



DIAMOND CUTTER



Guns and Rockets Thanksgiving Meal



Winter Safety
begins now!

2-18th Soldiers
visit students Veterans Day
Red Dragons
Honor Soldier

Commander's Corner



Col. Dominic E. Pompelia

Diamond Troopers, on behalf of the command staff, Command Sgt. Maj. Smith and myself we want to wish you a happy and safe holiday season.

We have once again completed another year of Operations Iraqi/Enduring Freedom. The U.S. Military is working aggressively to secure peace and stability throughout these regions; thank you for your dedication to duty and volunteering to serve your country.

For this holiday season, while spending time with friends and family, please remember those of us who will not have the opportunity to be at home with their loved ones.

We all know how hard it is when we cannot be with those we love. In these times of war,

we have an ever-growing number of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines who are making sacrifices everyday just by volunteering their lives to help bring democracy to people who were never given the opportunity to live a truly free life without the rule of a dictatorship.

As we inch ever closer to our impending deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, take time to enjoy the moments you share with those people you care about.

Try to do as much as possible to help your families prepare for the time of the deployment. Keeping your family members informed can and will save them undue stress in the long run and

inadvertently save you undue stress.

Problems at home while deployed can take your mind off the mission at hand and make you non-mission capable.

We want every Diamond Trooper operating at 110% for our tour so that we all effectively deploy, execute our mission and redeploy safely.

Safety is our priority!

But, on behalf of myself and Household 6, I would like to take this time to wish you and all your families and friends a safe and happy holiday season! Please be safe and we will see you all back and ready for work in a new year!

Diamond Cutter

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75th Fires Brigade commander

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75th Fires Brigade
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Cover Photo: Dining Facility Sgt. Errol Smith, was up early in the a.m. to help prepare the Thanksgiving meal. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McCargo, 75th FiB PAO)

Back Photo: The 75th Fires Brigade approaches the Tulsa Run finish line after completing the full 9 miles Sept 27 at Tulsa, Okla. (Photo by Sgt. Joe Battle, 75th Fires PAO)

FROM THE DIAMOND BRIGADE COMMAND SERGEANTS MAJOR

Holiday Greetings

"CELEBRATE YOUR FAITH AND RESPECT YOUR FELLOW MAN'S FAITH! BE SAFE THIS SEASON ... STAY MOTIVATED, STAY UGLY AND STAY TOUGH AS DIAMONDS!"

-CSM SMITH



**75TH INFANTRY BDE
"TOUGH AS DIAMONDS"**



"BE SAFE AND ENJOY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON AND REMEMBER ... SAFETY DOESN'T STOP ON DAYS OFF."

-CSM TIDWELL

**2ND BN, 18TH FAR
"MISSION READY"**

"BE SURE TO TAKE TIME THIS HOLIDAY SEASON TO THINK OF THOSE WHO HAVE GIVEN THEIR LIVES FOR ALL THE FREEDOMS WE ENJOY EVERYDAY!"

- CSM DOCTOR



**3RD BN, 18TH FAR
"RED DRAGONS"**



"TAKE TIME THIS HOLIDAY SEASON TO APPRECIATE THE THINGS IN LIFE THAT NORMALLY YOU WOULD OVERLOOK."

-CSM WILLIAMS

**100TH BSB
"DIAMOND SUPPORT"**

"THIS NEW YEAR CELEBRATE YOUR FREEDOMS RESPONSIBLY AND PLAN FOR ANOTHER AMAZING YEAR TO SERVE YOUR COUNTRY."

-CSM BRUNWALD



**1ST BN, 17TH FAR
"COPPERHEADS"**





Col. Dominic E. Pompelia thanks the Guns and Rockets Dining Facility Staff for their “hard work and dedication” prior to presenting them with awards or 75th Fires Brigade Coins.

**Story and Photos by
Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McCargo**

Nothing describes Thanksgiving like bountiful food, fellowship ... and FOOTBALL.

The Fort Sill Guns and Rockets Dining Facility had all in abundance Nov 22, and more than 600 service and family members arrived to celebrate the holiday together.

Much of preparation started two

months prior but more than 18 Army food service specialists began the meal preparation as early as 3 a.m. Thanksgiving Day.

Col. Dominic E. Pompelia, Commander of the 75th Fires Brigade, awarded Army Achievement Medals or present 75th Fires Brigade coins to several food service specialists and for their performance.

As part of the Diamond fellowship, service members from all branches were also able to enjoy a “home-cooked” meal



(Above) Spc. Karmesha Mason, Headquarters 100th Brigade Support Battalion, food service specialist, brings the food line freshly prepared chicken.



