



A CH-47 Chinook crew from the 159th Aviation Regiment at Fort Lewis prepares for a practice mountain search-and-rescue mission.

Fort Lewis, Wash.

Mount Rainier SAR Missions Continue

WITH the hiking and climbing season on Mount Rainier fast approaching, Company A, 5th Battalion, 159th Aviation Regiment, is preparing for its own season of high-altitude search-and-rescue operations.

Based at Fort Lewis's Gray Army Airfield, the Army Reserve aviation unit transports National Park Service emergency search-and-rescue teams to and from the mountain. The company inherited the SAR mission in July 1998, when the active-Army unit tasked with the responsibility was inactivated.

During regular training sessions before and during the climbing season, the unit's CH-47 Chinook helicopters fly to Kautz Creek near the base of the mountain to pick up the

SAR teams. Then the combined group performs insertion and extraction drills at locations from roughly 10,000 feet to the summit at 14,410 feet above sea level.

SAR missions are varied. Last June, for example, Co. A participated in a search for a missing snowboarder on the southeast side of the mountain. Hampered by foul weather and heavy cloud cover, the mission extended into several days as Chinook pilots and crewmembers transported SAR teams and flew search patterns, working routes, crevasses and tree lines where the snowboarder might be. The victim never was found.

Another mission involved two climbers who lost vital equipment during a climb on the Liberty Ridge ice face, at 13,000 feet. They requested help by cell phone, but the first Chinook sortie was turned away by an intense squall line, requiring additional flights to drop off and later pick up rescue teams.

In addition to the high-altitude SAR mission, Co. A supports the Army's active and re-

serve components at Fort Lewis, as well as nearby Army, Coast Guard, Air Force and Marine units. — *Ed Quimby, 70th Regional Support Command Public Affairs Office*

Fort Carson, Colo.

Family Readiness Center Offers Help

FORT Carson's Family Readiness Center prides itself on promoting the mental, physical and even spiritual well being of soldiers, civilian employees and family members. The center offers financial counseling, job-



Fort Carson's Family Readiness Center offers relocation; mobilization; financial; community life and outreach; and soldier and family readiness resources.

search assistance, chaplains' spiritual counseling, fitness programs and more, said Mary Jane Fletcher-Hermes, Fort Carson's Army Community Service director.

"This center is visionary. It removes boundaries. It goes across many lines and it works," Fletcher-Hermes said. "Everything is in one place and is highly visible to everyone who visits the building. The idea was to consolidate all the services that families and soldiers need to the point where service to the customer is seamless."

With relocation, deployment, mobilization, financial, community life, community outreach, and soldier and family readiness resources under one roof, the center has created a "one-stop shopping process" to cater to all of the customer's needs, Fletcher-Hermes said.

"It's an excellent team-building workplace," said Stanley Perdue, American Red Cross hub manager, whose agency had been located in an older building nearby. "Now that we're here there's a lot of positive synergy, both from referrals and collaboration with other agencies, and a larger volume of clients is becoming aware of each agency's location and services," he said.

Even though the center realized quick success through the consolidation, reaching out to the community beyond the centralized facility has been its continuing goal. Those efforts have included an Outreach Community Program, the Mayors Program, Army Family Team Building and more.

"A lot of the center's success

also comes from the joint work we do with outside organizations. We work with the YMCA, with Peterson Air Force Base, the Air Force Academy, and have other partnerships outside of this building. It's hard to come to Army Community Service and not see how far out we do reach," said 2LT Ryan A. Howell, the Army Community Services executive officer.

Future plans include "cyber-outreach" to the Fort Carson community. "We want to be able to web-broadcast classes and do training online rather than, say, having people come in here for classes when the weather's bad," Howell said. And, he said, the center is already using its online capability to help families correspond with deployed soldiers via computers. — *SPC Cecile Cromartie, Fort Carson PAO*

Homewood, Ill.

Recruiters "Pause for Patriotism"

RECRUITERS and Delayed Entry Program members who recently joined the Army through Homewood Recruiting Company, here, joined thousands of Boy and Girl Scouts, civilians and veterans to celebrate Armed Forces Day on May 20.

The event, called "Pause for Patriotism," was a celebration of military service that provided an opportunity for veterans, active-duty military and reserve-component members to connect with this community, hundreds of miles from any military installation.

"I wanted kids to meet service members and grow up knowing what service to country is all about," said Tom Holtz, a veteran of the Vietnam War and founder of the event.

"Young people are our nation's future, and I wanted to instill in them a reverence for God, knowledge of what our country stands for and a commitment to service to the United States of America."

Each year, the celebration begins with a fireworks display. Morning brings a parade of floats and drill teams, and children in Scout uniforms proudly march alongside veterans while high school marching bands provide the music. Active-duty and local reserve-component units supply equipment exhibits, meet with people and conduct demonstrations.

"We bring our Delayed Entry Program members from their homes in suburban Chicago to reinforce the commitment they've made and let them take pride in their decision to join the Army," said Recruiting Co. 1SG Vaughn Newhouse.

Many of the young people who came to the first Pause for Patriotism are now old enough to enlist. In 1994, when Pause for Patriotism started, 53 people from the Kankakee area joined the Army. In 1999, 70 people joined. — *Homewood Recruiting Co.*



Local residents get an up-close view of an M1A1 Abrams tank during the "Pause for Patriotism" celebration, which brought together soldiers, citizens and veterans.

Germany

Maintenance Units Earn ISO Certification

WHEN you buy a pair of sneakers, you can judge their quality by knowing the reputation associated with the brand name. Now soldiers coming to the 21st Theater Support Command in Kaiserslautern for maintenance services have a similarly recognizable mark of quality assurance. All of the command's maintenance activities have become "ISO" certified.

Maintenance Activity, Pirmasens, and Maintenance Activity, Mannheim, both part of the General Support Center, Europe, are the first two units to receive their certificates.

ISO 9002 is the French acronym for the International Organization for Standardization. The 9002 part of the name signifies that for this certification the unit is improving an already existing service or product. The ISO label assures customers that the organization meets certain quality-assurance requirements, said Udo Huff, the managing director for Germany of Perry Johnson



SPC Alberto Castro of the Colorado National Guard's 3650th Maint. Co. works on an engine at the 21st Theater Sprt. Cmd. in Kaiserslautern.

Registrars, an international company that prepares organizations for ISO certification.

To become ISO certified, units go through a series of tests and inspections. Contracted industry professionals advise the units. Most of the preparation involves changes or realignments in the way the units do business and track their work. Very little change of equipment is involved.

There were several "firsts" for many of the units in Germany that earned certification. The 21st TSC is the first to comply with an Army Materiel Command mandate that all Army logistics units become ISO-certified before the end of 2000. The Equipment Maintenance Center, Europe, part of the 29th Support Group, is the first unit with active-duty and reserve-component maintenance personnel to be certified, and the General Support Center, Europe, is the first unit to have all of its subordinate maintenance units certified. — *SGT Greg Jones, 21st Theater Support Command PAO*