Air Guard engineers preparing for upcoming deployment

By 1st Lt. Camara Minks
Staff Writer

The members of the 155th Civil Engineering Squadron aren't taking a break after completing the Operational Readiness Inspection in January; instead, they are using the ORI as a starting point for their deployment overseas to support efforts in Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

Over 30 personnel from many different sections of the 155th CES are receiving training and preparing their families for the long separation the deployment will bring in the summer and fall of this year.

"I want to have them (the squadron) prepared better than when we got deployed the first time," said Chief Master Sgt. Alan G. Maier, 155th CES.

In order to do that, Maier said he is preparing his organization's families and members by giving them more information and training before they deploy, which will help them with the demobilization transition once they get home.

This includes legal and financial briefings and contacting Karen Jordan-Anderson of the Airmen and Family Readiness Center on base.

"I want my members to start thinking about 'What do I need to do financially? What do I need to do for my family?... What do I need to do to prep,'" said Maier.

Maier also had Dr. Ahsan Naseem, a psychologist from the Department of Veteran's Affairs Lincoln Campus, come to speak to the Air Guardsmen in his squadron about how to cope with deployments before, during and after the mission is over.

That was Dr. Naseem's first visit to address 155th Air Refueling members going overseas.

Personally, Maier has been working with his extended family and friends to create a support group for his wife and children while he's gone.

"I'm lucky to have my siblings within the Lincoln area," Maier said, adding that he's also letting various organizations he belongs to know that his family will need someone to call on for things such as home repair, auto repair and emotional support while he's gone. This includes his children's support network as well.

"My son has some other friends that their fathers have been gone for a year, so he has somebody that he can talk to that's in the same boat," said Maier.

He also has made sure his wife has contacted Military One Source to access the resources they have for families.

This isn't Maier's first deployment, but he is making sure that those who are deploying for the first time get the support and training they need. This includes such Guardsmen as Senior Airman Tyler Kathol from Hartington, Neb.

Kathol has been in the Air National Guard for four years and this will be his first deployment overseas.

"It's kinda exciting. I'm kinda nervous too," said Kathol, who will graduate this summer from Northeast Community College with a degree in Building Construction. He said his new degree fits in well with what he does for the Air National Guard and what he will do during the deployment.

"(My family) knew this would happen. We're just all trying to go with the flow," said Kathol, adding that he's working on keeping his family informed and up to date on what to expect.

Kathol is also getting hints and tips from those who have deployed before to get an idea of what kind of work he might be doing and what he might expect for lodging and meals.

Some of the preparations for the ORI helped the deployers get ready for this mobilization.

"It put our (Personal Readiness Folders) and a lot of our paperwork in perfect order and that I'm finding out is a big help," said Master Sgt. David J. Wieting, Prime Beef manager for 155th CES.

"All of our mobility paperwork is already done because of the ORI and that is a good thing."

One of Wieting's jobs as Prime Beef manager is ensuring that everyone who is deploying has the correct equipment and that it is paid for by the correct operation. This has been a challenge in the past.

"I'm getting good help from (supply), (personel), and (logistics readiness.) Deb Barnett in (supply) and Trish Petersen in (personnel), and Mike Akin in LGRR have become very good friends of mine," said Wieting.

Guard, Reserves break ground on Beatrice center

By David Nore
Public Information Officer

A groundbreaking ceremony was held in Beatrice, March 9, to kick off the construction of a new combined Armed Forces Readiness Center located on land just north of Southeast Community College.

Maj. Gen. Tim Kadavy, city officials and construction managers manned the silver ceremonial shovels to break ground for the $10 million project that is expected to be completed in the spring of 2010.

"We are extremely glad to be here in Beatrice and happy to be part of the Beatrice community. We think this will show how much we think of Beatrice with the quality of this facility," said Kadavy.

"We are committed to world class facilities for our Army National Guard and I will speak on behalf of the Army Reserve also when I say that," he added.

The new 60,000-square-foot readiness center will replace current Army Guard armories in Beatrice and Fairbury, and a similar U.S. Army Reserve facility in Wymore. These facilities were closed by the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) of 2005.

The new readiness center will be located across the street from the current Nebraska Army National Guard armory, which is located at 210 South Reed Street.

"This is a great day for Beatrice. We have had a long and we believe good relationship with the National Guard predating World War II. We are proud to have you building a new facility here in Beatrice and I imagine some 50 years ago across the street someone else was saying similar words. But they are being said again and we are not tired of saying them," said Beatrice Mayor Dennis Schuster.

"Welcome and we hope you have another successful 50 years in Beatrice, Neb.," he said.

Denis Goeser of LEO-Daly Architecture said his company is ready to deliver a high quality facility to the Guard, Reserve, and Beatrice. "We've taken a lot of success stories from recent projects and melded them into this design. We have had really great support from the city, National Guard and Army Reserve."