(Left) 1st Sgt. Dan Tribble and some fellow 3rd Battalion, 13th Field Artillery Soldiers pile the plates high with food.





(Left) More than 600 fort Sill patrons lined outside to partake of the Guns and Rockets Thanksgiving Meal.



(Above) Command Sgt. Maj. Stephen Doctor selects a morsel for a patron's plate.



meal at the dining facility.

Two wide-screen televisions aired the Thanksgiving Day Football game. Though the Detroit Lions proved to be a formidable foe they could not overcome the Green Bay Packers.

Senior battery, battalion and brigade leaders and NCOs were in attendance to serve the meal and to take an opportunity to meet and greet military peers and subordinates.

The meal prepared: was roast turkey, roast beef, chicken, cornbreads, pot roast, collard greens, mashed potatoes, candied yams, macaroni and cheese and black-eyed pees. There were too full salad bars and dessert kiosks.

(Left) Cpt. Enrique Loy, 100th BSB, takes a turn at carving a roast.



(Left) A Marine and two Soldiers enjoy their Thanksgiving meal together ... the topic: FOOTBALL!



A Tribute to a Fallen Comrade

Red Dragons bid farewell to one of their own

By Sgt 1st Class Kelly McCargo

More than 100 friends and fellow Soldiers from 75th Fires Brigade, 3rd Battalion, 13th Field Artillery Brigade sat in silence at Fort Sill's Grierson Hill Chapel, Oct. 31 as light piano music sounded through the interior.

"With a somber heart we are here today to pay last respects to Private First Class Marvin Johnson II. Although he was only part of the 'Red Dragon Battalion' for a short time he came to us with a big heart and a big smile," said Cpt. Eric Treschl, C Battery, 13th FAR, battery commander.

Johnson, 20, was killed during a shooting incident at Lawton, Okla. Oct 26 early in the morning, just days after arriving from assignment in South Korea. Fort Sill military police and investigators are cooperating with Lawton authorities in the ongoing investigation.

"As a testament to the caliber of the Soldier he was, Pfc. Johnson volunteered to serve the American people as he enlisted in the Army during a time war ... this act speaks highly of his character and honor and it was a privilege to serve with him," Treschl said.

The next speaker was Johnson's friend from "day one" of basic training and also during a their year-long deployment to Korea.

"For a year and-a-half, me and Marvin were best friends. I

remember feeling comfortable around him—I have never experienced that before with friends—like he was a brother of mine," said Pfc. Clifford Cates, C Btry 3rd Bn., 13th FAR.

"Marvin and I were in South Korea together ... one particular time I remember he and some friends we knew, went out and had dinner together. Not being used to all of the foreign foods and riding around on trains, Marvin got sick and we took care of him that evening and made sure he got back to his room safe. The next morning we both chuckled about it, and Marvin said 'I'm glad I have friends like you,'" Cates said. "Ever since that day we went every where together.

"I can honestly say that there are only a few people who have changed my life forever; he gave me an opportunity to open up to somebody," Cates said. "He taught me life is short—and the most important part of life are the people in it.

"To his family; I love as if you as if you are my own, and in many ways you are. I want you to know, that my family and I will be there for you in this difficult time, to ease the suffering that you are going through. To Marvin, I love you and miss you; you are my family and you have graced my life—God Bless you!"

Scripture from Psalms 91



Photo by Sgt 1st Class Kelly McCargo

Pfc. Clifford Cates sits in solemn silence beside the memorial of one of his closest friends.

was read aloud by Staff Sgt. Guy Smith, C Battery, 3rd Bn., 13th FAR, launcher chief, and then a piano player gently played Amazing Grace until Johnson's battery first sergeant solemnly took the podium.

"Roll call!" shouted 1st Sgt. Grover McIntosh, C Btry, 3rd Bn., 13th FAR. "Staff Sergeant Daniels!"

"Here First Sergeant," a voice yelled back.

"Sergeant Anton," McIntosh shouted.

"Here First Sergeant,"

another voice yelled back

"PFC Johnson," McIntosh shouted.

Silence.

"PFC Johnson ... Private First Class Marvin Johnson the Second," McIntosh shouted.

Silence.

Suddenly three rifle shots blasted outside of the chapel in salute, and as the acrid sulfur from the blank rounds drifted into the chapel, attendees stood and bowed their heads in silent thought and prayer for their fallen comrade.





