

UNITED STATES MILITARY ENTRANCE PROCESSING COMMAND

Messenger

SHARING INFORMATION TO REACH A VISION VOL. 32, NO. 1

A Look at
the **Center** of the



Hourglass

Messenger

Sharing information to reach a vision

A look at Sectors

pages 4-19

– their mission, people and priorities

Departments

Community	24
Unusual Enlistment	27
Around the MEPS	30
Leader Profiles	32
MEPS of Excellence	40
Congrats, Fond Farewells, New Faces	40
In Memoriam	41

Command *pages*
20-23
**reconfigures,
renames clusters to
Battalions**

Dallas staff, family take part in one of nation's largest veterans ceremonies 26

Boston staff and applicants see Cruise, [Tom, that is] 30

U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command

Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr.
USMEPCOM Commander

Daniel R. Trew
USMEPCOM Public Affairs Officer

Messenger

Vol. 32, No. 1
published in April 2010

Send submissions and changes to:
Commander
U.S. Military Entrance
Processing Command
ATTN: MPA (Messenger)
2834 Green Bay Road
North Chicago, IL 60064-3094

Magazine Staff

Christine Parker, Editor
(847) 688-3680 or DSN 792-3680, Ext. 7222

Skip Wiseman, Associate Editor
(847) 688-3680 or DSN 792-3680, Ext. 7226

Amy Gregorski, Cover Designer

E-mail: Messenger@mepcom.army.mil
Fax: (847) 688-2664

The *Messenger* is authorized by Army Regulation 360-1 for members of the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command. Contents of this publication are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by USMEPCOM, the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government. Articles about Military Entrance Processing Stations were submitted by that MEPS unless indicated otherwise. USMEPCOM publishes the *Messenger* bimonthly using offset printing. Printed circulation: 3,000.

Commander's Commentary

As we look at the roles and missions of the sectors and their people, it is vital that we recognize the sector staffs and the value they add to our organization.

The sectors provide a vital link between the headquarters and its staff and the field. They take the direction and guidance from USMEPCOM and above, disseminate it to the field and ensure it is properly implemented. They field the daily-nuts-and-bolts issues and questions from the MEPS and provide the expert guidance needed to process applicants. The sectors have small staffs, only about 15 people each. They shoulder a tremendous burden, often covering questions outside their areas of expertise when the teammate who ordinarily handles inquiries in that realm is unavailable.

Now is a challenging time for the sectors. While conducting the daily business vital to our nation's defense, they are managing new technology to maintain USMEPCOM's dedication to being a "future-focused" organization as called for in our vision statement.

We are instituting sweeping changes and must find ways to adapt as we go along. One step in our transformation is implementing the battalion structure, which will fundamentally change the way we do business.

Col. Barrye Price, former Eastern Sector commander once told me he felt like a circuit court judge because he was supervising and rating 34 commanders. He was right. I cannot think of another military organization

where one O-6 supervisor directly rates 31 or 34 subordinates.

The battalion concept is more manageable. Instead of supervising nearly three dozen people, the sector commander will supervise six battalion commanders. This will provide yet another benefit — greater opportunities to mentor.

Instructions and guidance flow efficiently from the headquarters through the sectors to the field in our current configuration, but because the span of control is so broad, follow-up often leaves something to be desired.

A better ability to mentor will help solve that problem. The battalion commander will eventually oversee fewer people than the sector commanders had, thus, they will have more time for each. Sector commanders will benefit because there will be fewer people and issues vying for their attention.

Battalion commanders will not only have a narrower span of control, they will exercise authority in a much smaller geographical area. Knowledge of local customs and issues will benefit battalion and USMEPCOM operations. Having a battalion commander nearby who understands local issues will make for more effective communications between us and the Interservice Recruitment Committees.

Having someone local to solve local issues will be a tremendous advantage. I am a firm believer in centralized control and decentralized execution. This latitude will lead to solutions that may never occur to someone at the headquarters.



Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr.

The final, and perhaps most important reason we are converting to a battalion structure is our continued implementation of the Virtual Interactive Processing System. Although the final impact on our operations is yet to be seen, we do know that VIPS will significantly change our day-to-day activities.

The battalion structure will provide expertise closer to where procedures are implemented and provide more latitude as we institute VIPS. More ideas and innovation closer to the end user will provide untold benefits.

President Truman wrote in his memoirs that Gen. George C. Marshall, Truman's secretary of state, would listen patiently as his staff debated an issue. When he felt the discussion had reached the end of its effectiveness he would say, "Gentlemen, don't fight the problem; decide it."

That is what we have done by implementing the battalion structure — decided the issue. It is a way to work smarter, not harder. That is what a "future-focused" organization does.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mariano C. Campos Jr.".

Mariano C. Campos Jr.
Colonel, USAF
Commanding

A look at the center of the hourglass –

U.S. Military
Entrance
Processing
Command

Sectors

By Christine Parker
Messenger Editor

You've probably heard these two common quotes — “the more things change, the more they stay the same,” and “the only constant is change.”

They reflect what the Greek philosopher, Heraclitus said, “You cannot step twice into the same river.” And if the U.S. Military Entrance Processing Command was a river, this ancient quote would hold true.

Although USMEPCOM's mission has remained the same, the command's structure has evolved over the years. This includes changes at all levels, including sectors, a somewhat recent addition.

In 1951, the command had 54 Armed Forces Examining Stations, or AFES. Almost 60 years later, although the number has risen and fallen, we have 65 MEPS.

Back in the 1950s, those 54 AFES were arranged in six “Army Areas,” since the Army oversaw the processing mission. And, 36 of the 54 cities that were home to an AFES then, have a MEPS now.

In 1964, the Army activated the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, and moved AFES under USAREC's six recruiting districts in New York City, Fort Meade, Md., Fort McPherson, Ga., Fort Sam Houston, Texas, Chicago, and the Presidio of San Francisco.

It wasn't until Oct. 1, 1979, when USMEPCOM stood alone, that the command established sectors — Eastern, at Fort Meade, Central, co-located with headquarters in North Chicago, Ill., and Western, located at the Presidio of San Francisco.

In an effort to “flatten the organization,” in 1993, the USMEPCOM commander closed Eastern Sector, and divided the MEPS between the new Eastern Sector in North Chicago, and Western Sector, which moved to the Denver, Colo., area. In 2005, the command moved

Western Sector to North Chicago, bringing headquarters and both sectors into one building.

Today sectors look similar to what they looked like 10 years ago. They've always been the middle of the “hourglass” of the command, with almost 300 people at headquarters, about 30 to 50 at sectors, and the majority, about 2,500 people working at MEPS.

In 2000, the 25-person sector staffs consisted of a commander, deputy commander/executive officer, command sergeant major, equal opportunity advisor, commander's secretary, 12 positions in operations, and eight in the support group. Today's sectors have a staff of 15. The articles on pages 5 through 20 will give you a glimpse of the current sector staff members — both their duties, varied backgrounds, personalities and priorities.

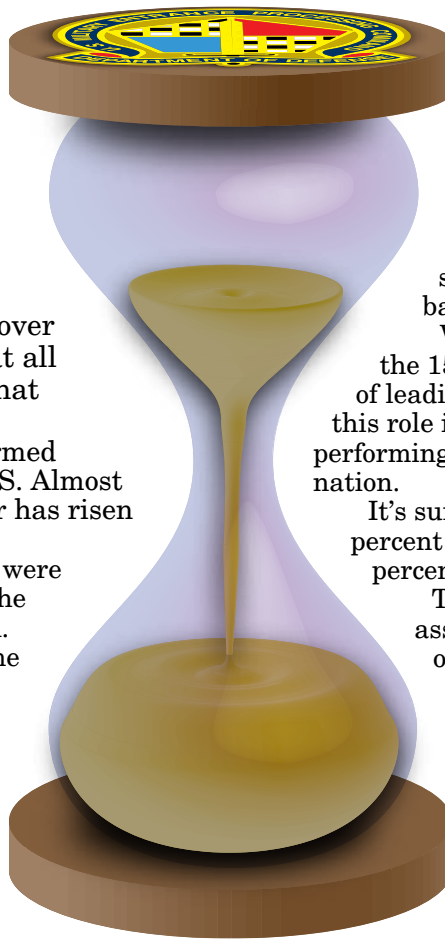
Whatever the year, whatever the number, the 15 people in each sector have the mission of leading, informing and supporting MEPS. And this role is critical since there are so many people performing the processing mission throughout the nation.

It's surprising that sectors make up only 1 percent of the command's positions. Yes, just 1 percent!

The sector commanders have a unique assignment — command and control of 31 or 34 MEPS. That keeps sector commanders, command sergeants major and staffs out on the road. When asked what they spend most of their time doing, sector secretaries respond, “coordinating travel for leadership.” But some of that is about to change.

In 2000, each of the sectors had 6 clusters. This year, the USMEPCOM commander renamed clusters to battalions, for a variety of reasons. A story that begins on page 20 explains the new battalion structure in more depth.

For the 30 years that USMEPCOM has had sectors, their locations, structure, personnel and numbers may have changed, but their mission has remained the same. You may never step into the same sector twice, but the people who take their place in the middle of USMEPCOM's “hourglass,” continue to lead and support the command's 65 MEPS.



Commanders



Col. Charles Dunston Western Sector

In command Since July 2008.

Enlisted In the Marine Corps Reserve in 1975.

Received his commission Through the Platoon Leaders Class Program in May 1981 and then attended the Basic School and the Infantry Officer Course at Quantico, Va.

Priorities “Everything we do is people-oriented. I tell commanders when they come on board that leadership and mission accomplishment are both No. 1. They are to professionally process applicants into the armed forces and they are to take care of their people.”

Leadership “Strong, positive, concerned leadership is the bedrock of everything we do, whether it’s the military or civilian side of the house.”

He stresses “Self-improvement. We have to encourage and coach our people to be better and not just do the nine-to-five and go home at night. We should encourage our civilians to make themselves marketable. And, commanders and senior enlisted advisors need to encourage our military personnel to do what they need to do — pursue higher education, correspondence courses and promotion tests, and make sure they’re physically fit.”

An in-depth spotlight on Colonel Dunston begins on page 34.



Col. Todd Garlick Eastern Sector

In command Since July 2009.

Enlisted In the Army in 1982.

Earned a nomination To attend the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, from the USMA Preparatory School. Graduated West Point in 1988 and received an Army commission as a second lieutenant of infantry.

Leadership “Caring, but caring sometimes takes many different forms. Caring can be in the form of training, it can be in the form of discipline, or it can be going that extra mile to take care of someone. I would say ‘caring,’ but that doesn’t mean ‘easy.’”

His staff “They play a vital role in the command — administration, communication, training, supporting student testing and the career exploration program, and future transformation.”

He enjoys most “The people. There isn’t a day that goes by that I’m not amazed by the things the people working for us are capable of doing. That’s what keeps me going day in and day out. If it wasn’t for the people, I wouldn’t enjoy it.”

An in-depth spotlight on Colonel Garlick begins on page 35.

Command Sergeants Major



Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice Thorpe Eastern Sector

In the position “I’ve been working in the sector for 18 months, but it seems like I was assigned here just yesterday. I truly enjoy my job and I appreciate the relationship Colonel Garlick and I have. I learn something from him every day. I am really excited about our leadership team.”

Last assignment He was the command sergeant major for the Chicago Recruiting Battalion for 33 months.

Keeps him busy “The majority of my time is spent on personnel issues — enlisted, officer and civilian. Additionally, I expend an enormous amount of time building bridges between USMEPCOM and the recruiting services and training bases. However, the part of my job that I enjoy most is the mentorship that I am able to provide to the leaders within our organization. I believe you change organizations one person at a time. And, you establish a legacy by investing in leaders — one leader at a time.”

Needed for position “Vision, foresight and flexibility. USMEPCOM executes a lot of great initiatives. However, the ability to link our initiatives to the needs of our stakeholders is very important to our success. Recruiting experience is a plus. Training base experience is equally important.”

Three keys to good leadership “Setting the example is truly important, being able to communicate effectively and the willingness to put the needs of your organization before your own needs. These are the three key parts of leadership that will assist in being successful within the military and USMEPCOM. Leaders must learn to be happy where they are. Leadership is important, and your leadership is needed where you are.”

Important “Instilling the sense of service and reminding our team of the necessity to provide red carpet treatment to each and every applicant that enters into “Freedom’s Front Door.” The command is a place that can make dreams come true. Every minute — precious minute — we spend with the applicants in our facilities counts.”

Hometown “I am a dependant to a retired Army Soldier. I traveled to many countries before the age of 18. I was born at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. — I consider Washington, D.C., my home.”

Free time “I enjoy running, as well as the individual challenge of running marathons. There is something that inspires me about running with thousands of people. All who know where the finish line is, everyone knows the distance. But, everybody who is running as a team or individual sometimes applies more than 100 percent of themselves to one common goal. At that point and time everyone who is running is committed. I enjoy the tranquility of the race.”

An in-depth spotlight on Command Sergeant Major Thorpe begins on page 38.



While visiting Zabul Province, Command Sgt. Maj. James Murray went on patrol with the Provincial Reconstruction Team. In the photo to the left, Murray stands with some of the local children, with a view of a school the PRT was reconstructing. Below, he is on patrol with the PRT.

Command Sgt. Maj. James Murray Western Sector

Since November, Western Sector Command Sgt. Maj. James Murray has been deployed as the CSM for U.S. Forces Afghanistan South, or USFOR-A South, which covers the entire southern region of Afghanistan.

He fulfills the standard duties and responsibilities of a command sergeant major, which includes training, coaching and mentoring. Murray works with other coalition forces during his travel as well. He anticipated rotating back in June, but he's asked to be extended until September.

"As with every job there are rewards," Murray said. "Having the kids run up when we're patrolling or passing through a village, asking for chocolate or ink pens, or them giving the 'thumbs up' sign puts a smile on your face.

"Yet there are sad moments that come with a job as well." Murray said. "I must say that the sounds of Taps being played or another country's final tribute note is a downside of the job."

He explained that, whenever a member of U.S. or coalition forces falls, they conduct a final tribute to them by means of a fallen warrior ramp ceremony. Usually the tribute is held within 24 hours. All nations pay their final respect before the person is sent back to their loved ones.

Because of Command Sergeant Major Murray's deployment, there is no feature on him in Leader Profiles on pages 32-39.





Commanders' Secretaries

W Theresa Odom

In the position Five years. Also, she was the USMEPCOM facilities directorate secretary for a year. She's wanted to be a secretary since the age of 6!

Government 25 years.

