annual pay raise and the check is processed by the end of January. If you go beyond that, you'll have to wait until the end of February for your first check."

Swisher claims his move from Washington, D.C. to Clearwater, Fla., was flawless because he did his

"Retire" continued on page 11

Rogers praises Letterkenny on mission

U.S. Army photo by Tom Peske

Crane Army Ammunition Activity Civilian Executive Assistant John Boling, Joint Munitions Command Commanding General Brig. Gen. James E. Rogers, and CAAA Commander Col. Charles Kibben receive a briefing from Ralph Peters, Letterkenny Munitions Center's Army Tactical Missile System CTX, as they tour LEMC's ATACMS maintenance facility Nov. 15.

By Tom Peske
Crane Army Ammunition Activity
Public Affairs

LETTERKENNY, Pa. -- Letterkenny Munitions Center hosted Brig. Gen. James E. Rogers, commanding general of Joint Munitions Command, Nov. 15, presenting a strong overview of the center's progress in meeting the high demands for fiscal year 2008.

On hand for the visit were Crane Army Ammunition Activity Commander Col. Charles Kibben and Civilian Executive Assistant John Boling. After a series of briefings on the current state of operations at Letterkenny, the guests were given a tour of key sites.

Rogers heard a variety of briefings regarding LEMC, including the center's direct labor man-hour execution. The depot exceeded its direct labor man-hour execution plan so far in fiscal year 2008. There also was a discussion on the recruit/fill process and a briefing on LEMC's partnership initiatives with private industry. Some of the other topics briefed were R3 Demilitarization initiatives and Lean Six Sigma Green and Black Belt projects.

According to Rich Kutzler, LEMC administrative officer, "Brig. Gen. Rogers was elated that Letterkenny Munitions Center was the front runner in reinvesting scrap proceeds generated from ammunition/missile demilitarization and how LEMC utilized Lean Six Sigma to develop the process for selling scrap metal. He said that LEMC was one of the first to forward money to the Product Manager for Demilitarization and get a return on investment. This is good news that the Army is finally receiving money back for the demilitarization program."

"(Brig. Gen. Rogers is) pleased that LEMC is ahead of its Direct Labor Man-Hour Execution Plan for fiscal year 2008."

-- Vince Myers, LEMC acting director

Kutzler added that Rogers was glad that a LEMC employee is now serving as a member on the Joint Munitions Command's Lean Six Sigma project team to develop a similar process for all installations to use.

According to LEMC Acting Director Vince Myers, Rogers also noted he was "pleased that LEMC is ahead of its Direct Labor Man-Hour Execution Plan for fiscal year 2008."

During the visit, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provided Rogers, Kibben and Boling a tour LEMC's new Less than Truck Load Facility. They also visited LEMC's container outloading operations, machine shop, Non-Destructive Testing (X-Ray) Facility, and several missile maintenance facilities.

An Air Force representative was also on hand to explain LEMC's Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missile demilitarization efforts.

Lean Six Sigma Corner

Triumphant projects lead to more pay, opportunities for inventory managers

By Darryl Howlett
JMC Public Affairs

ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, Ill. – Imagine having your pay raised by $10,000 or more per year and not having to compete in order to receive the extra cash.

Well, a plan to end high turnover rates for 48 inventory personnel by increasing entry level grades, standardizing job series, and ensuring career progression will do just that.

Jeri Kopp, director, Business Operations Directorate witin the Joint Munitions Command's Munitions Logistics Readiness Center, led a Lean Six Sigma Green Belt project to standardize and maintain inventory managers staffing levels across JMC.

Kopp said, before the project, supervisors of inventory managers were dealing with high turnover rates at the Army Working Capital Fund installations.

"We were losing staff and witnessing constant turnover and training, with vacancies in the inventory manager field," said Kopp. "We talked with every installation's first line supervisors over inventory managers and heard the pain they were feeling."