“(Marvin) taught me life is short—and the most important part of life are the people in it.”

-Pfc. Clifford Cates

Got something for us?

Do you know or have a story that you think would make a great 75th Fires Brigade news story?

Have you taken a photo of a 75th Fires Brigade Soldier in action or an event you would like to see published in the “Diamond Cutter”?

We accept submissions!

All submissions need to be emailed to Sgt. Joe Battle: joe.battle@conus.army.mil

Please keep story submissions to one page in length. Photographs for submissions need to be in focus and of a high resolution. The 75th Fires Brigade Public Affairs office cannot reproduce copyrighted material. Submissions may be edited to meet the standards outlined in the Associated Press Stylebook. Photos may be cropped to meet page size requirements. Full credit will be given to the author and/or photographer. For more information please contact the 75th Fires Brigade PAO at DSN: 442-8454



DANGER



LANDMINES

Story and photos

by Sgt 1st Class Kelly McCargo

Ground 'Radar' to replace metal detection

The U.S. Army's most sophisticated mine deactivation and detonation systems are all but useless without the knowledge of how to safely find land mines before it's detonated dangerously close to human beings.

"Historically mine detection relied entirely on metal detection or (an explosion), and that's pretty much it ... that's pretty limited because there is a lot of metal clutter on the battlefield. A metal detector detects all conductive metals in the ground. This includes stuff that's used in mines and not used in mines such as steel, aluminum and copper—anything," Craig McNally, L3 Communications, CyTerra Field Engineer. "Mines have become lower and lower on metal

content so we're trying to detect the other detectable components of a mine and that's where ground radar comes in."

A 4-member team of CyTerra explosive disposal experts came to Fort Sill to train more than 120 Fort Sill Soldiers on the proper usage of the Army Navy-Portable Special Search 14 a mine detection system Oct 15 to Nov. 2.

The AN-PSS 14 is a mine detection system that combines metal detection with ground penetrating radar.

The AN-PSS 14 is so complex it can detect mines made of wood or plastic, or as small as a golf ball, McNally said. The water-resistant system also has exception success in inclement weather conditions which Soldiers know happens all too often.

"This system not only tells you where the mines are but what type of mine it is; whether it's an antipersonnel blast mine or an anti-tank mine because this system detects both the metal content of the mine and the body of the mine," said McNally. "(It) has a very powerful metal detector—very sensitive—and essentially it has a radar jammed in the middle of it and the two work together to tell you that 'hey we have a target' or whether it's trash."

Trash being basic conductive metals in the soil or common metal fragments littering a battlefield.

Few Soldiers serving today have ever used previous mine, or 'metal', detectors but are aware of this system's track record.

"Honestly this is a great system," said Sgt Jared Englehardt, C Battery,





Spc. Odin Ayala (left), A Battery, 3rd Battalion, 13th Field Artillery Regiment and Sgt. Mark Hendron, B Btry, 3rd Bn., 13th FAR initialize the mine detector before negotiating the lane training.

2nd Battalion, 18th Field Artillery, communications support NCO.

Engelhardt, a five-time Foreign War Veteran, said due this mine detection system, his unit can attest to finding more than 280 enemy weapons caches while deployed to Iraq last year.

“It’s very easy to learn with the instructors who paced us along very adequately,” he said.

The training was broken down into five-days.

“Monday is in a classroom and its PowerPoint driven. We start doing some small group hands-on instructions during the afternoon,” McNally said.

On Tuesday and Wednesday the instructors offer instructions, tips and critiques on students’ scanning techniques along a 30-foot inert mine lane.

But by Thursday, McNally said “(the students) are pretty much flying solo.”

On the last day, students need to successfully complete a 20-question, multiple-choice written exam and then a practical hands-on exam in order to receive their AN-PSS 14 graduation certificate.

Once certified these students will return to their units and offer their fellow Soldiers a distinct advantage in finding IEDs and mines along patrol routes during combat deployments.

To further facilitate Soldiers survival factor, the Army alone plans on purchasing and fielding more than 17,000 systems to replace outdated and obsolete mine detection equipment in use today, according to the L3 communications CyTerra website.

Fort Sill Soldiers now have the access and training to a tool designed to flush out an enemy that saturates Afghanistan countryside with an estimated 110 million, according to UNICEF’s website.

The CyTera Team developed a coin to present to Soldiers for “Outstanding Training Performance.”



(Below) Craig McNally (standing), L3 Communications, CyTerra Field Engineer, evaluates his “high-speed” Sgt. Jared Engelhardt, C Btry, 2nd Bn., 18th FAR.