Keeps her busy Making complete and accurate travel arrangements for the sector commander, deputy commander and command sergeant major.

Needed for position Friendliness, versatility, enthusiasm and flexibility to change.

Message "Always put your best foot forward with a smile on your face. This is the first time these young adults have processed through a MEPS, but not your first time. The applicants have to be half scared to death signing contracts to join the military, and they need some reassurance they are doing the right thing."

Let's improve Communication, communication, communication.

Dream job Mascot for a professional baseball team.

Hometown Mundelein, Ill. She's the seventh of eight children.

Free time With her husband and three tiny Yorkies — Emma, Zoe and Crazy Katie. Also, gardening and walking.

E Linda Hoover

In the position Five years. She's worked at USMEPCOM for 23 years! She's been the secretary in [what was] the Civilian Personnel Office and resource management also.

Government 34 years in July!

Keeps her busy DTS! DTS! DTS!

Important Ensuring she communicates "from her bosses to the field and from the field to her bosses."

Needed for position "Sense of humor, ability to adapt to change, good communication skills, tactfulness, assertiveness."

Message "Take each day one at a time — you can't please everyone — do the best you can do. We are there for each other."

Volunteering Linda volunteers her time at a soup kitchen, with clothing drives, with Big Brothers and Sisters, Awana, Chemo Angel, Senior Angel, Meals on Wheels, and the Adopt a School Program — plus several more.

Hometown Beach Park, Ill.

Free time With her grandkids and family. Also, bowling, crafting, cross-stitching and making cards.

Future When her daughter graduates college in December, she's thinking about taking a few college courses herself.

In the position Four years. She was the MEPCOM Operations Center chief for six months, worked in Eastern Sector for six months, the USMEPCOM Operations Accession Division for three years and was the operations officer at Pittsburgh MEPS from 1996 to 1999.

Retired Army.

Keeps her busy Analysis, questions from the field, conference planning, project planning and implementation, e-mail, and meetings.

Needed for position “Previous MEPS experience, a ‘can-do’ attitude, decision-making skills, verbal and written communication skills, and the ability to lead by example.”



W **Kathy Murphy**

Message “We are here to help you and take your good ideas and try to implement them throughout the command.”

Enjoys most “Helping the MEPS.”

Let’s improve “Communication from the headquarters to the field.”

Hometown Bay City, Mich.

Free time Taking care of her 2-year-old daughter and 16- and 18-year-old sons. Her older son is preparing to enlist in the Air Force (she’ll do the swear-in). Also, cooking and outdoor activities.

Operations Group Chiefs



E **John Butler**

In the position Four years. Also, he worked in the USMEPCOM Operations Center for about a year.

Retired Marine Corps.

Once was Commanding officer of a motor transport/food service squadron — where he “learned how

to rely on the expertise of others!” Served as a UH-1N helicopter door gunner. Served as a force protection officer.

Important “Providing people at MEPS the information, tools and training they need to accomplish their mission.”

Needed for position “Someone who is versatile and has a flexible character since this position interacts with every office in headquarters, and every position at the MEPS.”

He enjoys “Resolving an issue that a MEPS staff member had, or providing them with the assistance that helps them complete their job or make it better.”

Let’s improve “Providing the MEPS an easier way to track and refer to the many process changes that are occurring as we continue our transformation.”

Battalions “I support it 100 percent. It has already increased the communication and work flow efficiency, provided MEPS with regionalized support, and empowered the battalion commanders and senior enlisted advisors to provide leadership and mentorship to other MEPS commanders and senior enlisted advisors.”

Hometown Oak Harbor, Wash. (on Whidbey Island)

Free time Outdoor activities like bicycling, softball, riding his Harley-Davidson, and helping his children and grandchildren.

Future Enrolled in master of business administration program and master of human resources development program, both at Webster University.



Processing Chiefs

W Jim Wojczynski

In the position Four years.

Retired Army, 22 years. He's worked a total of 44 years in the government.

Once was Assistant to post commander in closing Fort Sheridan, Ill.

Keeps him busy Staff assistance visits, answering MEPS questions. Providing clarification on regulatory guidance and policy.

Important "To train and mentor."

Needed for position "Good communication skills and patience."

Travel Two weeks per month.

He enjoys "Visiting the MEPS, meeting new employees, training them and interfacing with the applicants."

Let's improve "Communication, both up and down the chain of command."

Hometown Chicago.

Free time "Playing with grandchildren. Going to Wrigley Field. Watching sports."

E Jose Villaronga

In the position Four years. Also in the command, he was a processing analyst (active duty) and a processing chief analyst (civilian).

Retired "Yes, the only service, the U.S. Navy."

Once was Part of a pre-commissioning unit onboard the 2nd USS *Arleigh Burke* destroyer, USS *Barry* (DDG 52), "my best tour ever." He was stationed in Rota, Spain, for three years, "outstanding shore duty".

Keeps him busy "Assistance visits. Training standardization and analysis of processes, review of regulations, policy memos, info messages and taskers. Additionally, MEPS e-mails, phone calls and tasks from my supervisor."

Training "First and foremost, we are a customer-service-oriented organization, so (internal and external) customer service training should be a priority. After that, our employees should be very familiar with the future vision of our organization and how this affects our primary customers (MEPS personnel). Also, training in MEPS processes would benefit sectors as well."

Important "I believe that keeping our MEPS informed and competent regarding new policies and procedures affecting their day-to-day operations is the most important aspect of my job."

Continued on page 11

Education Services Specialist

Jennifer Smith

W

In the position Three years.

Government Six years.

Once was An ESS in Army Education at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, and with the Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai, Egypt. She is also a certified dog trainer.

Keeps her busy Answering questions from the MEPS, solving problems and compiling data for reports.

Important “I’m the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery career exploration program representative in my sector. I air the MEPS ESSs’ concerns, I advocate for their needs, I answer their questions and clarify guidance for them. Plus, I manage the funds for ESSs to attend conferences.”

Needed for position “Someone who can multi-task, manage a lot of moving parts, has critical thinking



skills, mentors or can connect people with a mentor, has a sales background or is willing to learn, is patient, likes to travel, and has great Microsoft Office skills.”

Travel About a week per month.

She enjoys “Visiting the MEPS. It’s great to meet the people I work with over e-mail and the phone. I also love visiting high schools with the ESS and experiencing how differently things work in each area.”

Let’s improve “The Schools 2001 database. We need a dedicated, ASVAB-specific, easy-to-use, high-speed, web-based program that interfaces with USMEPCOM data and also tracks, compiles, reports, merges mail, etc.”

Battalions “I enjoy working with the battalion commanders. Whether we call it a cluster or battalion, I think it’s a great idea to have one designated leader for each group. I think this will lead to more local support and flexibility for the MEPS.”

Hometown She was born in and “loves” Chicago, but lived most of her life in Heidelberg, Germany.

Free time “Hiking with my chocolate lab, quilting and planning my wedding (April).”

Future “I’m working on a second master’s degree — a master of arts in theology from Franciscan University.”

Jose Villaronga

E

Continued from page 10

He enjoys “Meeting with our MEPS employees, and being very satisfied if they have learned or improved a process or system at their MEPS. Additionally, watching those young men and women in our MEPS voluntarily raising their right hand to serve our country, I love to be able to assist our MEPS. That is why I’m employed. There is always a different question or request from the field. It’s never boring.”

Message “Focus on self-improvement. Be determined, be confident, and help even the people you don’t consider your ‘friends.’”

Battalions “I think the battalion concept is the way to go. Before, “cluster” was just a group name. Now our leadership is giving battalions the necessary tools to feel empowered to lead their crew and succeed.”

Hometown Santa Isabel, Puerto Rico.

Free time Spending time with family, home improvement, education.

Future “I would like to earn my master’s degree by 2011.”

Testing Chiefs

In the position Four years. Twelve years in USMEPCOM — Operations NCOIC, Testing NCOIC, Nashville MEPS; first sergeant, Philadelphia MEPS; TCO, Chicago MEPS.

Retired Army.

Once was Garrison sergeant major, Camp Casey, South Korea.

Keeps him busy Interpreting USMEPCOM and DoD regulations as they pertain to testing; giving advice on how to handle issues with Office of Personnel Management area coordinators and testing service managers. Also, providing training and guidance to MEPS personnel, over the phone and face-to-face.

Important “To provide quality and accurate reviews, to include training on MEPS processes, in order to

guarantee a successful inspector general inspection.”

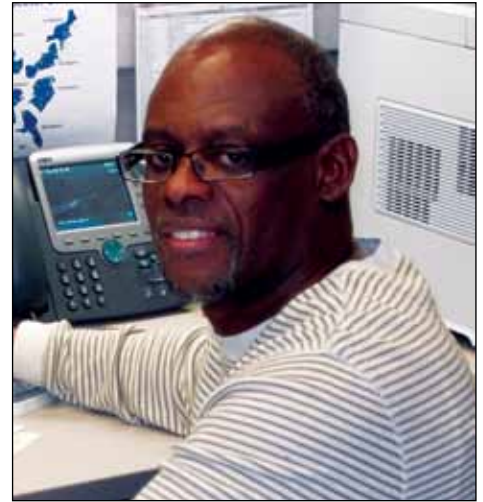
Needed for position “Someone who is mature, intelligent, organized and has the ability to communicate with MEPS and other personnel with whom we work or support.”

Message “Remember why we were hired — to process applicants, even despite our disagreements with our recruiting service partners.”

Hometown Miami

Free time Watching sports — football, basketball — and the news.

Future Pursuing master’s degree in workforce education and development, Southern Illinois University.



Kevin Adderly

W



Dave Noesen

E

In the position One and a half years. He was the Eastern Sector advisor, and a human resources assistant at Chicago MEPS, both for about a year and a half.

Currently A master sergeant in the Air Force Reserve (12 and a half years). He was active duty Air Force for 6 years.

Once was A play-by-play announcer for the football and basketball team at Western Illinois University. With a bachelor’s degree in broadcasting, he hosted a 30-minute sports show there, and was recognized as one of the best in Illinois. After college he worked at a radio station as a news director and talk show host. In 2004 he was recognized by the Associated Press as Illinois’ news gatherer of the year.

Important “Bringing back the concerns and daily problems from the field to my leadership and to USMEPCOM personnel.”

Travel About 13 days per month.

Let’s improve “The way USMEPCOM advertises job opportunities to all personnel. One day I would like to see a Web site where all employees in the command could check for openings in all 65 MEPS. This would promote transfers and possible promotions within our MEPS.”

Message “Change is coming, be prepared and ready to adapt.”

Hometown Downers Grove, Ill.

Free time Spending time with his wife, Amy, daughter, Emily, and dog, Daisy; going to Chicago Blackhawks games, spending time at home.



W Rick Carey

In the position Two years.

Retired Navy.

Soon In May, he will graduate from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater with a master's degree in business administration.

Needed for position "Someone with strong no-nonsense leadership attributes, who does the right thing regardless of personal impact. A proven track record of increasingly responsible leadership positions. Experience on a staff would certainly be helpful."

He enjoys "Supervising the members of the Western Sector support group. We have a truly great team and everyone pulls their weight in support of the mission."

Message "Change is here, we all need to embrace it and lend our expertise to make sure that change management initiatives are well thought out. If we want it to be a success rather than a burden, we all need to contribute as we move forward."

Battalions "I fully support the change. Span of control is improved, allowing for better service to the MEPS. What on the surface could seem as some to be a hindrance to procedures will, in my opinion, actually facilitate and improve our procedures. It will just take a little while to get through the growing pains."

Hometown Marshfield, Wis.

Free time "Riding my Harley Ultra Glide, driving my Ford F250 Super Duty Diesel, fishing (both summer and winter) at Big Bay de Noc in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan."

Support Group Chiefs



E Annette King

In the position Two and a half years.

Retired Army.

Completed Master's degree in business and human resources. She's looking to complete the Civilian Leadership Advanced Course.

Keeps her busy Reviewing documents and assisting MEPS personnel with issues and concerns. Also, answering questions regarding processing awards and evaluations.

Important "Customer service and processing personnel actions and evaluations."

Needed for position "A people person and someone who can question actions that are in conflict with procedural guidance."

She enjoys "Assisting MEPS personnel in resolving problems."

Battalions "This can be a great change if we can get the command structure in rank and provide them with the authority associated with the position."

Hometown Miami.

Free time She spends her free time with kids, reading and working out.

Sector Advisors



W Paul Sutton

In the position Four years. Before this, he was a processing management analyst in Eastern Sector for two years.

Retired Air Force.

Message “That we (sector) work for them and not the other way around. Our only purpose is to support their every need in a timely, accurate manner — period.”

Let’s improve “Communication. We need to pick up the phone and call folks and, if they are in your building, get up from behind the desk and walk to the person’s office and talk. Minimize e-mail traffic at all costs.”

Keeps him busy “A variety of questions on subjects ranging from headquarters messages to personnel issues, processing, training and the Amusement Vending Machine Fund.”

Important “Every aspect of our job is important, but for the MEPS to know we are fighting a good fight for them is TOPS!”

Needed for position “Someone who’s personable, honest and an outstanding communicator. Also, someone who has the ability to multi-task, make decisions ... accept feedback, and not be afraid to fail.”

Travel Twice a month.

Hometown Marysville, Calif.

Free time “Reading mystery novels, golf when the weather is good and talking to people.”

Future He’s working on a master’s degree in business administration and on his golf game.



E Mike Long

In the position One year. He’s worked in the command for 8 years — in the military as an operations officer and test control officer, and as a [civilian] USMEPCOM Operations Center analyst and team lead.

Message “Become familiar with USMEPCOM regulations and call your sector for guidance as often as needed. We are here to help.”

Retired Army.

Keeps him busy Travel, meetings and analysis. “All necessary parts of the job.”

He travels “Too much for me, but probably not enough for the MEPS staff. I do enjoy visiting the MEPS, speaking face-to-face with our great staff, and providing training and recommendations.”

Important “I hope the timely, accurate responses to [the MEPS] questions on any topic.”

He enjoys “Interacting with our amazing, resilient staff at the MEPS on a daily basis.”

Needed for position “Someone who is a people person and likes to talk in small and large settings. Someone who likes to do research, has a strong work ethic and doesn’t mind putting in some extra hours when needed.”

Battalions “I think it’s a great concept and will afford more opportunities for all parties involved. It will provide new responsibilities, challenges to the battalion commanders and afford each MEPS a stronger voice through their respective battalion. Hopefully it will foster even more camaraderie amongst the battalions.”

Hometown Whatever state in which he’s currently working — so, for now — Illinois. His hometown is Howell, N.J.