Kopp said with inventory managers starting their careers in a low paying jobs with no career advancement opportunities, the circumstances created personnel shortages as they left for higher paying jobs, causing a loss of highly-skilled, knowledgeable people.

The goals of the project were to reduce the personnel turnover rate by 10 percent, increase personnel fills to 90 percent, reduce overtime hours/costs by 15 percent, and reduce travel costs for supply depot operations and command assessment program visits by 20 percent. The scope of the project was to review and analyze the manpower responsible for inventory mission at JMC munitions facilities.

"After having worked with the installations' inventory personnel over the last 15 years, and streamlining plus automating the inventory processes at the installations, it was time to look at the grading structure and job descriptions, bringing them in line and standardizing them with current processes," said Mazie Angus, inventory team lead, Accountability/Storage Division with JMC. "In my opinion this project was a huge success and long overdue."

In many cases, entry level inventory specialists will be promoted to reflect the automation that has been built into their jobs over time.

After briefings with installation commanders and the JMC command group, Brig. Gen. James E. Rogers, commanding general, JMC, directed JMC to not only look at inventory managers, but all positions across JMC and determine if standardization and career progression was necessary.

In the case of inventory managers, positions that were listed as Grade Series-5/6 were actually upgraded to GS-7-9-11s.

"This was done for the (Quality Assurance Specialist Ammunition Surveillance) a couple of years ago," Kopp said. "Right now folks are very excited within the inventory staffing fields."

The project used a variety of LSS tools such as "voice of the customer" surveys, SIPOC (supplier, input, process, output, customers) diagrams, RACI (responsibility, accountability, consultation and inform) charts, statistical sampling, control charts, normality tests, process capability charts, root cause analysis, fishbone diagrams, boxplots, pilot plans and control plans throughout the project to analyze the reasons/causes and develop corrective actions to eliminate the project's "pain."

The team consisted of six core and six ad hoc members, all from JMC.

The project will be tracked over the next several months before actual cost savings can be validated. However, it is estimated that general cost savings will be $12,952 per year and cost avoidance savings will be $57,684 per year with implementation costs of $187,271, phased in over the next year. But benefits that will be realized immediately include improved employee morale, reduction in employee turnover, retention of a skilled workforce, decreased training requirements, and an enhanced mission.

"This is a win-win from ensuring the command improves inventory stability to increasing and developing a career path at the units to ensure all is in sync," said Rogers.

Lean Six Sigma Corner

U.S. Army photo by Tom Peske

Crane employees Paul Allswede and Lara Zilafro completed the Lean Six Sigma Master Black Belt Course in October.

By Tom Peske
Crane Army Ammunition Activity Public Affairs

CRANE, Ind. -- Continuous improvement for an Army organization is something requiring constant work, dedication and trained people. Crane Army Ammunition Activity took another step forward toward embedding Lean Six Sigma into its organizational culture by having two of its employees complete LSS Master Black Belt training.

CAAA Program Manager Paul Allswede and Chemical Engineer Lara Zilafro received their Master Black Belt training certificates Oct. 5 at the Joint Munitions Command from Brig. Gen. James E. Rogers, commanding general of JMC.

Allswede said having two LSS Master Black Belts means that Crane Army proactively took full advantage of the Master Black Belt training opportunity and purposefully created redundancy and depth within the organization's LSS structure. He explained the intent of the action was to further enable LSS deployment, LSS self-sustainment, and to avoid the loss of any LSS forward momentum due to the unavailability of one person.

The two employees successfully completed the three-week course after taking a four-hour exam that challenged their knowledge and mastery of problem solving using LSS statistical decision-making methodology. Successful completion of the three-week Master Black Belt course is only the first step of the certification process. The remaining steps include instructing two Army LSS Black Belt courses totaling eight weeks, completing two Black Belt projects that are entered into PowerSteering, passing coaching assessments, and mentoring two Black Belt projects through completion. Allswede and Zilafro are hoping that within a year the Master Black Belt certification will be achieved.

