America's Defenders

U.S. Army Transformation: Troops Using High-Tech Equipment, Training to Meet New Face of War

(NAPS)—With lessons learned from the Gulf War, Somalia and the recent war in Central Asia, the U.S. Army is challenging soldiers to excel as part of a faster, more effective fighting force built on the strengths of superior training, technology and information networks. This evolution is a keystone of the Army's Transformation plan, an Army-wide focus on how it responds to any threat, anywhere in the world, with speed and stealth.

Transformation centers on preparing the Army to challenge and defeat the new face of warfare, which is increasingly found in small regional conflicts instead of the traditional Cold War style battlefields. Developing new kinds of soldier skills is the key element to the success of this plan.

The central focus of Transformation is the training and preparation of the Army's soldiers to ensure they are the best-equipped and trained Army in the world. The Army's Transformation strengthens this focus on soldiers by continually investing in new technologies, strategies and training.

A critical capability of Transformation will be the deployment of a combat brigade in 96 hours, a combat division within 120 hours and five divisions within 30 days. This quick response time will allow the Army to prevent the escalation of regional skirmishes into full-scale wars.

The primary physical aspect of Transformation is the introduction of advanced equipment. Phase One includes the introduction of the Stryker, a light-armored vehicle that rolls upon eight technologically advanced wheels. With 10 different types of Strykers designed for various missions, Strykers possess ultramodern technology with lighter armor, advanced thermal tracking and protection against unconventional warfare.

"The Stryker is the new vehicle that we're fielding," said Spc. Michael Minutaglio, a vehicle commander based at Fort Lewis, Wash. "Their mobility and technology really helps us get the infantry into the hot spots quickly and safely. It will be a tremendous asset to have in battle."

A secondary feature of Transformation is enhanced tactical integration among Army units, both on the ground and in the air. Battle-proven helicopters such as Apaches, Black Hawks and Chinooks provide vital support to troops, vehicles and long-range missile systems. As Transformation unfolds, soldiers will increasingly utilize satellite intelligence, robotic weapons and aerial drones.

"Aviation's main role is infantry support, providing air and fire support for their ground operations," said Chief Warrant Officer Lisa Jewett, an Apache co-pilot based at Fort Hood, Texas. "However, we understand that it's critical for us to work as one team to achieve the mission objective."

In addition to the Army's focus on tactical Transformation, they have also addressed other 21st century demands in terms of soldier care and environmental resources. For example, the Army Medical Department (AMEDD) developed the 91W combat medic Military Occupational Specialty, a.k.a. the 91 Whiskey, to operate as a key part of small, mobile medical detachments, able to provide state-of-the-art medical treatment in any battle environment with precision and care. These new medics combine the skills and training of licensed practical nurses and combat medics. As some of AMEDD's core medical assets, 91Ws possess the medical skills to care for today's 21st century soldier.

Likewise, in the environmental world, the Army is forwarding advancements in areas such as solar and geothermal energy sources, "green" bullets and alternatively-fueled vehicles. These advancements in environmental research allow the Army to be better prepared when it deploys throughout the world on various missions, whether adapting vehicles and soldiers to a foreign terrain or building Army bases on unfamiliar lands.

With these advancements in training and technology, the Army continues to establish itself as the preeminent military force in the world, able to combat enemies anywhere with measured success and resolve. This ability is built upon the strength of the soldiers within the units and the nation behind them.

"Given the world climate these days, I think that my pride for the Army and America has increased because I now know that I joined for a reason," Jewett said. "And if called upon, I will gladly do my job to protect America."

For more information about career opportunities in the U.S. Army, visit the Web site at http://goarmy.com.

Quick facts about U.S. Army Transformation

- A 20-year Army vision, led by the Secretary of the Army and the Chief of Staff of the Army, designed to better meet the demands of 21st century warfare.
- Can have a combat brigade anywhere in the world within 96 hours and a combat division within 120 hours.
- There are 10 different types of Strykers, with uses including engineering, medical evacuation and troop transport.
- Interim Brigade Combat Teams (IBCT), the Transformation Army units, based at Fort Lewis, were the first to begin the Transformation process in 1999.
- Other IBCTs in Alaska, Louisiana, Hawaii and Pennsylvania will soon begin Transformation.
- Additional information on Transformation can be found at http://www.army.mil/vision/Transformationinfo.htm.

Valentine Pageant

Wishing Upon a Star pageant productions will hold their First Annual Natural Valentine Pageant on February 1, 2003. The pageant will be held at the National Guard Armory in London.

Age groups for the pageant will be: girls 0-11m, 12-23m-2 yrs., 3-4 yrs., 5-6 yrs., 7-11 yrs., 12-14 yrs., and 15 and up. Boys 0-2 yrs., 3-5 yrs., 6 and up. Every contestant will receive a gift from cupid. Winners will receive large crowns, trophies and toys.