Free time Spending time working in the yard, traveling and shopping.

Personnel Staff NCOIC



E **Sgt. 1st Class
Kelvin Rama**

In the position 19 months.

Army 16 years.

Last assignment U.S. Military Group, U.S. Embassy Bogota, Columbia.

Favorite assignment Fort Greely, Alaska.

Dream assignment “To be assigned to any NATO activities.”

Important “Dealing with service members’ livelihood issues, such as promotions, pay, personnel actions, etc.”

Needed for position “A people person. Someone who’s flexible and can multi-task.”

He enjoys “Working with my sector, because they are quite supportive.”

Battalions “It’s the best thing, because there is a succession and there will be better command and control from top to bottom.”

Hometown San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Free time “Spending time with his daughter, running and reading about history.”

Future He has completed an undergraduate degree and plans to pursue a graduate degree.

Sector Contacts

Eastern

(847) 688-5520 + extension
DSN 792 + extension

7600	Commander
7624	Deputy Commander
7601	Secretary
7616	Command Sergeant Major
7606	Chief, Operations Group
7625	Testing Chief
7605	Processing Chief
7611	Education Services Specialist
7619, 7604	Sector Advisors
7626	Chief, Support Group
7615	Personnel Staff NCOIC
7621	Contact Representative
7603	Administrative Assistant
7613	Information Technology Specialist
7636	EO Advisor

Western

(847) 688-3680 + extension or
DSN 792 + extension

7850	Commander
7855	Deputy Commander
7858	Secretary
7852	Command Sergeant Major
7860	Chief, Operations Group
7862	Testing Chief
7863	Processing Chief
7866	Education Services Specialist
7865, 7851	Sector Advisors
7854	Chief, Support Group
7853	Personnel Staff NCOIC
7864	Assistant Personnel Staff NCOIC
7856	Contact Representative
7861	Information Technology Specialist
7867	EO Advisor



E Senior Master Sgt. Spencer Parker

In the position 20 months.

Air Force 23 years.

Favorite assignment “They have been great. I still communicate with friends from all of them, but, if I had to highlight one, it would be Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C. I was 30 minutes from my hometown.”

Recently Completed a master’s of business administration from TUI University.

Keeps him busy “Facilitating questions, analyzing information and writing reports. Occasionally, building training presentations.”

Important “Ensuring that, if our folks bring me an issue, I do everything in my power to help and facilitate their concerns.”

He enjoys “All of it, it’s great to be able to help people!”

Needed for position “Integrity, patience and a desire to see that the right thing happens.”

Battalions “Big picture, things always change. If the battalion concept will streamline processes and afford our organization the ability to operate more effectively; it is a welcome change. We have great leadership that understand our business and want us all to be successful.”

Hometown Elm City, N.C.

Free time “Family, Family, Family! I have a great wife and 3 great kids ... what could be better?”

Equal Opportunity Advisors



W David Thompson

In the position Six years (four on active duty).

Retired Navy.

Important “Helping leadership navigate the intricacies of human interaction and solving difficulties at the lowest level possible.”

Needed for position “Great communication skills would be a must! Having a good sense of empathy and an ability to think outside the box when dealing with concerns.”

Travel Two weeks per month.

He enjoys “Getting to know all the MEPS personnel.”

Message “Celebrate the diversity within your organization. Understand that we are all not the same, and it is these differences that have made our nation stronger.”

Battalions “Personally I feel that it is a great idea. Providing another layer of more regionalized leadership to assist the MEPS with any challenges the local leadership may face by others who are ‘on the ground’ themselves is a win-win situation.”

Hometown Raised in California, “but Panguitch, Utah, is where I call home.”

Free time Woodworking, hiking and reading.

Future He is currently working on bachelor of science degree in business administration and plans to continue with a graduate degree in human resources management.

Contact Representatives



E Rita Galloway

In the position Two and a half years. She worked almost two years at Chicago MEPS as an administrative services technician.

Government Eight years. She's a soldier's wife of 25 years.

Keeps her busy "Calling and tracking down people to complete taskers. Responding to, 'Can you send me an example? I need some help.'"

Important "Timeliness on awards and taskers."

Needed for position "Someone who is open-minded and friendly."

Let's improve "Awareness of positive and friendly customer service."

Travel "Maybe once a quarter."

She enjoys "Helping everyone."

Message "If you aren't sure of something — ask — and someone here will get the answer for you."

Battalions "Great idea."

Hometown Chicago

Free time "Spending time with my grandkids and bowling."



W Kathy Davis

In the position Two and a half years. She's worked in USMEPCOM for five years, as a secretary in Western Sector and in (what is now) the Office of Strategic Planning and Transformation.

Government 28 years.

Education It took 18 years of night school while raising her daughters, but she finished her bachelor's degree in psychology in 2000.

Important "Getting award or civilian personnel packages through the approval process in a timely manner."

Needed for position "A very detail-oriented person and one who is able to pass on and follow-up with needed information."

Travel "I've recently been qualified to work with the SAV team (on the admin portion), so I travel for a week every other month."

She enjoys "Creating new forms to make people's jobs easier."

Let's improve "Before going out with changes to regulations or processes, ask the 'worker bee' for input. Sometimes the best information comes from those of us who 'do the grunt work' and know the system, not from those who are in charge of the system."

Hometown She was born in Waukegan, Ill. (near USMEPCOM headquarters).

Free time "Reading, bowling, watching grandkids."

Information Technology Specialists



E Tony Nieves

In the position Three years. He's worked at USMEPCOM for 14 years; four active duty Army, four and a half years as a contractor, and five and a half years as a government employee. He was a personnel senior sergeant on active duty in Eastern

Sector, and an awards clerk there. In USMEPCOM, he worked on the information technology help desk as a contractor, and as a management analyst in operations.

Retired Army.

Keeps him busy "Reading and answering e-mails and following up with phone calls and on requests. Status of requests from headquarters, guidance questions, technical assistance and help getting requests or issues resolved."

Important "Answering requests in a timely manner, providing correct and accurate guidance, and following up with the MEPS' issues and concerns."

Needed for position "A people person that can go to bat for the MEPS ITSs in the field. One that has good organizational skills and can work independently. Most importantly, one that has a good

disposition and a good sense of humor."

Message "That we understand the chain of command — WE work for MEPS, not the other way around. Also, we are looking to support them the best we can, regardless of the obstacles."

Hometown San Sebastian, Puerto Rico, although he was born and lived the first years of his life in Chicago.

Free time Watching television, playing games on his home PC or the Internet, and spending time with his wife and kids (movies, restaurants, etc.).

**Photography
on pages 5-19
by Art Heintz**



One of Spokane's own ties the knot

Spokane MEPS medical noncommissioned officer, Sgt. 1st Class Gwen Hornor, and Staff Sgt. David Vigil were married Jan. 1. The groom is stationed at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. The couple wanted to have a wedding on the beach in a central location to allow their families to meet. Scenic Coronado, Calif., met their desires perfectly. Gwen's parents are Rick and Susan Hornor of Spokane, Wash., and David's parents are Donald Vigil and Janet Crocker of Colorado Springs, Colo. Although the newlyweds are geographically separated, Gwen does make the sacrifice of periodic trips to Hawaii to visit her husband.

Administrative Assistant



E **Sgt. Danielle Raddle**

In the position One and a half years.

Army Seven years. She is a National Guard Soldier, serving on active duty.

Keeps her busy “E-mail and providing support for our ‘treasure.’”

Important “Providing the MEPS with the support they need.”

Needed for position “Someone who is business-oriented, has good customer service skills, has patience and is polite.”

Message “Do what is right; not what is convenient.”

Hometown Crestwood, Ill. (near Chicago)

Free time Spending time with her husband and kids. Reading books and watching shows like Law and Order: SVU, Mercy, etc.

Future She’s starting online courses next semester.

Personnel Staff NCO



W **Sgt. Aaron Brown**

In the position One year.

Army 10 years.

Last duty Crestwood, Ill.

Once Deployed as a military policeman.

Message “Continue to do the right thing.”

Free time He spends it with his wife, kids, family.

Hometown Blytheville, Ark.

Editor’s note: Sgt. Aaron Brown and Sgt. Danielle Raddle are married.

Upcoming Diversity Celebrations

May
Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Diverse Leadership for a Diverse Workforce

August 26
Women’s Equality Day

Celebrating Women’s Right to Vote

September
Hispanic Heritage Month

October
National Disability Employment Awareness Month

Command reconfigures, renames clusters to

Battalions

By Christine Parker
Messenger Editor

On Jan. 1, USMEPCOM restructured its 65 MEPS from an informal cluster organization to a formal battalion structure. The command's middle section — sectors — maintain command and control of battalions and MEPS.

The permanent orders designated 12 provisional battalions, commanded by dual-hatted battalion/MEPS commanders. USMEPCOM leadership believes the reorganization will enhance mission capabilities and provide greater responsiveness to the needs of the recruiting services. There are no increases in total requirements or authorizations.

The command's consideration of the battalion concept is not new. Over time, there are quite a few needs that led to considering the change. The issue has been discussed for years.

Name change

"What we have right now is, quite frankly, a name change," Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr., USMEPCOM commander, said.

The commander readily admits he's never been a fan of the label, "cluster." He thinks "battalion" is something with which most people can associate. "Navy, Army, Marine Corps understand; Air Force, to some degree. People understand the name."

In highlighting the problem inherent in the cluster label, Campos said, "If someone were to say, 'I'm a cluster commander.' What exactly does that mean?" At minimum, the title, "battalion commander" is better understood during conversations with, for example, the military recruiting community.

Ability to lead, mentor

A second benefit of having battalions and battalion commanders is related to leadership and their ability to observe and mentor.

USMEPCOM is a unique organization. "When you talk about flat organizations — that's great, but it prob-

ably works best if you're all in the same area or building. When you're geographically separated like we are, you can have command and control from the sectors, but there's a lack of direct supervision and the ability to mentor.

"Battalion commanders will have an opportunity to mentor in each of the 12 regions," Campos said. A 1-4 or 1-5 ratio of battalion commander to MEPS commanders is more personal than a 1-31 or 1-34 ratio of sector commander to MEPS commanders.

In addition to the ratio issue, being geographically separated from the people you supervise and rate doesn't offer much opportunity to interact or observe. A more personal relationship allows for more leadership and the ability to mentor, and possibly rate.

"We now have battalion commanders — with similar, but not all the same authorities — to mentor the MEPS commanders of that region," Campos said. "That's the intent ... that's why we put *leaders* out there."

It's important to note that USMEPCOM staff are currently examining the intricacies of military and civilian rating chains and that, until further notice, battalion commanders are not rating other MEPS commanders.

Regional support

A third benefit of the battalion structure is improved regional support.

In regard to MEPS working with interservice recruitment committees, "The intent is for every MEPS to work with their local IRC — that's where the problems get solved," Campos said.

However, sometimes MEPS commanders need to raise an issue through the chain of command to the sector commander. And, although they have a BlackBerry, the sector commander may be on the road and/or engaged in another issue.

"We are spread out all over this nation, so we need some type of intermediate level of control. If we all lived in one place or one region — great — flatten out the organization, not a problem," Campos said. Military processing is geographically dispersed and it affects the way the command conducts business.

With battalions, "If there is an issue out there, we will have someone who's regionally attuned, closer to the

action, someone who can address the issue right away,” Campos said.

If the question arises, “will sectors become brigades?” At this time, Campos doesn’t think so.

“The word sectors connotes a much larger responsibility than brigades. A battalion for us is not the same as a battalion on a garrison or one that’s deployed, nor is it the same as a squadron,” he said.

“We aren’t a combat unit. We have to adapt our structure to our mission.”

Communication

Improved communication is a fourth benefit. “I can direct something from headquarters to sectors, and it’s passed to MEPS, but how does it get translated? And who’s overseeing it?” Campos said.

Working Group

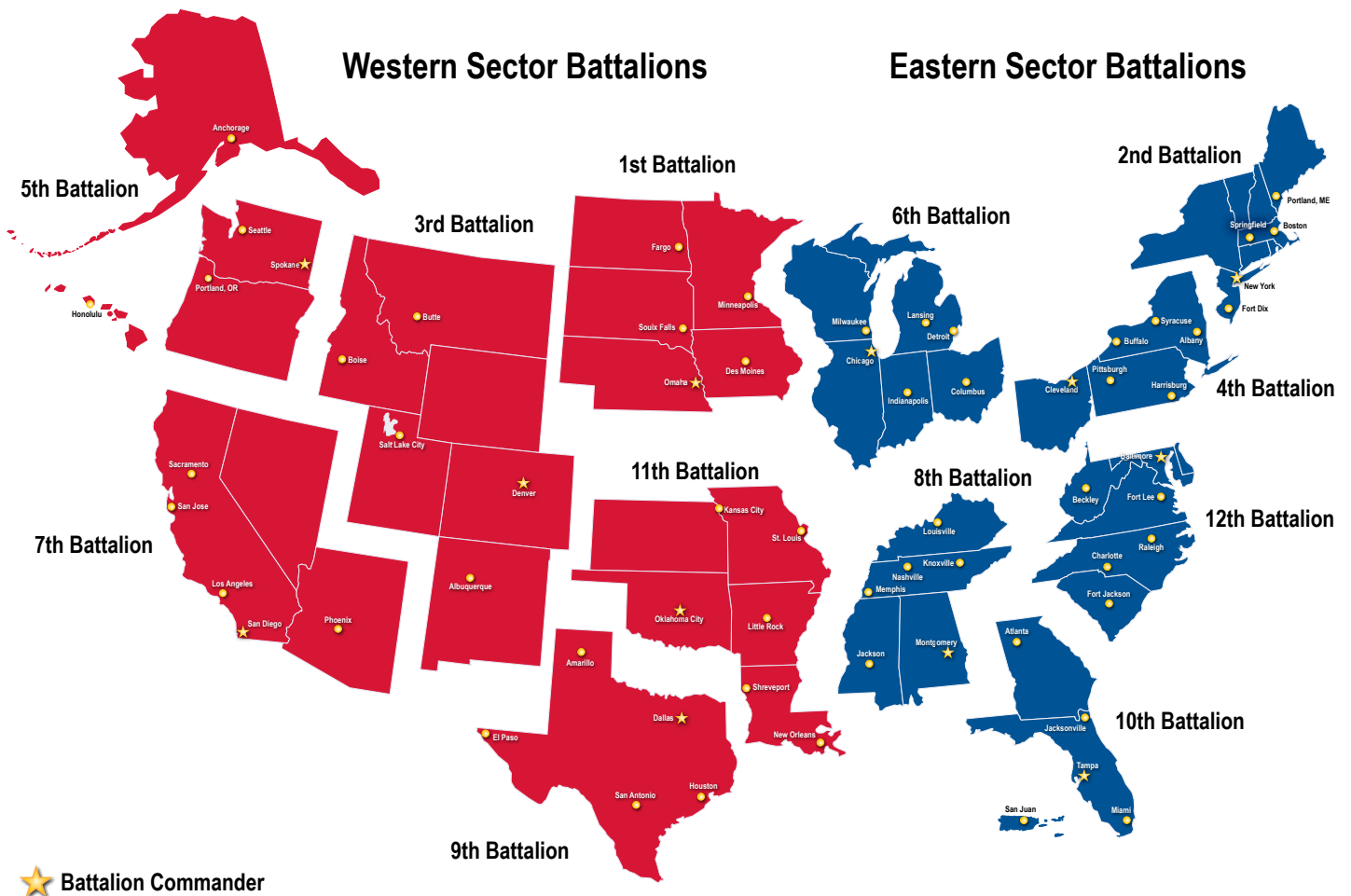
The battalion structure working group that includes representatives from sectors and across headquarters, has been meeting since January. The Resource Management Directorate (J-8) leads the group, because they manage manpower.