Allswede said the final exam was a "stressful four-hour event," with all of that time needed to answer nine exam

"MBB" continued on page 12

On the move!

Tooele Army Depot, Deseret Chemical Depot sign ammunition movement agreement

By Kathy Anderson
Toole Army Depot Public Affairs

TOOELE, Utah -- Tooele Army Depot is used to supporting the Army Materiel Command and the warfighter. However, the command usually does that in major outloads of ammunition at home and abroad.

In November, a new 17-mile outload started that is one of the most vital movements for TEAD in recent years.

The depot began moving low-level explosive items for long-term storage to former chemical storage sites at the Deseret Chemical Depot. These moves will free igloos at TEAD for the storage of training and warfighting materials. It will continue in concert with the destruction of the remaining chemical munitions until all sites are filled with conventional ammunition. That should be about six years from now.

This project was the brainchild of the ammunition leadership in 1999 as they watched the igloo storage space disappear at TEAD due to increasing requirements.

The heavy movement of ammunition to TEAD resulted in the highest occupancy rate in the country, which severely limited TEAD's ability to store and ship "go to war" stocks.

U.S. Army photo by Kathy Anderson

A Tooele Army Depot worker prepares to outload ammunition for transportation. TEAD and the Deseret Chemical Depot recently reached an agreement in moving ammunition to DCD from TEAD.

The reoccupation of an entire chemical storage area had never been attempted. Although delayed by the 2001 attacks and the conflicts starting in 2002, the drive to store slow-moving items at DCD continued to be a TEAD goal.

In 2005, and again in 2006, the commanding general and deputy commanding general of AMC were briefed on the storage possibility and both supported the plan. The rest is history.

Col. Anne L. Davis, commander, TEAD, and Col. Frederick D. Pellissier, commander, Deseret Chemical Depot, signed a historic memorandum of understanding allowing the transfer of ammunition and the occupation of former chemical sites by TEAD to begin.

"This move has been a joint effort between the employees of TEAD and DCD. I'm very pleased with the dedication of all those involved in making this move a success. This move will definitely enhance TEAD's storage capabilities while having no negative impact on DCD's chemical demil mission," stated Davis.

"The use of Area 10 provides TEAD increased ammunition storage capacity so we can better support the Global War on Terrorism and provides a substantial cost savings to AMC," stated Pellissier.

The space is needed to support the Army's requirement for storage. As a result of Base Realignment and Closure 2005, reductions in demilitarization program funding, and the return of OCONUS retrograde stocks, projections show the total available covered storage space occupancy will exceed 85 percent during the period of fiscal years 2007 through 2011. Beginning in fiscal year 2010, the demand for covered storage space is anticipated to exceed 100 percent of available covered storage space.

Impacts that result from occupancy rates above 85 percent can include:

· Negative effects to the warfighter mission.

· Reduction in new production and retrograde receipt capability.

· Re-warehousing cost increases (due to multiple handling).

· Outside storage.

· Reduction in inventory accountability.

The present occupancy level for TEAD's explosive storage structures is 94 percent. Re-warehousing conventional ammunition presently in storage will lower overall occupancy levels at a rate of 0.1 percent per DCD igloo filled.

"The critical shortage of explosive storage space throughout the Joint Munitions Command impacts our ability to support the warfighter to perform our mission as a power projection platform. Augmenting our storage posture by the use of DCD igloos helps us to be better equipped and postured to support the warfighter," stated Keith Siniscalchi, director of TEAD's Ammunition Logistics and Engineering.

UXO, a threat to Soldier, civilian safety

U.S. Army photo provided by U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center

Army safety officials urge Soldiers to be cautious when encountering unexploded ordnance like this BLU-97 submunition.

By Chris Frazier
U.S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center
and Maggie Browne
JMC Public Affairs

A recent unexploded ordnance accident that claimed the life of a Soldier is serving as a deadly reminder to be extra cautious when handling munitions.