Flowers Mound Elementary School Veteran's Day Assembly

By Sgt. 1st Class Kelly McCargo

There are many ways to celebrate Veteran's Day but more than 30 2nd Battalion, 18th Field Artillery Soldiers joined more than 300 Flower Mound teachers and students Nov 9.

The students prepared poems, songs and an essay about "What Veteran's Day means to them."

Twenty-four Flower Mound boys and girls performed a tribute to all military branches students during the military medley where the students performed the

Army Song, The Halls of Montezuma, Anchors Aweigh, The Air Force Song, and some additional selections.

The Soldiers Posted the U.S. Colors then introduced themselves to the students. In unison the Soldiers recited the NCO Creed.

The students made cut out hearts from construction paper with "Thank you for all that you have done for us" pasted on the front and gave them to the Soldiers and Veterans in attendance.



(Above Left) Students hand out construction paper hearts to Soldiers and Veterans.

(Above) Sgt 1st Class Matthew Dial, B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 18th Field Artillery, platoon sergeant, goes over the plan one last time with his Soldiers prior to the assembly at the Flowers Mound Elementary School break area. Dial said he was "more than pleased to be with the students."

CONTACT YOUR RETENTION NCO TODAY!

75th Fires Brigade Career Counselor
MSG Glenn – 442-9395
MSG Englert – 442-9369

3-13 FA Battalion
SSG Lara / SSG Eadie- 442-0518

2-18 FA Battalion
SSG Jefferson – 442-3493

1-17 FA Battalion
SSG Reyes – 442-6452

100 BSB
SGT Clark / SGT Lockhart – 442-6297

HHB, 75th Fires
SGT Carranza/SGT Lockhart – 442-5006 / 6297

REENLIST
STAY ARMY STRONG

Brigade Safety Office

Winter Driving

Doesn't just pertain to military vehicles

We all know driving a POV during winter months is sometimes a challenging event and operating an Army wheeled or tracked vehicle is not much different.

Limited hours of daylight, freezing conditions, white outs and black ice all contribute to vehicle-related accidents.

In a rollover in Alaska, a Stryker was slowly moving down a frozen tank trail when all the tires began to slide causing the vehicle to slide off the road and roll over.

Consequently, one Soldier suffered minor injuries and an estimated \$200,000 worth of damage to the vehicle occurred.

Whether it's a wheeled or tracked vehicle, exercise extra caution when driving in winter conditions.

Lower temperatures and wet weather sometimes cause Soldiers to huddle inside vehicles to keep warm. Tracked vehicles

have a higher risk of carbon monoxide poisoning, a color and odorless gas, due to the lack of proper exhaust gas venting or engine panels not seating properly in the crew compartment. Proper Prevent Maintenance Checks and Services and correct use of the heater can help reduce the possibility of such accidents occurring.

Operating Army vehicles and POVs during winter months can be hazardous, but making sure your vehicle is in good condition, adding additional supplies to your required basic issue items, and applying composite risk management will minimize the risk and reduce stress.

For more information go to the U.S. Army's Combat Readiness Center Website at https://crcapps3.crc.army.mil/Newsletter/Default.aspx?tabid=190&id=2007_NOV_list



SLOW DOWN ... The goal is to "Arrive Alive!" Store additional cold weather garments (hat, gloves, pants and jackets) in your vehicle. Most vehicle break downs are "unforeseeable." Avoid wearing shorts, T-shirts regardless of how close or short your journey is supposed to be! On longer trips consider water, flashlights, cell phones, flares and first aid kits. It may be sometime before roadside assistance can make it to your location!

How Cold is *Cold*?

Last year's cold weather season produced over 300 cold weather related injuries. Exposure to the elements is an occupational hazard common to Soldiers, but awareness and implementation of appropriate control measures such as proper clothing and equipment, sufficient nutrition and hydration, personal hygiene and appropriate work practices can prevent injuries.

The term "cold weather injury" tends to bring to mind an image of drifting snow and temperatures below the freezing mark, but non-freezing cold weather related injuries such as trench or immersion foot and chilblains can occur in temperatures as high as 60° F.

The Cold-Weather Casualties and Injuries Chart developed by the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine (USACHPPM)

identifies the causes and symptoms along with first aid and prevention measures for the seven different types of cold weather related injuries including dehydration and carbon monoxide poisoning.

For more information on preventing cold weather injuries check out the USACHPPM Web site at: <http://usachppm.apgea.army.mil/HIOCWI>.