Three people are leading the working group. They are Lt. Col. Ryan Saw, resource management deputy director, Mike Welch, chief, management branch, resource management, and Capt. Joanne Gordon, command legal counselor.

As must be done with any undertaking that affects almost 3,000 people and the work they accomplish, the working group is identifying and discussing issues regarding the new battalion structure.

The group is compiling a matrix of issues, impacts, and specified and implied tasks across the command. This document addresses — to name just a few — military and civilian rating chains, the civilian grievance

Continued



★ Battalion Commander

and discipline process, facility work requests, and many other adaptations in the areas of information technology, resource management, and the offices of strategic planning and transformation, staff judge advocate, inspector general, equal employment opportunity and public affairs. The headquarters offices responsible for the issues will take the lead in accomplishing the related tasks.

The working group is drafting frequently asked questions, or FAQs, to help everyone involved understand the decisions and procedures related to including battalions in the chain of command.

Some of the working group members wrote a command implementation plan that defines the restructuring and what it will accomplish. When the headquarters staff approves and the commander signs the plan, USMEPCOM will forward it through the under secretary of defense (personnel and readiness) to the secretaries of the Army, Navy, Air Force and the commandant of the Marine Corps.

Virtual Interactive Processing System

In the long term, battalions may help the command implement and communicate some parts of the

Virtual Interactive Processing System. They may give USMEPCOM an enhanced test bed for changes and help the command understand how VIPS will affect processing. Also, empowering and involving more people in change often leads to innovation.

Battalions may also have the potential to help communicate and test VIPS.

If battalion commanders are regionally attuned to their IRCs, they can communicate VIPS-related changes to the recruiting services. The sector commanders won't need to communicate the message by themselves.

"We're in the transformation mode now — we're not sure what it [VIPS] is going to look like. What do they say, 'the only constant in the world is change?'" Campos said. "Our organization is changing and we need to find ways to adapt as we go along. If we don't, at the end of the day, you have this nice system [VIPS] and you turn it on, but no one knows how to use it."

When he visits MEPS, he often tells people there, "We could come up with the neatest system in the world, but none of it is going to happen unless you're part of it and you help us get there."

Continued

Eastern Sector

2nd Battalion and New York MEPS
Boston MEPS
Fort Dix MEPS
Portland, Maine MEPS
Springfield MEPS

4th Battalion and Cleveland MEPS
Albany MEPS
Buffalo MEPS
Harrisburg MEPS
Syracuse MEPS
Pittsburgh MEPS

6th Battalion and Chicago MEPS
Columbus MEPS
Detroit MEPS
Indianapolis MEPS
Lansing MEPS
Milwaukee MEPS

8th Battalion and Montgomery MEPS
Jackson MEPS
Knoxville MEPS
Louisville MEPS
Memphis MEPS
Nashville MEPS

10th Battalion and Jacksonville MEPS
Atlanta MEPS
Tampa MEPS
Miami MEPS
San Juan MEPS

12th Battalion and Baltimore MEPS
Beckley MEPS
Charlotte MEPS
Fort Jackson MEPS
Fort Lee MEPS
Raleigh MEPS

Western Sector

1st Battalion and Minneapolis MEPS
Omaha MEPS
Fargo MEPS
Des Moines MEPS
Sioux Falls MEPS

3rd Battalion and Salt Lake City MEPS
Denver MEPS
Albuquerque MEPS
Boise MEPS
Butte MEPS

5th Battalion and Seattle MEPS
Honolulu MEPS
Anchorage MEPS
Spokane MEPS
Portland, Ore., MEPS

7th Battalion and San Diego MEPS
Los Angeles MEPS
Sacramento MEPS
Phoenix MEPS
San Jose MEPS

9th Battalion and Dallas MEPS
Houston MEPS
San Antonio MEPS
El Paso MEPS
Amarillo MEPS

11th Battalion and St. Louis MEPS
Kansas City MEPS
Shreveport MEPS
Oklahoma City MEPS
New Orleans MEPS
Little Rock MEPS

It's going to take teamwork

Campos explained that, for these changes, teamwork between headquarters, sectors and MEPS is vitally important.

"Everyone in the command needs to solve problems and find the answers, so we can make this work," he said.

"And, if things can't work — if there's a legal or functional reason why it can't work — that's OK.

"Tell me that you've done everything you can to try to make it work and, if the answer is no — so be it — I understand. We've tried everything."

Small wins already

At a recent battalion structure working group meeting, a sector deputy commander gave examples of how the battalion structure is working already.

He spoke of one situation in which a MEPS was facing the possibility of not making its testing goals. So, the battalion commander redirected resources within the battalion for a few weeks to help that MEPS reach its goals.

In a situation like this, in the past, the sector commander and staff would have stepped in to help. And, they would have had to do so remotely, from North Chicago, rather than from a location or perspective near and similar to the MEPS that needed support. Also, it would have been the sector staff stepping in to help and direct resources, rather than a regionally attuned battalion commander.

The deputy commander gave another example — the way in which his sector is working to ensure a fair and equal distribution of new furniture.

Rather than doing things "the old way," his sector is asking battalion commanders to consolidate furniture requests. So, now, rather than sectors needing to set priorities for the distribution of resources to more than 30 MEPS, they can distribute funds to six battalions and allow the battalions to ensure a fair and equal distribution.

This new method gives sectors "another set of eyes" in the field. This way a battalion commander can keep track of the furniture in four or five MEPS, rather than a sector commander or staff doing so for more than 30 distant locations.

These small wins reflect the commander's intent.

"If there are some smart people out there, why can't they regionally address and control some issues, rather than sectors and headquarters making all the decisions?" Campos said.

Does he think the command is adjusting to the battalion structure?

"It's getting better," he said, "I'm seeing the battalion commanders, by and large, becoming more engaged."

And added, "it's important to realize it's a changing dynamic.

"When I was a [recruiting] deputy group commander, we had eight subordinate units. I would tell the squadron commander, 'you can call the boss if you want to ... but that's what I'm here for ... I'm your sanity check ...'" In USMEPCOM, battalion commanders can act as a "sanity check" if a MEPS commander needs one.

Progress

The commander re-emphasized that battalion restructuring ties into not only the command's mission, but transformation and VIPS as well.

"If we want to continue to attract the right kind of applicants to meet the quality in peacetime and mobilization, we're going to need to continue to be a customer-supportive business," Campos said.

"Why do we exist, as a [headquarters] staff? To support the field. Why does the field exist? To support the customers, to support the applicants, the services. And it goes both ways," Campos said.

"The battalion structure is another step in adapting, to us getting there. The process is going to take time.

"This is not easy. I'm not pretending it's easy. Nothing good comes easy, particularly when it relates to the evolution of a work force."

We're not going to turn on the switch overnight. It's evolving. Be patient, it's going to get there."

And, when considering change for people who work at USMEPCOM, the commander suggests, understand our fundamental business and the fact that we're a service-oriented organization that needs to adapt to our customers' needs.

"This is not easy. I'm not pretending it's easy. Nothing comes easy, particularly when it relates to the evolution of a workforce. I'm under no illusions."

The commander explained that he believes he has a responsibility to be proactive rather than reactive. His intent is not to put his "stamp" on the command during his tenure. Rather, "the important thing is making sure the function and mission of this organization not only continues to do well on a daily basis, but that we're looking ahead to the future," Campos said.

He added, "that's going to go way past me — when I leave the command — I will be just another name and picture on the wall.

"But when I leave, I will ask myself, 'Did I try to take [the organization] to the next level? Did I make sure we stayed on track?'" Campos said.

"The next commander will look at the organization and take it even further."



Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr. reads, "Hop on Pop" to children gathered for a celebration of Dr. Seuss and his books at Naval Station Great Lakes, Ill. *Photo by Judy Lazarus, Great Lakes Bulletin*

Campos joins local military leaders in showing children that reading is fun ... damental

By Christine Parker
Messenger Editor

Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr., USMEPCOM commander, joined local military leaders in celebrating the 106th birthday of Dr. Seuss [author Theodor Seuss Geisel] at Naval Station Great Lakes, Ill., March 18.

"Reading is fundamental to everything we do in life. Everyone must be involved in encouraging our children to read. As adults, as parents, we know we have to be involved. Making reading fun is great way to make that happen," Campos said.

Capt. John Malfitano, NSGL commanding officer, started the event by reading, "The Cat in the Hat." Geisel wrote this book in response to a 1954 "Life" magazine article titled, "Why Do Students Bog Down on First R? A Local Committee Sheds Light on a National Problem: Reading."

The article detailed issues that contributed to lacking student reading levels at that time. Interestingly, the problem continues today. In that same year, Seuss wrote "The Cat in the Hat" to promote the cause of elementary literacy.

"All of us are responsible for the literacy of our children. They are our future and we — the adults — must do everything within our power to help them develop the tools they'll need in the future, like a love of reading," Campos said.

"Our children's future, and the future of the nation, depends to no small degree on what we teach them today."



(From left) Capt. Jake Washington, commanding officer, Naval Facilities Engineering Command Midwest; Capt. Thomas McGue, commanding officer, Naval Health Clinic Great Lakes; Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr., commander, USMEPCOM, Capt. John Malfitano, commanding officer, Naval Station Great Lakes; Cmdr. Theresa Lewis, executive officer, Recruit Training Command; and Col. Peter Yeager, commanding officer, Marine Air Control Group 48. *Photo by Judy Lazarus, Great Lakes Bulletin*

Two of Fort Dix' own earn volunteer ribbon

By Rebecca O'Donnell
Fort Dix MEPS

Recently, two of Fort Dix MEPS' own spent a day at the MEPS to earn their volunteer ribbon for the Marine Auxiliary.

The two young men, Robert and Daniel Gallagher are the sons of the Fort Dix MEPS health technician, Kimberly Gallagher.

Founded in 1958, the Liberty Young Marines is composed of adult volunteers from the active and reserve Marines, Navy reserve, retired Marines, former Marines and family members who provide opportunities to youth to promote a drug free, healthy lifestyle while teaching about honor, integrity and pride. They provide opportunities for these youngsters to build on their pride and leadership skills.

"It was too funny watching them stay up to polish their boots until 11:30 the night before," Kimberly Gallagher said. "They were taking so much pride in the whole experience. They were talking about and reminding each other what to do if they were to



Staff Sgt. Monique Davis-Mackroy and Daniel Gallagher salute the Colors. Brothers Robert and Daniel Gallagher raised and lowered the flag on a day they spent volunteering at the MEPS, to earn their volunteer ribbon for the Marine Auxiliary. *Photo by Kimberly Gallagher*

run into an officer, to make sure they saluted correctly."

The Young Marine's Creed includes such things as obeying parents and others in charge, keeping themselves neat at all times and having self-discipline.



Lt.j.g. Travis Godwin, Fort Dix MEPS operations officer, presents a certificate to Daniel Gallagher with his brother, Robert in the room. *Photo by Kimberly Gallagher*



Happy to Help

From Harrisburg MEPS, Corey Maletsky, assistant budget technician, and Nate Howerton, test administrator, register for the St. Jude Children's Research Hospital 5K run. The Harrisburg area event raised nearly \$25,000 to support the hospital. Five Harrisburg MEPS members took part in the event.

The MEPS staff kept them busy shredding documents, stamping work copies, and even raising and lowering the flag.

"Their support to the Fort Dix Military Entrance Processing Station was greatly appreciated by the command and our staff," said Lt.j.g. Travis Godwin, operations officer. "They should reflect honor upon themselves for keeping with the high standards set forth by their command."

Both boys received a certificate of appreciation from the commander.

Dallas staff and family participate in 11th Hour Ceremony

– 100 recruits take public oath of enlistment

By Christine Parker
Messenger Editor

The Dallas MEPS staff was part of the annual Dallas Veterans Day Commemoration and parade that drew thousands to the city's downtown area Nov. 11.

"Dallas has one of the 10 nationally recognized Veterans Day commemorations, and one of the two largest in the nation," Lt. Col. T.J. Edwards, Dallas MEPS commander, said.

The Dallas Veterans Day Committee asked the MEPS to take part in the parade, and Edwards and his staff obliged.



Maj. Gen. (Dr.) Thomas W. Travis was the officiating officer and gave the oath of enlistment to the 100 recruits gathered for the Veterans Day commemoration. U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. Dustin Beard

MEPS military and civilian personnel and their families joined military personnel from surrounding posts and bases in the day's events. Some MEPS personnel rode on a float and others participated in the 11th Hour Ceremony.



More than 100 recruits from all services took a public oath of enlistment at the 11th Hour Ceremony in Dallas. After the ceremony, joined by their recruiters, the young men and women walked in the Veterans Day parade as well.

The ceremony took place at Dallas City Hall Plaza, the same location at which they kicked off the parade.

One hundred applicants and their recruiters from all services participated in an oath of enlistment ceremony during the 11th Hour Ceremony and, following that, they marched in the parade.

The 2009 theme was, "Honoring Our Military Medical Corps" "for their gallant efforts to save lives in the face of peril."

Maj. Gen. (Dr.) Thomas W. Travis, 59th Medical Wing commander, Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, was officiating officer for the swear-in ceremony. The general leads the Air Force's largest medical facility with a staff of more than 5,500.