The Soldier in Iraq was digging in front of his quarters when he discovered a yellow cylinder resembling a caulk tube. Once the Soldier brought the tube out of the ground, he banged it against a wall to knock the dirt off and determine what he was holding. The device, which turned out to be a BLU-97/B Combined Effects Bomb, exploded, killing the Soldier and wounding another.

The BLU-97 submunitions are yellow, soda-can-sized bomblets that are dispensed in large numbers to attack "soft" area targets. The bomblet case is made of scored steel designed to break into about 300 preformed ingrain fragments for defeating light armor and personnel.

The body of the BLU-97 is cylindrical in shape, about 20 centimeters long and has a six centimeter diameter. However, military and foreign munitions can come in a variety of types, sizes and shapes and may not be easy to recognize. They include, but are not limited to, small-arms ammunition, projectiles, cartridges, bombs, rockets, pyrotechnics, grenades, blasting caps, fuzes, simulators and raw explosives.

According to the Defense Environmental Network and Information Exchange, when encountering UXO, always follow the 3Rs of explosive safety: recognize the munition; retreat from the munition, that is, do not touch or disturb it, but move carefully away, walking out the same path the area was entered; and report the munition and its location.

Although the Joint Munitions Command does not have a command–specific policy regarding UXO and related materials, Army regulations and policies are followed, according to Ralph Knape, safety and occupational health specialist, JMC Safety Office. JMC also follows a "five-step risk management process": identify hazards, assess hazards, develop controls and make decisions, implement controls, and supervise and evaluate.

Each installation has the responsibility of developing their own standard operating procedures for dealing with UXO. Installations may have a wide range of concerns such as test/destruction ranges, housing areas and Base Realignment and Closure facilities being converted to public use. Also, many JMC locations have bulk propellants and explosives from production processes, in addition to recognizable items, according to Knape.

"The overall goal is to make facilities and equipment safe for present and future use by the government, private industry and the public," said Knape.

Since fiscal year 2005, there have been three Class A Army accidents resulting from Soldiers handling UXO, resulting in the deaths of three Soldiers. By following the 3Rs of explosive safety, Soldiers can help prevent future fatalities. In combat areas, anywhere on an installation, or on training ranges, it's best to remember, "If you did not drop it, do not pick it up!"

For more information on UXO safety, visit the Defense Environmental Network and Information Exchange's UXO Safety Education Program Web site at www.denix.osd.mil/uxosafety.

AMC names Small Business Specialist of the Year

U.S. Army photo by Darryl Howlett

Kathleen A. Granger provides matrix support to both the Army Sustainment Command and the Joint Munitions Command in the area of small business.

By Nancy Adolphi
Special to the Bullet'n

ROCK ISLAND ARSENAL, Ill. -- An Army Sustainment Command employee, Kathleen A. Granger, was recently honored for her work. Granger, Office of Small Business Programs, was selected as Army Material Command 2007 Small Business Specialist of the year. Gen. Benjamin S. Griffin, AMC commanding general, presented the award at a ceremony at the Rock Island Arsenal.

Granger also provides matrix support to the Joint Munitions Command as part of her duties.

Granger, a resident of Rock Island, Ill, was recognized for her exceptional customer service; receiving numerous compliments from contractors who depicted her as an asset to the command.

According to the nomination, her “can do” attitude was beneficial in helping small businesses land contracts with the federal government. Granger said she was “quite surprised” to hear she received the award. “I feel I do the best I can do everyday,” she said.

Bob Matthys, her supervisor, compared the award to a “coach of the year award” in athletics. He noted, "This award is very prestigious and a 'feather in the command’s hat.'”

Crane Army Passes One Million Hour Safety Milestone

By Tom Peske
Crane AAA Public Affairs

CRANE, Ind. -- The employees of Crane Army Ammunition Activity passed a safety milestone of more than one million hours worked without a lost workday incident in October and are still going strong.

