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June 6, 2008
PAO 06-06-08

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Military members learn critical combat lifesaving skills

By Spc. Nicole Sullivan and Jasper DesLauriers

RAPID CITY, S.D. - More than 800 service members, from all different parts of the country and military branches, learn first responder medical skills to help save lives, both on and off the battlefield.

The Combat Lifesaver Course is being taught at Camp Rapid and Ellsworth Air Force Base from June 2 through June 6 during the South Dakota National Guard's annual training exercise known as Golden Coyote 2008. This four-day course teaches highly advanced medical skills for emergency first aid.

Instructor, 2nd Lt. Richard Jackson, said the course is designed to teach Soldiers how to best control the situation they face.

"Soldiers are taught to use their skills and the environment to control the situation, take care of the casualty, and how to move them to safe care," said Jackson of the 801st Combat Support Hospital in Indianapolis, Ind.

"The biggest challenge of this course is teaching non-medical personnel to perform medical treatments," continued Jackson.

One student enrolled in the class, Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Marvin Makarwich, said he has multiple things he wishes to accomplish during the Combat Lifesaver Course.

"The goals I wish to accomplish are to first to learn basic skills to save casualties out on the battlefield," said Makarwich of the Operational Health Support Unit out of Dallas. "The second goal is to improve relations between services; the Navy, Army and Air Force are all working together here."

Maj. Reginna Campbell, program coordinator and also of the 801st, added that this training is crucial to all military members.

“It is such a great class. The Soldiers want to be here and they want to learn,” said Campbell. “The end result is that they are going to help save someone’s life.”

Spc. Louie Clement of the 109th Regional Support Group, South Dakota Army National Guard, said he thinks this course material is vital to battlefield survival and a challenging situation to face.

“I’d hate to think that it might be one of my buddies that you would have to apply these life-saving techniques to in a real-life scenario,” said Clement.

Approximately 15 percent of deaths that occur in ground combat could be saved if proper and prompt medical attention was administered. This course gives the knowledge, skills and experience that can help injured service members survive.

Clement said the course will also help him in his civilian job as an aquatics and program director in his hometown of Sturgis, S.D.

Second Lt. Jackson said the course can benefit National Guard and Reserve members and the communities in which they live.

“One thing about a Soldier is that we take to the battlefield the things we learn in the civilian world, and we take to the civilian world the things we learned on the battlefield,” said Jackson.

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FOR MORE INFORMATION, please contact Maj. Orson Ward at (605) 737-6721, or cell (605) 431-8753.

Photo Cut Lines:

080605-A-1355S-001: Petty Officer 2nd Class Marvin Makarwich, practices combat lifesaving skills Thursday, June 5, in Rapid City, S.D. The four-day course was held as a part of the annual Golden Coyote exercise. (National Guard photo by Spc. Nicole Sullivan) (RELEASED)

080605-A-1355S-002: Spc. Louie Clement of Sturgis, S.D, practices combat lifesaving skills Thursday, June 5, in Rapid City, S.D. The four-day course was held as a part of the annual Golden Coyote exercise. (National Guard photo by Spc. Nicole Sullivan) (RELEASED)

080605-A-1355S-003: Staff Sgt. Dave Lane (left) flinches as Staff Sgt. Jesse Cote, both of the 286th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Maine (right) inserts an IV at Combat Lifesaver Course on Thursday, June 5, at Camp Rapid in Rapid City, S.D. (National Guard photo by Spc. Nicole Sullivan) (RELEASED)

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FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION about the South Dakota National Guard, please visit our Web site at <https://sdguard.ngb.army.mil/default.aspx>

NOTE: The South Dakota National Guard will host the annual Golden Coyote exercise from June 7 – 21 in the southern Black Hills. More than 4,000 service members from 92 units representing 27 states and four foreign nations are participating in the exercise. The Golden Coyote exercise has been conducted for the past 24 years. The exercise provides relevant training opportunities in support of the war on terror and homeland defense.

Residents should be aware of an increase in military traffic throughout the Black Hills and an increase in the level of noise due to military operations. Aviation activity will be operating out of Camp Rapid and the Army Aviation Support Facility next to the Rapid City Regional Airport.

Aircraft will be primarily training on equipment and personnel transport missions as well as medical evacuation. Aircraft will respond to real-world emergencies during the exercise and remain in an all-hours-ready status during the exercise.

Spectators to military training are welcome, however caution is warranted and spectators are asked to remain at a safe distance from all moving military vehicles and aircraft to prevent injury to personnel or damage to property.