H. Ross Perot, chairman emeritus, Perot Systems, gave remarks at the ceremony. In 1953 Perot graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy. Perot served as class president, chairman of the honor committee and battalion commander at the academy. He served four years at sea on a destroyer and an aircraft carrier. In 1956 he married and in 1957, upon his honorable discharge, he and his wife settled in Dallas.

From 1962 to 1984, Perot built his company, Electronic Data Systems, into one of the world's largest technology service firms. For his efforts to help improve treatment for U.S. prisoners in Vietnam, Perot later received the highest civilian award from the Department



Dallas MEPS commander, Lt. Col. T.J. Edwards (center) and Dallas MEPS operations officer, Capt. Andrew White (left) pose for a photo with H. Ross Perot.

of Defense, the medal for distinguished public service. In 2004, for more than 40 years of support to the armed forces, Perot received the Eisenhower Award.

UNUSUAL ENLISTMENT

Daughter changes course to follow in mom's footsteps

Jacqueline Hamer watched every step as her daughter processed through the Charlotte MEPS to enlist in the Army.

Jasmine Serena Hamer is following in the footsteps of her mother who served in Army for nine years as a human resources specialist.

Jasmine said she wanted, "to follow in the footsteps of her mother in giving back to the country that has given us so much."

Jasmine attended King's College in Charlotte where she earned an associate degree in medical assisting. The degree prepared Jasmine to work in private medical offices, hospitals, clinics, laboratories and urgent care facilities. She plans to continue her education in the Army.

Jasmine went to basic training at Fort Jackson, S.C., in October and then on to advanced individual training for logistics management at Fort Lee, Va.

Lt. Col. Ott M. Siebert, Charlotte MEPS commander, administered the oath of enlistment to Jasmine in front of Jacqueline, family members and Charlotte MEPS staff members. The ceremony continued the Hamer family's legacy of service.



Jacqueline Hamer, Charlotte MEPS human resources assistant, stands with her daughter, Jasmine, and MEPS commander, Lt. Col. Ott Siebert, after Jasmine's enlistment ceremony.

Denver delivers valentines for veterans

By Lt. Cmdr. Jed R. Espiritu
Denver MEPS Operations Officer

The day before Valentine's Day, the Denver MEPS conducted another community outreach project. This time it was for local veterans.

Assembling at the MEPS, Denver staff and family members created Valentine's Day cards using staff-donated paper hearts, sparkles, card stock, markers and the creativity of 10 young minds.

After designing the valentines from scratch, the volunteers took a shuttle service donated by a local company to the State Veterans Nursing Home at Fitzsimons in Aurora, Colo. There they distributed cards and gifts to residents of the disabled veterans home to thank them for their service.

"This was a very rewarding and heartfelt visit for our staff as well as the veterans at the Fitzsimons Veterans Home," Maj. Calvin C. Thomas, MEPS commander, said. "This visit was just to show our appreciation for the sacrifices, dedication and commitment by these veterans who served our country with such pride and loyalty. The history assembled in that room was priceless."

MEPS staff members met in the home's activities center where they served staff-donated cookies and cinnamon bread to up to 45 residents at one time. Many residents



A table full of homemade valentines for the veterans.



Many MEPS employees and family members pitched in to make valentines and hand them out to veterans. Here, Erica Bernard, MEPS travel specialist [holding one daughter], and her other daughter make cards. Bernard, a former Army sergeant, developed and organized the veterans project.

had to return to their rooms when they became tired. After meeting with each veteran, the MEPS staff visited the quarters of those who were not able to leave their rooms.

"The interaction between the children, the staff and the veterans — between the very young and the very old — was so inspiring," Patty Maslyn, a MEPS human resources assistant and former Army sergeant, said. "Faces lit up and hearts were lifted."

The veterans were visibly moved by the outreach from the MEPS staff and their children. News crews were there as well. The local Fox News affiliate aired a story that evening.

Erica Bernard, MEPS travel specialist and former Army sergeant, developed and organized the project.

"I was deeply touched by one of the veterans who came back down after the event," she said. "Apparently he makes baby blankets for the Children's Hospital in Aurora, and he gave one to Alyssa (Bernard's daughter). That really touched my heart."

Dan Delgado, a MEPS medical technician and former Army sergeant first class, agreed.

"It really left an impact on me," he said. "Some of the veterans had no (living) relatives and the only belongings they had were in the corner — that was it, that was all they had. But they were just so happy to know that somebody cared for them."

The MEPS staff was deeply moved by the veterans and the lives they were living, and the veterans were eager to share their war stories.

As Duane Adkins, Denver lead human resources assistant and former Air Force master sergeant, put it, "You could sit there with them for two or three days. To



Maj. Calvin Thomas, Denver MEPS commander, talks with one of the veterans at the State Veterans Nursing Home at Fitzsimons in Aurora, Colo.

me it was a very great experience, and it was a two-way street — it helped us and it helped them, as well.”

Sarah Rodriguez, MEPS secretary and former Army sergeant, reflected on the event.

“It was an honor to honor those that served,” she said. We have to take care of the people who served and took care of us for years. If they hadn’t served, this country wouldn’t be the same.”

Every MEPS volunteer took a new perspective away from the event, giving new meaning to the phrase “Freedom is not free.”

Denver MEPS salutes the veterans around the nation and encourages others to do the same. Seek out a local veterans home and help remind our veterans that we appreciate the sacrifices they have made — for the sake of our country.

Thanks for reaching out!

Boston MEPS

Staff from Boston MEPS visited veterans at the Soldiers Home in Chelsea, Mass.

The home to 500 Massachusetts veterans provides outpatient care, a nursing school, long- and short-term care, a skilled nursing facility, and dormitories.

The MEPS delivered boxes and boxes of toiletries, reading material, movies, etc., to residents whose joy was indescribable.

Established in 1882, the Soldiers Home is a multifaceted health care facility for eligible Massachusetts veterans. It provides the best health care possible to state veterans and the

highest level of comprehensive care, while respecting the psycho-social, spiritual and cultural needs for veterans and their families, and strives to extend comfort, dignity and responsive care to its patients.

— Submitted by Mr. Ronnie White and 1st Lt. Melissa Ransom

Fort Lee MEPS

The Fort Lee MEPS held a food and clothing drive for the Salvation Army in the tri-cities area of Petersburg, Colonial Heights, and Hopewell, Va.

The Fort Lee MEPS Readiness Support Group offered its services this year as the unemployment and home-

less rates in Petersburg, Va., were at an all-time high.

Major Carl J. Faison, Fort Lee MEPS commander, wanted to align his MEPS with USMEPCOM’s vision statement by being a “customer centered” organization. They did this by getting in touch with the surrounding communities in which applicants reside.

The MEPS staff want people in the community to know the MEPS staff is a diverse group of people who rally together to support the community. The staff tries to make processing easier for itself, service liaisons and applicants

— Submitted by Lutreva Byrd Fort Lee MEPS RSG

Cruise films new movie in Boston, near MEPS

By Lt. Melissa Ransom and Ronnie White
Boston MEPS

Boston MEPS applicants and staff had an exciting view as they watched the filming of "Knight and Day," an upcoming Tom Cruise and Cameron Diaz movie filmed right outside the Boston MEPS building.

They were treated to car chases, gun fights and acts of heroism. The action-comedy is the biggest budget movie ever filmed in Boston.

Cruise was very personable and waved to the MEPS staff when he saw the military uniforms. He did most of his own stunts, traveling on top of a car at about 25 miles per hour. His wife, Katie Holmes, and daughter, Suri, also watched the filming.

For those who have aspirations of being an extra in a movie, Boston is the place to be. The city gives movie makers tax breaks to encourage filming in the city. Three movies were shot in Boston in October, including Adam Sandler in "Grown Ups."

Jose Villaronga, Eastern Sector processing chief, was lucky enough to see Kevin James at his hotel. James was filming "Zookeeper."

The best thing about the filming is the applicants had a great diversion while they were processing.



30



In Knoxville, love couldn't wait

By Betty Scheider
Lead Human Resources Assistant
Knoxville MEPS

Petty Officer 2nd Class Johnathan Mark Davis and Kathryn Elizabeth Engelke tied the knot at the Knoxville MEPS.

An unusual place to get married? Perhaps, but love and friendship abounded as the whole MEPS took part to make the couple's special day memorable.

Johnathan was born in McAllen, Texas, and raised in Austin, Texas. He entered the Navy right out of high school and has been in for five years. He has been with the Knoxville MEPS, working in the testing section, since October, arriving from his previous assignment on the USS *Ramage* in Norfolk, Va.

Kathryn is from Greenville, N.C. She attended East Carolina University in Greenville, majoring in musical theater, acting and history, and hopes to attend nursing school.

The couple met online and dated for about 11 months before deciding to get married. Love couldn't wait and a large wedding wasn't in the immediate future, so the couple were going to just go off and get married. When MEPS staff members heard that, they got into motion.

After testing got the word out, staff members Sgt. 1st Class Delores Livingston, John Harris, Sherrin Miller, Terry Rhoden and Connie Burton worked on the decorations and transformed the ceremony room into a chapel. Capt. Mariann Butler and Burton made the wedding cake.

The wedding ceremony took place with the staff family and two distinguished guests: Eastern Sector commander, Col. Todd Garlick, and Eastern Sector senior enlisted advisor, Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice Thorpe.

The staff had a luncheon following the ceremony and the festivities ended with the cake cutting. The newlyweds left afterward to spend time in their new home with their Chesapeake Bay retriever "Ranger."



Petty Officer 2nd Class Johnathan Mark Davis and Kathryn Elizabeth Engelke pose for a photo. The couple married at the Knoxville MEPS.



MEPS members Kathy Shrader, Linda Jenkins and Betty Scheider sing, "For All We Know" by the Carpenters.



Chaplain John Vespie preforms the ceremony.

USMEPCOM
Col. Mariano C.
Campos Jr.



Hometown: El Paso, Texas. “I consider El Paso my hometown. I was actually born in Honolulu. My dad was in the Army. At the time, he was stationed with the 25th Lightning Division. We all wound up in El Paso, because my grandfather was also stationed in Schofield Barracks and they all wound up at Fort Bliss. That’s why I’ve called it home my whole life, even though I bounced around as an Army brat.”

What was it like growing up in El Paso?

“It was great, I mean, if you like deserts. El Paso is a beautiful town — the southwest sunsets, stuff like that. It’s a big town with a small town kind of atmosphere, which can be good and bad, but it’s a beautiful town. By the time (my dad) retired I was about 13 years old. Starting out, after we moved from Hawaii, I was only about two years old when we moved to El Paso. Then from El Paso, we went to Germany. From Germany, dad was stationed at Fort Ord. Fort Carson was some where in there.”

Fond childhood memories: “The reason I probably had a lot of fun (in El Paso) is because all my relatives were there. My grandfather decided to retire from the Army there as well. I was the first grandchild in the family, so my uncles and aunts were more like my brothers and sisters. That also meant I got picked on a lot. I had a blast. There are a lot of wide open spaces. Back then, you could take your bike out, back when you had banana bikes, and you pretended like you were freakin’ Evel Knievel and do jumps off the wood (ramp) and land in the dirt.”

What was your favorite toy when you were a kid?

“I had lots of favorite toys. One of them was a GI Joe. Maybe that’s why I got in the military. I don’t know. You had this little fighting figure, you could change out all the stuff. It was poseable. Action figures are a big thing now, more than when we were kids. For Christmas, I remember one of the things I asked for was a GI Joe space capsule. Mom and Dad bought it. I had it for years. Of course, it got destroyed. Years later, I was stationed in Minneapolis and I found a retro package of GI Joe stuff and here’s a space capsule — a Mercury space capsule — with a GI Joe in it. It was like, ‘I gotta have it.’ If you come to my house, I’ve got a couple GI Joes that were purchased in the last 10 years or so that are still in the boxes.”

Education: Bachelor’s degree from the University of Texas at El Paso; master’s degree from National University in San Diego.

A history of service: “You never would’ve thought I would have wound up in the military. Growing up as a military brat, in the late ’60s, early ’70s, I was in high school throughout the ’70s. Let’s face it, in that particular time, you didn’t hear a lot of good things about the military. I think the influences came from my family. My grandfather was a Filipino scout. He was captured on Corregidor in World War II. My dad was in the Army. I had three uncles serve in the Marine Corps, one in the Navy. They all had an influence on me. In my family, it was kind of an unwritten rule, if you will, that service is a right of passage, but you also had to give something back. My grandfather, you talk about a guy who was just staunchly proud that he was an American citizen and that the United States gave him everything. He was very proud. You never said a bad thing about General MacArthur, for example. I think there was probably a little bit of that influence in there because they served, I was going to serve.”

Why the Air Force? “I think I had a thing for airplanes somewhere along the way. I tried to trace that back, too. When I grew up, I remember Armed Forces Days and the base would open up. I remember even as a 4 year old, I was so small, but I remember Dad taking me to Biggs Air Force Base in El Paso and them putting me in the cockpit of an airplane. I have that memory still in my mind. I remember Dad taking me to all these Armed Forces Days. The ones that impressed me the most

were the ones with the airplanes. I think I was like most kids. If you’re a military brat, if you grow up with a particular uniform, then you want to try something different. I knew all about the Army, but didn’t know much about the Air Force except they wore blue uniforms and looked pretty cool.”

Granddad the Filipino Scout: “It’s kind of sad, because you don’t start asking questions about these things and, like most veterans of combat, they don’t talk a lot about it. I think when I first became aware of it is, maybe I was in college or something, as I was going into ROTC, my grandfather was still alive and he was very proud of the fact that I was going in the military. He was like, ‘My grandson’s going to be an aviator.’ When he passed away, I remember they took his uniform out and it had the 12th Filipino Division patch on it, which is also the patch of the Filipino Scouts. I go to his funeral — he was interred at the Fort Bliss cemetery — and all these Filipino World War II veterans show up. I knew Grandpa was a member of the VFW, but all these guys showed up and I asked my uncle, ‘Who the heck are these guys?’ He said, ‘You don’t know about those guys. They’re all World War II veterans and most of them were Filipino scouts.’ Since then I’ve become more interested in it. Apparently, he was with the scouts, but he was also attached to a coastal artillery unit on Corregidor when it fell and was captured. The fascinating thing about him is he had a brother-in-law (who was also captured). As he was being

marched out, he and his brother-in-law managed to escape and went up in the hills and became guerillas until MacArthur came back. The funnier part of the story is there you have my grandfather and his brother-in-law, who were both captured and escaped. They stayed in (the Army) after the Philippines got independence because they wanted to get their citizenship and they liked the Army. They both go to Korea. My grandfather's brother-in-law gets captured in Korea. The joke in the family was he was the two-time loser."