The milestone, marked from Feb. 15 to Oct. 8, means that the injuries encountered by CAAA employees were minor enough that no employee missed a full day of work after their injury. According to the activity’s safety office, the significance of the milestone is huge.

“Our workers are apparently, and in a general sense, being more careful to avoid accidents that can be more traumatic and our leaders are being effective iterating the need to be safe and in enforcing the use of proper personal protective equipment,” CAAA Safety Engineer Bob Gillis said.

According to CAAA Supervisory Safety Engineer Walt Shearin, the safety culture is good, but complacency in the work place could easily ruin it. In order to maintain this culture, training has become an essential part of the workplace environment.

Gillis explained that CAAA Commander Col. Charles Kibben “went to a mandatory weekly safety topic where we previously had a monthly mandatory safety topic. The emphasis has been stronger and stronger in order to make all of our workers more aware of safety on a daily basis, to watch out for each other, and to report hazards to their supervisor as they may appear in the workplace.”

While it is unknown how long CAAA will continue past this safety milestone, it is clear that it is a part of a total effort to continue to provide their best for the world’s best.

Family

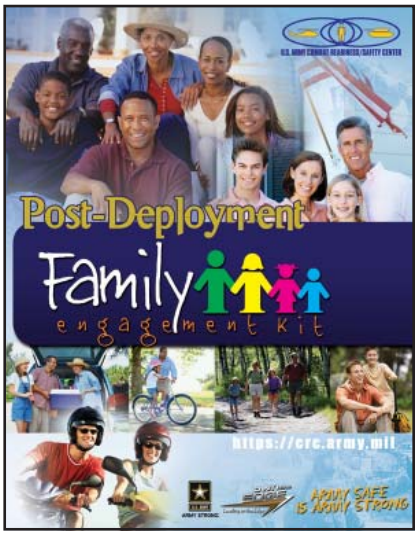
Continued from page 2

brigade-level safety professionals, Better Opportunites for Single Soldiers leaders, parents, and individual Family members to keep our Army team safe, Forrester added.

Families are encouraged to embrace the Family Engagement Kit as another tool supporting one common desire – safer Soldiers and Families, he said.

"Family involvement is essential, so I ask for engagement with your loved one," Forrester said. "With your help, we can better protect our nation's most precious assets – our Soldiers."

For more information about the Family Engagement Kit, visit the USACRC Web site at https://crc.army.mil/familyengagement.



Retire

Continued from page 4

homework. He had even planned for difficulties with the federal system but to his surprise did not happen.

"My experience with Army Civilian Personnel Offices has been more negative than positive over the years so I was expecting something between a goat-rope and a fiasco, but 98 percent of the process went smoothly," Swisher continued. "I expected problems getting payments started but there were none. When I did have questions for OPM, the 1-800 number was good. The staff was very responsive, very prompt, very accurate in answering questions."

Swisher's advice to other government employees is two-fold;

* Start planning early. "You are responsible for managing your career and that includes planning your retirement," Swisher said. Those were words of wisdom he got early on in his career.

* Adhere to deadlines. Your retirement packet should be submitted three months out.

"Find your CPO specialist. Find out requirements for submitting the retirement packet and adhere to deadlines. Also find out what it takes to clear your facility or installation and plan accordingly," Swisher said.

Swisher and Mulligan retired under the Civilian Service Retirement System, or CSRS, while Ralph Stinson, a 34-year Army career civilian, will retire at the end of December under FERS, or the Federal Employees Retirement System.

According to Stinson there are some differences, "What I didn't know going into it is that FERS offers a social security offset for people who retire before age 62. That helps a lot and helped me make my decision," Stinson, who is 58 years old, said.

Stinson, too, will relocate upon retirement and he also has a plan for his new life. "I've got a video camera and an Adobe editing system and with that I plan to produce documentaries about interesting people in my hometown near Andover, Maine. There are a million stories there waiting to be told and I figure I've got twenty or thirty years to capture them," he said.