Sunday best or pageant wear is the recommended attire for the event. There will be no double crowning and no one goes home empty handed.

Deadline for the event is January 13th with an entry fee of $80. TicRet sales are available to help with cost.

For more information and entry forms call (606)877-8919.

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Insulate now to save on winter fuel costs

As the mercury continues to drop with the onset of winter, and heating bills start to rise, now is an excellent time to check your attic to make sure you have the proper amount of insulation. Attic insulation is generally easy to install and will save you plenty in both heating and cooling bills.

According to 84 Lumber insulation purchasing specialist Bob Marinelli, there are many different types of insulation on the market.

"The type of insulation you use depends on the space you are insulating," said Marinelli.

"Blanket and batt insulation is used primarily on attic floors and walls when there is a large, easily accessible area to cover. Foil insulation also works well in those areas, acting as a vapor barrier in protecting against radiant heat loss. Loose fill insulation is generally used for nooks and crannies where blankets or batts can't be used."

Blanket and batt insulation is the most common type used by do-it-yourselfers. Blankets come in long single rolls, while batts come in short lengths packed several to a package. Fiberglass insulation is the most common type sold and is available unfaced, or faced with kraft paper or foil on one side. The paper makes the insulation less permeable to air and water vapor and eases installation.

Loose fill insulation comes in bags and can be poured or blown using pneumatic equipment. A third option is rigid insulation, which are boards made with various types of plastics and foams.

Marinelli said homeowners and builders need to consider the R-value (or resistance) you want to achieve in determining how much insulation is necessary to adequately do the job. The higher the R-value, the more insulation value the product has. The climate in which you live will determine how much insulation is necessary to adequately do the job. (Please see insulation zone map).

When installing fiberglass insulation, be sure to take safety precautions. Wear an OSHA-approved dust mask to protect yourself from the fine particles of fiberglass which fly through the air and can cause irritation. It's important to make sure the mask covers your nose and mouth securely. Also wear goggles, gloves, long-sleeves and a hat to keep particles off your skin. And it's advisable to take a break every 15 or 20 minutes and move into a fresh air area for several minutes.

Batt, blanket and loose fill insulation may be used between ceiling joists. You need not fasten the insulation between the joists; gravity holds the insulation in place. If using a vapor barrier, it should be installed beneath the insulation facing toward the heated room below.

If the joists are exposed, lay temporary flooring (a piece of plywood works well) and begin laying the blankets at the outer edge of the attic space and work towards the center. This will allow more headroom in the center of the attic for whatever cutting and fitting needs to be done. Lay long runs first and use leftovers to fill gaps and shorter spaces. Ends of batts should be cut to fit snugly around cross bracing.

If a second layer on insulation is needed and the cavity has been completely filled, the additional layer of material should be placed perpendicular to the joists. If the ceiling is insulated with loose fill insulation, you can increase the R-value by simply pouring more material between the joists, right on top of the old existing insulation. It's important to avoid pouring loose insulation into recessed light fixtures or other heat producing equipment. If the ceiling is insulated with blanket or batt insulation and has some loose fill placed on top of it, you can either add unfaced insulation or more loose fill to increase the R-value.

No matter which type of insulation you use, you'll always get a quick and profitable return on your investment by reducing your heating and cooling bills. The sooner you act, the more you'll save.

84 Lumber Company was founded by Joe Hardy in 1956 in the town of Eighty Four, Pennsylvania, where the original store continues to operate. Today, 84 Lumber Company operates 436 stores in 34 states with 14 more stores scheduled to break ground this year. 84 Lumber employs more than 5,000 associates nationwide. For 46 years, 84 Lumber Company has been providing professional contractors, remodelers and serious do-it-yourselfers with quality building materials, supplies and expertise. For more information on 84 Lumber Company please visit our website: 84lumber.com

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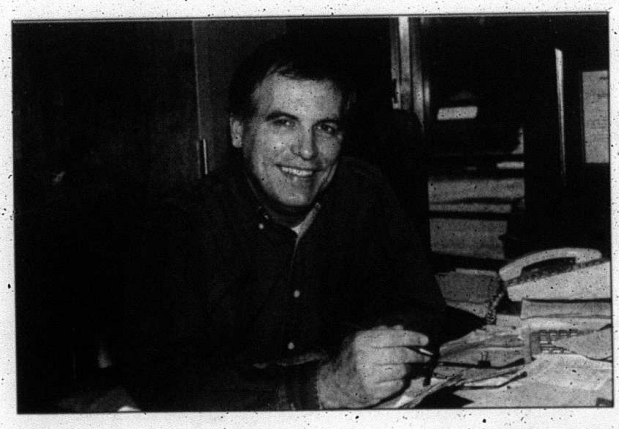

May this great season find each of you in health and good will for your neighbors and families. My personal wishes for a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

County Judge-Executive Buzz Carloftis