Previous assignment: "I was commander of the 372nd Recruiting Group at Hill Air Force Base, Utah. I had all Air Force recruiting for the entire western United States, including the Pacific.

Did that help in the transition into USMEPCOM? "I think it has. I always knew what folks in the MEPS did. Obviously not to the intricacies I do now. I always had an appreciation for what they did because, lets face it, it's not an easy job. When I was stationed in Minneapolis as a squadron commander for recruiting, the MEPS was on the 3rd floor and I was up on the 5th floor. I could run down there all the time and I would talk to the commander and got an appreciation for what they did. I was on the recruiting side, so obviously I wanted to make goal."

Favorite assignment: "I can tell you, I'm one of these guys, I've enjoyed every place I've been. I've been all over the map. I've been north, south, east, west and in the middle of the United States. I've been stationed in places

like Minneapolis and Grand Forks, N.D. I've been stationed places like Virginia Beach, I've been stationed in the bread basket in Omaha at Offutt Air Force Base and on the West Coast, at Mather Air Force Base. I make the best out of the assignment. People say 'I don't want to go there.' Who wanted to go to Grand Forks? You know what, it was a great assignment. It's hard to say. They were all good. I'm enjoying what I'm doing right now. To be frank, flying was fun. Being in the B-1 at Grand Forks was a blast. Of course I was a lot younger back then. I've loved every one, but if there was one that was truly different, it was probably the B-1, but that's when you were young, stupid and could do that kind of stuff."

Future military plans: "I take it step by step. Right now, I consider that I serve at the convenience of the government, DoD and the Good Lord. What happens is what happens after this, I don't know. I'm just enjoying the moment."

What do you want to be when you grow up? "I don't know and that's part of the problem. Maybe that's why I can't figure out what I'm going to be when I call it quits. I've enjoyed what I've done for 27 years now. And you're talking to a kid who was going to come in for six years. All of a sudden you got to liking it and you start staying and staying. The next thing you know, if I stay a little bit more I can make 20. Then after 20, it's like, okay maybe I can stay a little bit longer. Here I am at 27 years."

What do you do when you're not a commander? "I go home, I hang out with the family.

I'm a homebody. I play video games. I like first person shooters. I just finished Batman. But I can't play online because I get these five-year-olds who can beat my butt. Generally, I'll play the computer and beat the computer, although it will take me longer than most people. I also like model trains. I've got a temporary train set. Part of the plan when I retire is to make a permanent layout."

What's your leadership style? "I think we have a vision of what we want to be vs. the reality of what you are and sometimes the two don't match up. I'm hoping I'm close to my reality. Every year I give out a letter of expectations. It's something I learned from previous bosses. I truly believe in a positive yet demanding leadership style. I think you can be positive. I believe in Gen. [Russell] Dougherty's statement that there's nothing that says when you come to work you have to be an SOB. I can still be demanding and communicate with people the things I need and conduct business in a positive way."

What do you like best about your job? "People. This is a people business. I tell commanders all the time when I'm on the road, 'If you don't like people you really shouldn't be in this job.' I like the people. I like the interface we have with our employees, whether it's roaming the halls here or going out and visiting the MEPS, seeing the applicants. It's the people who make this job fun."

What do you order when you eat out: "I really like Thai soup. I rarely go to a Thai restaurant, but if I had my preference, I'd do it every

day. There's a beef noodle soup you can get at Thai restaurants. I could eat that stuff all day."

What's the best present you ever got? "The best present I ever got was from my wife. She got me an '06 Miata."

What's your guilty pleasure? "The claw machine. You know the claw machine that has those little stuffed animals. If I have a vice, that's it. I go nuts. I'll sit there and crank in up to \$5 just to get something because I know I can get it. But it has to lay a certain way for me to even attempt it. You can ask my family. I'll go for this thing. When my kids were little they loved it. They hate it now. I'll pick the stupid thing up and find some young kid walking by and give it to their mom and say, 'I just got this out of the machine. Do you want it?'"

Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you: "My nickname is Charlie. When I was a kid I couldn't pronounce my name. I mean, how many people, when you're a kindergartener and they ask your name, can say Mariano Castillo Campos Jr.? Not easy. So I made up a name when I was a kid and it stuck. In my family, they all know me as Charlie. I want to say, the reason why I came up with that name is because somebody said something about getting a Charlie horse. So I said, you know what, that's an interesting name, so I made up a name at about 6 or 7 years old. When my family first called me that my wife said 'Who the hell is that?' That's about as surprising as it gets."

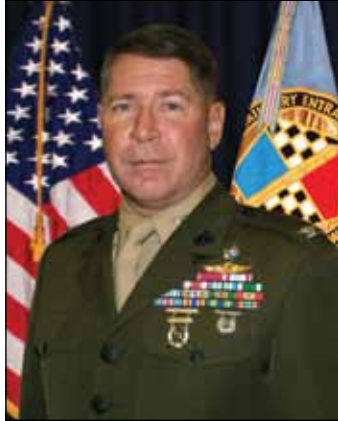
What's your favorite movie? "Patton.' Maybe it's because my dad liked it and I liked it, but there is something about that movie that is inspiring. Not that I'm a Patton kind of person or necessarily like that leadership style, but there is something about it. I remember watching it as a kid and I still watch it. I remember when I was stationed by myself on an assignment, I said, 'You know I need something to pep me up.' I threw in 'Patton.' I don't know why, but there's something inspirational about an individual against insurmountable odds and all that kind of thing."

Who plays you when they make a movie of your life? "Well, Bruce Lee's dead. I never thought about it. My life's not that exciting so I don't think anybody would want to play me. Lou Diamond Phillips, maybe, because he's half Filipino."

What's the last book you read? "In Conquest of Hell.' It's a story about the Meuse-Argonne Offensive in World War I. It was recommended to me by a friend. It gets into the depth of what they had to go through, the infantry. It was the United States getting into a war kind of at the last minute and all the sad things that happened and all the lessons that had to be learned."

What's your ideal vacation? "Just to take time off and spend time at home with the family, wherever that is. We do things locally and go hang out and wake up late. The dream vacation would be to take the whole family to Hawaii and go hang out at the beach. I think everybody has that one."

Western Sector Col. Charles Dunston



Hometown: Gloucester, Va. "It's a county, it's not really a town and it was rural when I grew up, but it's more of a suburban area now in the greater Tidewater-Newport News-Hampton-Norfolk area. It's kind of a bedroom community. It's a very historic area because it's close to Williamsburg, Jamestown and Yorktown. My home was 10 miles north of Yorktown where the famous battle in the Revolutionary War occurred."

Fond childhood memories: "I grew up in a farming community and there is also lots of water there, so we did a lot of boating, hunting and fishing, those kinds of things."

What was your favorite toy when you were a kid? "Probably a GI Joe or my toy gun. It was kind of like an M-1 rifle. Ever since I was little, I wanted to be in the military." *Did the toys attract him to the military or the other way around?* "I don't know if it was the chicken or the egg, but ever since I was little I had a proclivity to join the military. I was mainly looking at joining the Navy, because everybody in my family had been in

the Navy, but as time went by, I decided to join the Marine Corps."

Education: Bachelor of science degree in business administration with a minor in geography from Christopher Newport College, Newport News, Va.; master of arts degree in national security policy and strategic studies, Naval War College.

Why the Marine Corps? "At the time I went to join there were a lot of race riots and bad things were going on in the '70s. The Marine Corps was having the same problems, but you heard more about it in the Navy. Of course it was a Navy town, so that news travelled. The Marine Corps was a bit more stringent in discipline and that was what I was looking for. It was still a naval service, so I wasn't completely going off the rail."

With a little help from my friends: "I enlisted when I was 17. I was in the reserve for two years before I crossed over. I was an administrative clerk. Back then, not everybody could type and it was the kiss of death (that) I could type. It turned out to be a good thing, because I worked in the headquarters and people steered me, mentored me. I went to college when I got back from recruit training. Newport News was a big military community, so I had lots of mentors who were retired senior enlisted that knew I was in the military and aspiring. A lot of them would tutor me in the lunchroom if I was having trouble. That was very helpful."

Previous assignment: Chief of staff, 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force in Okinawa, Japan.

Favorite assignment: "The times when I was leading infantry units. Platoon commander, company commander or battalion commander. That's what I've been trained to do and my (military occupational specialty) is in infantry. It's what I've always gravitated toward."

Future military plans: "I'll likely retire from here. I'll hit 30 years of service in July 2011."

What do you want to be when you grow up? "I've talked to my family a lot about that. Part of me wants to go back and get a degree in history and teach history in colleges. Growing up in Virginia, the history is right there around you. Another (plan) is to get a (civil service) job back in Virginia or get a contractor job and go overseas."

What do you do when you're not a commander? "I have four children. My son is in the Marines (He's a lance corporal.) He's at Camp Lejeune now, doing real well. And I've got three daughters still at home so they keep me busy. Two are in high school and one is in middle school. Their activities keep my wife and me both pretty busy. I like to exercise, bicycle, boat. I like to spearfish. I was doing that, or diving, in Okinawa. There's a certain amount here, but the time of year to do it is real narrow."

A chip off the old block: "I'm proud of him (his son). I was very concerned that he was doing it just to please me as opposed to something he wanted to do. I'm convinced he's doing it because he wants to do it. The younger generation right now isn't so self-centered. They are

very keen to give back to society. He's going on his first deployment to Afghanistan in September. We'll see what happens then, if he wants to stick around. I've told him he can look at being an officer, if he chooses to. That's something you really need to want to do. If he just does this enlistment and then goes back to school with the new GI Bill, (that would be) great."

Here fishie, fishie:

"When I was a kid, I used to watch Jacques Cousteau and Sea Hunt and all that. I always wanted to be a diver. That's one of the things the Marines allowed me to do. I was in a reconnaissance unit and went to Navy dive school. When I went to Okinawa, I had some friends who were (spear fishing). One thing led to another and the next thing you know I had a spear gun and the long fins and ended up getting into it." There are advantages to taking the fish on in their world. "The people in a boat don't get to select their fish, whereas I get to select which one I shoot. If there's a bunch of fish swimming by I can pick the one I want."

What's your leadership style? "Positive, demanding and concerned. Set goals and standards and have people meet them. Give them guidance. If they need help, tell me you need help and we'll steer resources to you to allow you to be successful."

What will the battalion structure do for you?

"Span of control will go from 1-31 to 1-6 and each of the battalion commanders will have five or six MEPS they'll be supervising. It adds a layer of bureaucracy as well, so for staffing it will slow

things down slightly, but it will also (mean better) mentorship for the MEPS commanders. For instance, I get around to each one of the MEPS about twice a year. That's not a lot of mentorship. I see them more often during VTCs, talk to them on the telephone pretty often, e-mail back and forth and the various conferences we do. One to 31 is still a huge span of control."

What do you like best about your job?

"I think it's really the leadership aspect of it. I miss the tactical things I was doing in the Marine Corps, related to combat, but I get a double dose of leadership in this job, because everything we do revolves around people skills and affording people the opportunity to excel in their jobs."

What do you order when you eat out?

"Salmon. I like seafood. Or steak. (Command Sgt. Maj. James Murray) says he can almost order for me. He says I always eat salmon. He and I have a thing where we have a meal superiority contest. When we order our meal and it comes out, it's usually obvious who's got the better meal. Then we go into dessert if we need a tie-breaker. I win most of the time, but the sergeant major would probably give you a different answer, because I eat too much salmon, according to him. That can have a detrimental effect, because then I have to PT all that good food off."

What's the best present you ever got? "Probably a bicycle." He was about 8. "It was a red bicycle from Sears and Roebuck. It allowed me to travel further away from home."

What's your guilty pleasure? "Watching too much TV. I'm a news junkie."

Tell me one thing that's always on your desk: "There are always personnel issues on my desk. That's as it should be. Whether it's the facility or personnel issues, gaps in personnel, hiring actions or awards. Evaluations to get people promoted. Phone calls need to be made to get (people) orders to the next place they need to go. Family crises that need attention."

What's your least favorite sport? "Golf. There's no adrenaline involved in it. I'm sure the chief of staff would beg to differ. He would probably get a lot of joy out of hitting the ball."

What's your favorite movie? "In Harms Way' with John Wayne. It's a military movie and it shows the beginning of World War II. I've got a lot of favorite movies, but that one stands out more than the rest."

Who will play you when they make a movie of your life? "Robert De Niro. He's a great actor, one of the best ones out there."

What's the last book you read? "'The Savage Wars of Peace' by Max Boot. It's about the small wars in U.S. military history. It was written in 2002 when people said we hadn't been in this kind of war, the Global War on Terrorism, before. His thesis was, yes, we have. It chronologies all the wars starting with the Barbary Wars in North Africa, some of the Indian Wars, some of the 'little' wars we've had that have permeated our history. I like the book because it tells you a lot of things

you didn't know, the real history behind it, where it wasn't always black and white, where there were competing priorities. That history is practical, I think, for today's environment."

What's your ideal vacation? "I think getting on a sailboat and sailing the Caribbean and going from island to island for a period of time. When I retire I intend on hiking the John Muir trail out in Sierra Nevada. It's 250 miles long. It goes from down in the Sequoia National Park up to Yosemite. It's all higher elevations, 8,000-10,000 feet. The weather out west is consistently good in the summertime, plus it doesn't always have all the trees like back east. On the Appalachian Trail, you've got trees up on all the mountains so it's hard to see out. You could be up on top of the mountain, but you couldn't really tell."

**Eastern Sector
Col. Todd Garlick**



Hometown: High Falls, N.Y. "It's dubbed the center of the universe by the folks who live there. No stoplights. One stop sign and that's it. It's a population of about 500, so it's your typical, white picket fence country — rural, dairy farms. It's

between Albany and the city.”

Fond childhood memories: “Playing Little League baseball. I was a big Little League baseball nut. Going to the local creek and swimming in the summer. A lot of swimming, a lot of baseball. I played all positions in Little League. In college I was a pitcher.”

Education: Bachelor’s degree in quantitative engineering management, West Point. “It’s the number side of decision making for an engineer.” Master’s degree in national security strategy from the National Defense University.

Why the Army? “I enlisted as a private before I went to West Point. I wanted to be all that I could be. It was time to leave New York. I didn’t have the funds to go to college. The Army was my way to get there. My grandfather served in World War II. He served in the Italian Campaign. He was from Italy originally. He came over (to the United States and) volunteered to serve in the war, so I followed in my grandfather’s footsteps and in a couple of uncles’ footsteps.”