Stinson spent the last 34 years producing video news releases for the Army. Now he looks forward to channeling his focus on the civilian sector.

Lana Coleman, 61, retired from JMC in June after 23 years of federal service. She retired under FERS and started her planning about four years in advance. She too, appreciated the on-line resources, especially the Army Benefits Center calculator, "It was great and most of the forms were easy, but I did have problems with some of the terminology and understanding benefits."

Coleman started the planning process by attending a retirement seminar sponsored by the Rock Island Arsenal Civlian Personnel Advisory Center.

"These seminars are offered several times throughout the year and they fill up fast. We recommend attendance ten years out, but five years minimum," said Kelly Lack, a human resources supervisor at CPAC.

Lack said there are two recurring issues that frequently turn up at retirement time: "Buying back military or temp time and health insurance. Most people wait too long to look into those. To buy back military time you should jump on that quickly because interest accrues over the years and makes it too expensive to buy back and to carry over health insurance you need to be enrolled for a minimum of five years prior to retirement."

For step-by-step instructions on buying back military service or temporary time visit, https://www.abc.army.mil.

Whether you retire under FERS or CSRS, the same advice applies, have a plan and start early.

American Ordnance wins recycling award

By Doug Hanify
American Ordnance LLC

MIDDLETON, Iowa -- The Iowa Recycling Association's Best Business Recycling Award recognizes companies who are committed to responsible, long-term resource management through reducing, reusing, recycling and renewing.

The 2007 award has been awarded to the Iowa Army Ammunition Plant operating contractor American Ordnance LLC.

Previously, AO had won the Des Moines County recycling award for seven consecutive years before winning the state award.

The AO disposal department actively seeks opportunities to recycle additional items through extensive monitoring and in cooperation with the production lines. AO recycles materials such as aluminum, steel, mixed metals, copper wire, lead, banding steel, wood boxes, wood scrap (pallets, etc), cardboard, plastic, paper, silver, carbon filter material, used oil, excess equipment/machines, toner cartridges, and energetic materials.

In fiscal year 2002, AO reused and or recycled 890 tons of material and in fiscal year 2006, 2,570 tons of material.

In addition, AO has implemented a state-of-the-art filmless digital x-ray system that has reduced the amount of silver that requires recycling, as well as reducing the amount of waste x-ray fixer and developer.

The head of the AO recycling team is Kelley Cooper. "The success of the AO recycling program is due to a team effort by the personnel in my office and those that are committed to this program on the production lines. A program like ours improves the environment and the IAAAP, supports Army recycling, and reduces the cost of manufacturing new ammunition," said Cooper.

For more information about the American Ordnance LLC recycling programs, contact Kelley Cooper, (319) 753-7643, kcooper@aollc.biz.

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questions. The questions provided a data set and a general scenario and then it was up to the student to figure out what statistical tools to use, provide assessment and significance of the findings, and to determine all necessary follow-on steps (with their own assessment and significance of findings) until the student adequately answered the scenario's question.

"I know I was finishing the last question and had written 39 pages when time ran out," he said. "Needless to say, my head hurt at the end of it."

Preparing for the test was a team effort for the Master Black Belt students in the course. Zilafro said, "The 12 Master Black Belt students from JMC and its subordinate commands worked together and developed study guides; we were a true team with a common goal. The instructors also did a fantastic job preparing us for the test. Even with a ton of preparation, after working continuously for four hours to complete all nine questions, I was brain dead. The great news is all 12 students of JMC's first Master Black Belt class, passed the class and completed the first requirement to certification."

Their training prepared the new Master Black Belts to pass along their knowledge and train a new group of green belts at CAAA. Zilafro explained, "The Master Black Belt training reinforced the basic LSS concepts and provided new in-depth knowledge of additional LSS tools. As part of the class, the Master Black Belt students were required to teach the black belt course of study during which the instructors and fellow students critiqued performance. This forced greater understanding of the material, honed preparation skills, improved presentation skills, and decreased stage fright."