Once completed, the facility will house approximately 150 traditional Nebraska Army National Guard Soldiers and approximately 65 U.S. Army Reservists. The center will also be home to 11 full-time Nebraska Army National Guard Soldiers and one full-time U.S. Army Reserve employee.

Photo by David Nore

Breaking Ground: (from left) Col. Mark Stockstell, Beatrice Mayor Dennis Schuster, Maj. Gen. Timothy Kadavy, Denis Goeser of LEO Daly Architecture and David Langenberg of Hawkins Construction break the ground for the new Armed Forces Readiness Center in Beatrice, March 9. The new 60,000-square-foot $10 million center is expected to be completed by the spring of 2010. It will replace Army Guard armories in Beatrice and Fairbury, and a similar U.S. Army Reserve facility in Wymore.

Army Guard to phase out 'Stop Loss' program by late summer

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service

The Army will phase out use of the so-called "stop-loss" program between now and January, Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates said March 18.

Since the beginning of his term as defense secretary, Gates has called on the services to eliminate their dependence on the controversial program that allows the involuntary extension of service members' active duty past the scheduled end of their term of service.

The Army currently has 13,000 Soldiers whose active duty status was extended through the program so they could deploy with their units. The Army is the only service using the program.

"We have the legal authority to do it," Gates said during a Pentagon news conference. "But... I felt, particularly in these numbers, that it was breaking faith. It wasn't a violation of the enlistment contract. But I believe that when somebody's end date of service comes up, to hold them against their will, if you will, is just not the right thing to do."

The secretary said there will always be the need to hold a few people in the service, but it should be a small number. "I would like to get it down to scores, not thousands," he said.

The secretary's decision will eliminate the use of stop-loss for deploying Soldiers.

"Effective this August, the U.S. Army Reserve will no longer mobilize units under stop-loss," Gates said. "The Army National Guard will stop doing so in September and active Army units will cease employing stop-loss in January."

The goal is to cut the number of Soldiers remaining in the Army under stop-loss by 50 percent by June 2010 and to near zero by March 2011. "We will retain the authority to use stop-loss under extraordinary circumstances," Gates said.

The Army will put in place a number of incentives to encourage Soldiers to voluntarily extend their enlistments to mitigate the impact the decision will have on unit cohesion and strength.

Starting this month, the Army will pay stop-lossed Solders $500 a month. The program is retroactive to Oct. 1, which was when Congress passed the law permitting the payments.

Army leaders spoke to the secretary recently on the proposal, and they are putting in place the directives and regulations to make it work, Army officials said.

"I think that the way the Army is approaching this mitigates those risks, so I feel comfortable with this plan," Gates said.

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gram in preparation for basic training when he collapsed while cooling down from a morning run.

After receiving immediate initial treatment at Camp Ashland, Treacle was transported by ambulance to Papillion where he received treatment at Midlands Hospital before being transferred to Bergan Mercy Medical Center in Omaha. He died enroute to the hospital.

Treacle is survived by his wife Nicole and his two daughters, Rosaland and Claire Ann.

He was buried with full military honors on March 4 in Callaway, Neb.

"The entire Nebraska National Guard is deeply saddened by the loss of Private Treacle," said Maj. Gen. Timothy J. Kadavy, adjutant general for Nebraska. "Our hearts and thoughts go out to his wife Nicole, his daughters and his entire family."

The incident is under investigation.

According to his obituary, Treacle was born on April 20, 1984, to Robert E. Treacle Sr. and Diane (Allvin) Treacle. He lived in many different areas before moving to Cozad his freshman year and then to Dunning, Neb., where he graduated from Sandhills High School in 2003.

He and his wife were married in July 2004, shortly after they moved to Broken Bow, Oconto, Callaway and finally to Lexington.

According to Sgt. 1st Class Justin Schmitt, who worked with Treacle in the RSP shortly after he enlisted in the Nebraska Army Guard last November, Treacle was widely liked by the entire staff.

"He was one of those guys who would never quit on himself," said Schmitt. "He caught on to things real quick and he remembered them from drill to drill."

"All the cadre liked him a lot because he worked so hard. He would never quit on himself," he said. "You just couldn't help but like him."

Schmitt said that Treacle had told him that he had wanted to join the National Guard since he was 15 years old. He was scheduled to attend basic training in March.

Schmitt said that he was shocked when he learned of Treacle's death, adding that he had no doubt that Treacle would've been an outstanding Soldier.

"He would've done well in the National Guard," he said. "He was going to be one of those Soldiers that every unit would've wanted to have in their organization. He was going to be one of those Soldiers who, if you gave him a task, would've accomplished it in about 20 minutes and then would've come back asking fore more."

"He definitely wasn't going to be one of those guys who wants to spend the entire drill with their backs against the drill floor wall," he added. "He was going to be a good Soldier."