Previous assignment: “I was in school and then I ran the promotion boards for the Army. Officer, enlisted, active, guard and reserve. It was a zero defect job. There were some stressful days, but I think if you keep a level head about it, I was able to pull a lot of people through some interesting situations. Plus you got to see almost everyone who’s anyone in the Army. All those boards are headed by a general

officer, sometimes panels of general officers. At one time we had 21 general officers in one room. That makes for some exciting times.”

Favorite assignment: Heidelberg Germany. “I was the 5th Corps strength manager. That was fantastic. The weekend would come up and you could say ‘I want to go to Paris or I want to go to Salzburg.’ It was neat to be able to do that. I worked hard, but I was able to play hard, too.”

Future military plans: “I don’t know. I’ll probably end up going back to D.C. I’d like to do one more tour in Army (human resources).”

What do you want to be when you grow up? “I’d like to be able to pick up golf balls on the driving range. I’ll probably continue with some form of aid to the military like doing some volunteer work, or get into an organization where I can really make a difference in people’s lives. I don’t have any grandkids yet, but by that time, I’m sure I’ll spend the rest of my years spoiling my grandkids.” His 23-year-old son is a second lieutenant in the Army. A 19-year-old son is currently at West Point. He also has a 13-year-old daughter.

What do you do when you’re not a commander? “I’m a golf nut. I’m a golfaholic.” He shoots in the ’70s. “I’ve shot a couple in the ’60s, but that was when I was playing all the time. I don’t play that much any more, but I’ll still get out and practice. I’ll pound balls just to keep sharp. I would say almost any sports. I’m a sports nut. My wife likes

to screen all the movies for the upcoming Oscars and I go along with her for the good ones.”

What was your favorite toy when you were a kid? “A big red Tonka Jeep. I think it was a birthday gift. I used to take it everywhere, pound it into the dirt, the whole nine yards. I currently own a big red Jeep. It’s funny how the only thing that changes as we get older is the price of our toys.”

What does the battalion structure do for you? “It’s going to help with the span of control. A ratio of 1-34 is clearly unmanageable. At 1-6, I can at least provide some direction and guidance and close mentorship to those six commanders. I’m going to empower those commanders to help standardize each of those regional locations. I think that’s where we get the synergy from going to the battalion concept. I can now power down to those commanders and they can begin to embrace those stations in their area.”

What does it do for the MEPS? “It’s going to give them some more latitude, more flexibility, especially as we start powering down budget. It’s also going to give them someone they can turn to. Flexibility is going to be the biggest thing. For example, in the battalion, if you have an ESS who all of the sudden leaves the job, within that battalion they’re going to have the ability to cover down. The battalion commander is going to be able to take into consideration the geographic oddities of that location and perhaps to reassign (someone), look for a temporary overhire or

have that flexibility in that location.”

What do you order when you eat out? “Chicken Caesar salad and a diet Coke, most of the time. I’m a light eater when I eat out because my wife is a great cook. When I come home, I’ll eat.”

What’s the best present you ever got? “A cappuccino maker. I’m turning into a foofoo coffee guy. A cappuccino maker was a pleasant surprise.”

What’s your guilty pleasure? “Reese’s Peanut Butter Cups. I’ll go an extra mile to get a Reese’s Peanut Butter Cup. You put one in front of me, I almost can’t turn it down.”

What’s your least favorite sport? “I really don’t have a least favorite sport. I play almost all of them. I play ’em, watch ’em.”

Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you: “I used to work in a mouse factory, a mouse laboratory, where we mass produced mice for experimentation. We had to be able to weigh them, measure their number of offspring, wean them, the whole nine yards, feed them, change their bedding. I spent many a day knee-deep in mouse doo.” He worked summers when he was in high school and then full time when he was first going to college. He helped raise 10s of thousands of mice.

What’s your favorite movie? “I’ll watch all The Matrix trilogy. I think they’re fantastic. (The Matrix) almost reminds me of Star Trek, where everything you’d seen in Star Trek is slowly coming true. I think some of the technologies in “The

Matrix” are potential windows into the future, although it’s an alternate future. If I was going to go to an older movie, the one that I have to watch every year is ‘It’s a Wonderful Life.’ Isn’t that an odd combination? “That’s probably the other weird thing about me. One minute I can be reading an ultra modern book, but the next minute I’ll be reading Shakespeare. I enjoy the classics.”

Who will play you when they make a movie of your life? “We’ll go with vanity. Tom Cruise will play me. That’s what my wife would say.”

What’s the last book you read? “‘The Black Swan: The Impact of the Highly Improbable.’ It talks about how even though we may think guys like Bill Gates and guys like him were oddities, they really had certain things going for them and timing is almost everything. While we may think something may be, (but) you can’t envision it ever happening. Sometimes being able to take advantage of the current conditions creates that opportunity that only a select few can see, understand, and then take advantage of. That’s really the crux of it.”

What’s your ideal vacation? “One where you can take the whole family and we can all enjoy the things we do. My wife can go watch movies, I can go play golf, my kids can enjoy the beach. That would be the ideal vacation. Then we could all come back together and talk about how we enjoyed our day.”

**USMEPCOM
Command Sgt. Maj.
William Lindo**



Hometown: Dayton, Tenn. “Dayton was a small town when I was there, population about 17,000. It was a three or four red light town.”

Fond childhood memories: “One of my fondest memories was going to Dayton City School. It was a small elementary school where the population was fairly mixed for that time in Tennessee. Growing up with different ethnic groups. Growing up and going to high school. Playing high school ball and playing sports against some of the reform schools in the area and seeing how some of those individuals came from less than ideal situations and after three or four years in the youth center how they would graduate and go back into society as productive citizens.” He played baseball, football, basketball, you name it. Even a little bit of racquetball when there was time.

A friend gone wrong: “A young kid who played in youth league against us was committed to Taft Youth Center. My father worked there. This is a guy

I grew up with. Something happened in his life, with his family, his mother, his sister and himself. They came up with a plot and murdered their mother. That’s how he ended up committed to the youth center. Once he got there, even among criminals there’s a certain code, things you don’t violate. He had a pretty tough time there until he reached 17 and was released. I think he was about 13 when they shot their mother. Seeing this young man and the things he went through and then see him when he was incarcerated was kind of tough.”

What was your favorite toy when you were a kid? “I had two. Hot Wheels and Rock ‘em Sock ‘em Robots. The Hot Wheels were slick fancy cars that rolled like no other car they produced at the time. I guess it was the aggressive nature of the Rock ‘em Sock ‘em Robots. There’s nothing like knocking a guy’s head off and watching it raise up a little bit.”

Education: Bachelor’s degree in management from Wiley College, home of the great debaters, in Marshall, Texas. Bachelor’s degree in liberal arts from Excelsior College.

Why the Army? “The main reason I joined the Army was based on having an older brother in the Army. My father served in the Navy. My brother was in Europe when I graduated high school. After graduating I had no plans on joining any branch of military service. I went and signed up for college. One Sunday on the ride back from church my father asked me, ‘Have you thought about joining

the military?’ I was a little upset about him even asking me that question, but I didn’t tell him that. Several months later after he gave me the money to go to school, while he was on vacation visiting his sister, I decided to join the Army.”

Almost a MEPCOM lifer: His previous assignment was as Eastern Sector senior enlisted advisor and, before that first sergeant at the Shreveport MEPS. He went to the Sergeants Major Academy in El Paso in between. “My total MEPCOM time, I’ve got nine years. There are a lot of pros and there are some cons. Any time you spend that much time in one command it is very easy to lose track of what’s going on in your field. I feel real good about the accession triad, what we do as a command. Then again, I’ve missed some of the transformation in the Army.”

Favorite assignment: “I always tell everybody, if you go to a promotion board, your favorite assignment is your current assignment. I don’t say that jokingly. I’m serious about that. This is probably one of my most enjoyable assignments. To have the opportunity to travel across the country and see the impact we make on people’s lives each and every day. How we serve as a vehicle to open up opportunities and at the same time, provide for the defense of this great nation. This is the most enjoyable assignment I’ve had, by far.”

What do you want to be when you grow up? “I think I want to work with something that has to deal with the youth of America, be it a youth challenge

program or maybe ROTC. I want to take a step back from the federal government.”

What do you do when you're not a senior enlisted advisor? “I'm an avid sports fan. I enjoy all three major sports, for the most part. I like to spend my time doing a little auto mechanic work, tearing up things and trying to put it back together. I have two '86 Olds Cutlasses that I like to tinker around with. I have them stored back in Tennessee. They're kind of my toys. My initial vehicle, when I came in the Army, was an '84 Olds Cutlass. It was stolen during the Shreveport tour. I purchased another one and already had an '86 at the time. I just started tinkering with them.”

What's your leadership style? “I like to think I have a democratic leadership style for the most part. There are times, when need be, I can switch over real quick into being authoritarian. I like to take input from everyone when time permits.”

What do you like best about your job? “I get to see everything from cradle to grave when it comes to processing applicants. Being a former recruiter, I've been out there. I've seen them process in the MEPS and the ones that are going through the MEPS now. I see them pretty often when I go to graduation at basic training bases and I see them as a finished product. I'll tell you what, that gives you a great sense of accomplishment. That is one thing I think is really missing from a lot of our folks at the MEPS who are not located close to service bases. They don't see that

finished product. They just see the numbers, but I see the finished product. If they had any idea of the impact they're making they could get more than we could ever pay them, that's for sure.”

What do you order when you eat out?

“Seafood. I always get a seafood platter because when it comes to fish, shrimp, clams, I'm a connoisseur of seafood to some extent.”

What's the best present you ever got? “A Buffalo Bill BB gun. Not like on 'A Christmas Story.' I always had this fascination with guns. When I got that Buffalo Bill side-loading BB gun, that was one of the better Christmases.” He was about 10.

What's your guilty pleasure? “TV. College Gameday. Normally I start the day out from 9 o'clock Saturday morning when it comes on, and I'll be with Gameday until midnight on Saturdays. I like the predictions, I like to listen to the commentators and get their insights on the games, the key players, the key matchups. (I like to) see how much they don't really know about what they're talking about.” During the course of the day he works his way through several conferences, starting with the Big 10 and usually ending with the PAC 10. The must-see game of the day, of course, is his beloved Tennessee Volunteers.

What's your least favorite sport? “Bowling. I never bowled until I went to Shreveport. I always considered it a sport for a non-athlete. Being arrogant, as we are sometimes, and considering myself an

athlete, anybody could roll a bowling ball. Of course I wasn't very good at it.”

Tell me something people would be surprised to know about you:

“I seem reserved, shy or to have an even timid demeanor about myself for the most part. I find myself to be a very humble person. Lots of times the person you see when I'm out visiting the MEPS or I'm in front of folks talking, I'm not in my comfort zone for the most part. I get there, but I don't look for opportunities.”

What's your favorite movie? “A Soldier's Story” with Denzel Washington and Adolf Caesar. It's set during World War II in the deep south. The sergeant, played by Adolf Caesar is murdered by Denzel Washington. It's suspense-drama.”

Who plays you when they make a movie about your life? “Lou Gossett. There's just something about the way he carries himself in most roles. He never plays roles as demeaning toward him. They're respectable. He always seems to be the good guy. He's the hero in the end. I'm not saying I fit that bill. I'm just saying I'd like Lou Gossett to portray me.”

What's your ideal vacation? “To return to Europe with the family. My first duty assignment was Nuremberg, Germany. I didn't take advantage of being in Europe. I'd like to go there and visit all the castles, ride down the Rhine River, go to the vineyards, maybe even be around at Oktoberfest. Just have a good time with the family.”

Eastern Sector Command Sgt. Maj. Maurice Thorpe



Hometown: He considers Washington, D.C., his home. “I was a military brat. I travelled around the world — from Washington, D.C., to Germany, to Fort Ord, Calif., to Hawaii. The Army community is my hometown.” His father, a retired command sergeant major, was a military police officer and was on the Criminal Investigation Division task force in Vietnam. In later years he transitioned into logistics.

What was it like growing up Army? “I loved the opportunity to go to Germany and different parts of the world. I think it made me a more well-rounded person.”

Education: He completed a bachelor of arts in organizational management while attending the Command Sergeants Major Academy. Currently pursuing a master of business administration degree.

Why the Army? “Because I was a military brat, being in the military was one of my first options. When I graduated from high school my father gave me three options — join the Army, go to college or get a job. I couldn't find a job and I

wasn't really ready to go back to school, so I joined the Army." He joined the Army "because I knew the Army. I grew up around it."

Previous assignment: Command sergeant major for Chicago Recruiting Battalion. The battalion covers from the Wisconsin border down to Gary, Ind.

Favorite assignment: "The year I spent at Fort Bliss, Texas, at the Sergeants Major Academy. It really gave me the opportunity to learn about the joint services because we went to school with all branches of service. It gave me the opportunity to work with foreign exchange students as well. As a matter of fact, the first Afghanistan command sergeant major, who is in place right now, was a classmate. He was great. A very quiet person, a quiet professional."

What was your most challenging assignment? "Recruiting command. It was both challenging and rewarding, because I had to sell an intangible product to folks in tough times. The most rewarding part was to be able to see some of these young kids come back later on and you see them as E-5s and E-6s. Some of them I put in back in 1995. That was definitely the most challenging and rewarding. I (was) a recruiter for going on 15 years. I came to recruiting command in 1995. From there, I went to recruiting in Los Angeles and then to Recruiting School at Fort Jackson. That was a great assignment as well. I was the first sergeant in Baltimore and then Richmond."

What made you stay in the business? "My leaders at the time definitely encouraged me to become a career recruiter, because they were looking to change the course of the command. They were looking for experienced leaders who even at that time had combat experience coming out of Desert Shield/Desert Storm. They were looking for those individuals to come to recruiting command so they could tell their stories. I fell in love with helping folks and became a recruiter because of that."

Future military plans: "I've got 24 years in the service. I plan to do 30. A command sergeant major can do 32, provided they're in a nominative assignment, so my goal is to get to a nominative assignment — a major command. I would go upstairs to be USMEPCOM sergeant major if I were selected. I'm definitely looking for the opportunity to be USMEPCOM sergeant major or USAREC sergeant major should that opportunity arise."

What do you want to be when you grow up? "I haven't decided, although I'm preparing myself to go into business. I really don't know exactly what I want to do when I get out. I've thought about going into business for myself or to be a project manager for somebody else, depending on what the offers look like when I get out."