With their training course completed, the two Master Black Belts began teaching the next wave of CAAA LSS Green Belts in October 2007. It is part of a constant commitment by Crane Army to improve how it operates and provides for the warfighter.

The dividends for CAAA's LSS program have been paying off for the activity. Last year CAAA validated more than $16,900 in Type I (hard financial savings) and more than $960,000 in Type II (cost avoidance savings) as a result of its LSS efforts.

As for recommendation for people beginning LSS training, Zilafro said, "My advice for people successfully working their way through the LSS program is keep a positive open mind and keep trying. Continuous improvement is not easy, but you are not in the fight alone. You always have the support you need to overcome obstacles, improve CAAA and be successful."

Mozambique officers visit Anniston Defense Munitions Center

U.S. Army photo by Jeremy Guthrie

Mozambique military officers tour the storage and inventory operations of the Anniston Defense Munitions Center. Here, (l-r) Col. Daniel Melaco Anastacio, chief of operations for the Mozambique army; Maj. Jose Correia Junior, who works in the Mozambique Army field artillery branch and serves as interpreter; and Lt. Col. Eugenio Roque, commanding officer of the Mozambique Army Special Forces Training Center; and U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Richard Phillips, U.S. Embassy in Mozambique, receive information about ADMC's storage procedures from Flouzetta Hill (far right), storage operations supervisor at one of the igloos. Also pictured is Amie Lackey, who provided the visitors with munitions inventory procedures.

By Miranda Myrick
Anniston Army Depot Public Affairs

ANNISTON, Ala. -- Officers from the Mozambique Army visited Anniston Defense Munitions Center Nov. 28 to tour operations. ADMC is a tenant activity at the Anniston Army Depot.

Munitions accidents in the southeastern Africa country have officials there wanting to learn more about safety and operating procedures at other munitions storage and disposal sites, said Col. Daniel Melaco Anastacio, chief of operations for the Mozambique army.

A munitions explosion occurred there in March near the capital city of Maputo, killing more than 100 people.

"It is important we come here and learn from the U.S. Army and their experiences," said Anastacio. "We'd like to learn from you so when the time comes for our munitions to be destroyed, we will know how you do it."

Mozambique became an independent republic in 1975, and the munitions have been stored there ever since. Anastacio said his country has little experience in destroying ammunition and asked ADMC Commander Lt. Col. Garry McClendon how to do it safely.

Anniston munitions personnel showed the visiting officers a part of their daily demolition operations, destroying 108 Dragon missiles over three detonated shots. The munitions, along with M15 mines, are buried nearly 15 feet into the dirt and use 150 feet of detonation cord to blow up the missiles. Visitors watched close by from a bunker equipped with video surveillance.

With each ADMC operation demonstration, the Mozambique officers were briefed on safety procedures.

Each ADMC group that works with munitions in the depot's Ammunition Limited Area conducts a three-minute safety meeting at the start of every work day.

"We are not issue-free," said McClendon. "I have the responsibility to emphasize safety, and by having another country to come here, it just raises our safety awareness even more."

Anastacio said he wants to improve security and safety at the ammunition depots in Mozambique. Encroachment has put the munitions depot in Maputo inside a highly populated area, and another accidental explosion could be disastrous for hundreds more who live and work there.

Here, workers and visitors in the limited area face many restrictions. No cellular phones or two-way communication devices are allowed in; neither are lighters and other potentially destructive devices. And of course, plenty of security guards are there to enforce all these rules.

Workers are not allowed to drive their personal vehicles inside the gate of the ammunition limited area where their offices and work areas are located. They are bused in to work from a parking lot outside the gate to the limited area.

Aside from the safety and security precautions taken by ADMC and the operations at the demolition pit, the visitors were briefed on the center's shipping, storage, inventory, and maintenance processes.

"It's an honor to have these visitors here," said McClendon.