What do you do when you're not a senior enlisted advisor? "I love to run. I love to participate in marathons. The majority of the time, for down time, I'm participating in 10k's and

5k's around the area. I run the Army 10-Miler every year. This year was my 14th or 15th time when we ran with USMEPCOM in October. The rest of the time I'm either in school or I spend time with my family and volunteering in the community with the local schools."

What's your leadership style? "If you asked me that when I was a first sergeant or the first time I was a battalion command sergeant major, I liked to directly participate in everything I delegate. Now I focus more on empowerment, especially as we go into the battalion standardization program — to allow the battalion senior enlisted advisors to be in charge of their battalions."

What does battalion concept do for you? "It is definitely going to allow me to spend more quality time with those battalion command sergeants major. I will be able to give them guidance and mentorship to be able to help them lead their 'treasure.' The ratio of 1-34 will go to 1-6 and give me more time to get to know the intermediate level leadership."

What do you like best about your job? "It's the other side of recruiting command. I had been in recruiting for almost 15 years before I came to USMEPCOM. USMEPCOM was always the enemy because they were the ones who prevented us from being successful in my mind. On this side, I can see where both organizations have a responsibility to help the services make their mission. The greatest joy I get is bridging the gap between the two."

What would you change? "I think that is already happening. One of the things I think is that it is a lot of area of responsibility for one person as a sergeant major or commander. Instituting the intermediate level leadership is one thing I would change."

What do you order when you eat out? "My wife and I like to eat sushi. The Kona Grill in Vernon Hills makes all kinds of sushi."

What's the best present you ever got? "This Christmas was my best Christmas. Everybody doesn't know this, but my wife was diagnosed with cancer in November. She was fighting pain and illness since October, but she was diagnosed with cancer in November. On the 24th of December, the doctor told us she was cancer free after surgery. Being able to take her home from the hospital on the 24th of December was the best Christmas present I ever had."

What's your guilty pleasure? "Chocolate. All kinds. I love chocolate. I'm trying to wean myself off it."

What's your favorite movie? "One of my favorite movies when I first joined the service was 'Gardens of Stone.' It's about service members in the Army at the height of the Vietnam War."

What's the last book you read? 'Living Strong,' by Lance Armstrong. "He talks about the challenges he went through with cancer and his fight back."

What's your ideal vacation? "My dream vacation is we're having a family vacation this year and going on a cruise with all our family. We're going to the eastern Caribbean."

MEPS of Excellence

The MEPS of Excellence Program acknowledges military entrance processing stations that obtain a level of excellence based on criteria related to USMEPCOM core processes (medical, testing, applicant processing) and general military readiness.

The two requirements to become a MEPS of Excellence are:

- To be one of the top three MEPS in each category.
- To meet the overall threshold.

The 65 MEPS are divided into three categories, based on historical data. MEPS remain in the designated category the entire fiscal year.

The MOE points system measures up to 10 criteria per quarter.

The criteria are:

- Timeliness of military evaluations and awards.
- Total students tested goal.
- Drug and HIV specimen processing.
- Clinical Laboratory Improvement Program.
- Physical fitness readiness.
- Height and weight standards.
- Electronic fingerprint capture station (unclassifiable fingerprints).
- Incidents of serious misconduct by military or civilian employees.
- Test loss compromise.
- Citibank travel card delinquency rates.

First Quarter, Fiscal 2010

Category 1

Atlanta MEPS
Baltimore MEPS
Kansas City MEPS
Sacramento MEPS

Category 2

Detroit MEPS
Minneapolis MEPS
Nashville MEPS

Category 3

Beckley MEPS
Portland, Maine MEPS
Sioux Falls MEPS

CONGRATS

PORTLAND, ORE. MEPS

Congrats to Mike Williams on graduating magna cum laude from Liberty University with a 3.86 GPA. He earned a bachelor of science in multidisciplinary studies (electrical engineering and business), with a minor in Christian counseling. Williams is an information technology specialist and information assurance security officer at the MEPS. He attended school full-time during his off-duty time for the last 16 months and plans to attend graduate school.

FOND FAREWELLS

BOISE MEPS

Dave Hodson

Education Services Specialist
Retired: Jan. 2
Government: 30-plus years; six at Boise MEPS
Plans: He's moving to South Korea to work as an English teacher.

LOUISVILLE MEPS

Chief Petty Officer James Wilson

Medical NCOIC
Years of service: 21
Departing for: Camp Lejeune, N.C.
Award: Joint Service Commendation Medal
Most remembered for: His sense of humor.

NEW FACES

FORT LEE MEPS

Lashonda Easton

Administrative Support Technician
Government: One year
Military: Six-plus years
Last assignment: Fort Wainwright, Alaska
Diversions: Shopping and exercising.
First impression of MEPS: "Employees were cordial and seemed to have positive attitudes."

1st Lt. Thomas Simmons

Assistant Operations Officer
Military service: 10 years
Last assignment: Joint Operations Center, Sandston, Va., Battle Captain
Diversions: Performing arts, martial arts, family time, traveling.
First impression of MEPS: "Friendly, team-oriented mentality."

Eastern Sector Semi-Annual Board Winners

GS 6 and below

GS 7 - GS 9

GS-10 and above

E-7 and above

Company Grade Officer

F.L.A.G

Rose Payne, Beckley MEPS Secretary

Myra Ellis, Tampa MEPS Test Coordinator

Daniel Correll, Tampa MEPS Education Services Specialist

Tech. Sgt. Cheasa Crump, Baltimore MEPS Health Technician

2nd Lt. Raphael Trujillo, Lansing MEPS Operations Officer

Spec. Xontippie Whittington, Baltimore MEPS Supervisory Health Technician

F.L.A.G. is Family, Leadership, Ambassadorship and Growth

LOUISVILLE MEPS

Sgt. Sergio Zaratecortina

Processing Specialist
Last assignment: 1st Marine Logistics Group
Years of service: Five-plus
First impression of MEPS: "Friendly atmosphere."

Salt Lake City loses Rafe Burt Homan

Rafe Burt Homan, the education services specialist at the Salt Lake City MEPS, died Jan. 25 after battling cancer. He was 42.

Mr. Homan joined the MEPS staff in October 2001.

He is survived by his wife, Melissa, and their three sons, Dexter, Drew and Ethan.

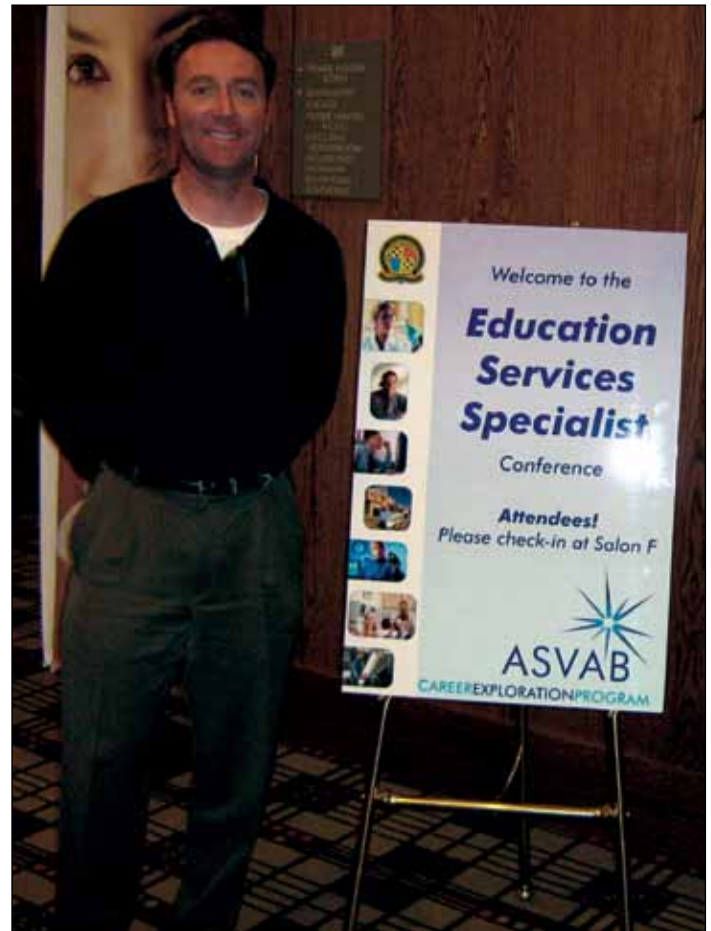
Maj. Cody W. Barker, Salt Lake City MEPS commander, said Mr. Homan's loss will have a "monumental" effect on the station and its operations.

"In the last four years, we were able to meet and exceed all (student testing program) goals by an average of 115 percent, based on his efforts," Barker said. "With all the things he was able to build for us, I don't envy the person who is going to succeed him."

Mr. Homan was born in Marerro, La., Aug. 30, 1967, to Edwin and Sandra (Hunsaker) Homan and grew up in Denton, Texas.

After completing a mission with the Tokyo South Mission, Japan, for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Mr. Homan enrolled at Brigham Young University. While a student, he enlisted in the Utah Army National Guard and was subsequently activated for service with the 1457th Engineering Battalion at Grafenwohr, Germany, during Operation Desert Storm.

After returning from Germany, Mr. Homan completed his bachelor of science degree in geography at BYU and later earned a master of education degree in counseling from the University of San Diego.



Rafe Burt Homan

His hobbies included fitness, BYU sports, reading, genealogy and spending time with his family and friends. He was an elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and served his church in several capacities.



USMEPCOM Commander, Col. Mariano C. Campos Jr., and Los Angeles MEPS Commander, Lt. Col. Juanita Cobbs cut the cake during the grand opening festivities.

The new Los Angeles MEPS



The Los Angeles MEPS held its grand opening Oct. 23. The MEPS is located in El Segundo, Calif.

A Tribute to Lynn Noerring

By Sherrill Wixon

On Feb. 25, we lost another member of the Salt Lake City MEPS family, Lynn Noerring. She died of pancreatic and liver cancer, but she didn't go without a fight.

Lynn has been a fighter ever since I have known her. I met Lynn in December of 1991 when I started working for the Salt Lake City MEPS. She was working in the medical section. At the time we worked at the Fort Douglas compound, an old cavalry fort. During the day we would go for walks and pick apples and cherries off the trees around the historic houses and even walk through those old houses. It was a great place to work, that old fort.

After we moved to our current location she worked with me as a human resources assistant and then became the commander's secretary. She was the best secretary a commander could ask for; she had so much energy and worked as hard as anyone could.

I loved to visit Lynn at her home, a beautiful log house that she and her husband built in Emigration Canyon, in the Wasatch Mountains. In the summer there would literally be hundreds of hummingbirds at her house. She fed the birds with lots of sugar. During this time I learned a lot about Lynn and her family and became very close to her.

My husband retired from the Army in 1991 and we moved to Salt Lake. When I got my job with the MEPS she became my first and best friend. As I got to know her, I realized this was a woman of great strength. She was the rock of her family. She took care of them financially, mentally, and emotionally.

When her daughter was 14, she was diagnosed with a blood disorder that slowly killed her kidneys. By the time she was in her 20's, she had to have a kidney transplant, so Lynn gave her daughter one of her kidneys. All went well and Lynn was back at work and again taking care of everyone else's needs and the MEPS mission.



"Fishing was Lynn's life and her personality. This photo says it all – about her and her spirit."

"Lynn will be deeply missed by me and the MEPS family. Lynn was one of the best, most honest and caring people I have ever known. She had a ferocity to her that was backed up by her actions as a human. The universe and heavens are a better place now that Lynn is watching over her family and us."

– Maj. Cody Barker, Salt Lake City MEPS commander

Lynn was very talented. She was a very hard worker and so energetic, always doing some kind of project at home – putting in new floors, cabinets, bathtubs, gardens, whatever needed to be done and she only weighed 90 pounds soaking wet. She was also very talented in ceramics. She had her own kiln; she painted the ceramics and sold them in stores.

During a very hard time in my life she was there for me, she was always there for anyone who needed her. She took care of her father and checked on him regularly. She had a heart of gold. And then if things weren't bad enough, her daughter had to have a

liver transplant so Lynn had to take care of that too. After a few years some medicine they gave her daughter for the liver killed her kidney so she had to go back on dialysis. She was on the transplant list for almost 4 years but had to go off for a while because she had

to have a heart procedure. What one has to understand is that Lynn did all this on her own, with no help. But again Lynn was strong and took care of it herself, she took care of her house, her daughter's house and I never heard her complain once. She always had a positive outlook on life. Everything was going to work out just fine as far as she was concerned.

Three days before she died she told the commander, her supervisor, and me to tell everyone what was going on, but she had not given up hope. She wanted so much to live for her two kids and her two grandsons. They were her life and her favorite thing to do with them was to go fishing. In fact, up in the canyon near where she lives there is a cove where they go fishing. They call it Lynn's Cove. That is where she will finally rest in peace.

Anchorage honors doctor who joined processing in late '70s to 'work fast and get it right'

Dr. Thomas Green died Jan. 28. He was a legacy in Alaska and at the Anchorage MEPS, where he worked for more than 30 years as chief medical officer.

The physician's family hosted a memorial service at the Alaska Aviation Heritage Museum Feb. 9. They asked the MEPS for a ceremony that was "military and professional."

"We came up with a flag-folding event that fit perfectly into the day's agenda," Maj. Lydia Weatherspoon, Anchorage MEPS commander, said.

One year ago, then-MEPS commander, Maj. Laura Bozeman wrote a three-page feature about Green for the *Messenger*. The story begins

on page 18 of volume 30, number 4, available at "*Messenger Online*," on the USMEPCOM web site, www.mepcom.army.mil.

Bozeman wrote, "While serving in Alaska he has accrued a tremendous amount of hands-on experience as a contract physician examining bush pilots for the Federal Aviation Administration, treating prison inmates, providing care for Alaskan natives and running a private practice for rugged individualists," Bozeman wrote. "Standing about 6 feet tall, his speech is often peppered with laughter, self-deprecating humor and wise experience from frontier medicine."

Nearly a decade after his arrival in Alaska, an Army National Guard recruiter told Green he would be



Dr. Thomas Green

a great asset at the Armed Forces Examining and Entrance Station. This was the beginning of the physician's service in processing at what is now Anchorage MEPS.

"To our Doc, who had a good run"



(Left to right) Anchorage MEPS 1st Sgt. Rodolfo Lozano, John Jones, Anthony Fuentes, Scott Teal, Timothy Rich, Daniel Hayes and Frieda Gilliam begin the flag-folding ceremony to honor Dr. Thomas Green.



First Sgt. Rodolfo Lozano presents the folded flag to Irene Green-May.

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month



*Diverse
Leadership
for a Diverse
Workforce*