

INFANTRY NEWS



THE U.S. TOTAL ARMY Personnel Agency, or TAPA, was activated 1 October 1987 in Alexandria, Virginia. TAPA consolidates the U.S. Army Military Personnel Center (MILPER-CEN), the Army's Civilian Personnel Center, the Physical Disability Agency, and the Drug and Alcohol Operations Activity.

This reorganization of personnel functions is expected to improve the Army's ability to move from peace to war while also making the most of its peacetime capabilities.

Active Army and Reserve Component soldiers and Department of the Army civilians worldwide will not notice changes in the operations performed by the former *Military and Civilian Personnel Centers*. Those functions have simply been streamlined under TAPA.

A THROUGH-THE-MASK feeding system is being tested by the Army's Natick Research, Development, and Engineering Center for use by soldiers wearing special protective clothing.

The project, under way for several years now, is scheduled to end in 1990, at which time tube foods may become available to soldiers as a special ration item.

Various foods have been tested so far, including beef and gravy, sloppy joes, turkey, yams, chicken a la king, beef stew, butternut squash, corn, apple pie, applesauce, puddings, fruits, flavored electrolyte beverages, and coffee with cream and sugar. Also in the works for future experiments are grits with sausage and French toast.

All the foods tested were prepared at the Natick Center and thermally processed, through either pasteurizing or retorting (sterilizing at high temperature under pressure), depending on the acidity of the food. The foods were then sent

to a microbiology laboratory to confirm their sterility.

The tubes are aluminum, six and three-fourths inches long and one and one-half inches in diameter with a five ounce capacity. The foods are placed in a 28-volt "tube warmer" that plugs into a transport vehicle's electrical system. Each warmer heats six tubes to 135 degrees Fahrenheit in 20 to 30 minutes.



A plastic device screwed onto the threads at the end of the tube is inserted through a valve on the face mask, and the soldier squeezes the contents through the mask to eat it.

In a test last summer, soldiers evaluated the foods and concluded that they could probably eat food in tubes for two and one-half days before becoming bored with them.

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY John O. Marsh, Jr., was awarded the 1987

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Distinguished Doughboy Award at the annual Infantry Ball in Washington on 14 November 1987.

The award—a brass-plated, World War I doughboy helmet mounted on a walnut base decorated with crossed rifles—is presented each year to an individual who has rendered great personal service to the morale and welfare of the infantryman.

In his acceptance speech, Secretary Marsh highlighted the U.S. infantryman's role throughout the nation's history and said the infantry soldier is and will continue to be "a key player in the strategy and doctrine of the Army . . . , because the Infantry is now and it shall continue to be the queen of battles."

Each year a committee chaired by the Chief, Infantry Branch, Total Army Personnel Agency, nominates individuals for the award, and the Chief of Infantry at the U.S. Army Infantry Center and School makes the final selection.

Previous recipients of the award, established in 1980, include Bob Hope, Bill Mauldin, and Major General Aubrey S. Newman, U.S.A., Retired.

THE NATIONAL INFANTRY Museum has provided the following items:

The Seventh Annual National Infantry Museum Five-Mile Run saw record participation and raised record funds for the Museum. There were about 5,300 runners and more than \$17,500 was raised to benefit the Museum.

Plaster cast busts of Generals John J. Pershing and George S. Patton, Jr., have been removed from display and placed in the hands of a foundry to be used for molds for bronze castings. Since these are very good likenesses and popular with viewers, and since the plaster was deteriorating, it was felt that they deserved to be preserved in a more durable material.

The culmination of the National Infantry Museum's events to honor the 200th anniversary of the signing of the Constitution was a ceremony at which numerous red, white, and blue balloons were released in front of the building by school children, and a bell was rung for 200 seconds to coincide with other bell ringings around the country. The bell used was one cast for the U.S. Army in 1860 at Troy, New York.

American Heritage Magazine plans to feature a National Infantry Museum holding, a regimental flag of the Second Regiment of Colored Troops in the Civil War, on the back cover of an upcoming issue. That issue will include a collection of stories that deal with black soldiers and the U.S. Army.

The 11th Airborne Division monument was recently installed across the street from the front of the Museum. A gift of the 11th Airborne Division Association, the monument is a large statue (nearly seven feet tall) of a young 11th Airborne Division trooper standing on a granite base with his rifle raised over his head. The figure, cast in bronze, is the work of the noted sculptor Franco Vianello.

Some recent Museum acquisitions are a Soviet Makarov pistol; herringbone twill trousers and jacket; paratrooper boots worn by the donor when he jumped into Normandy on 6 June 1944; a U.S. model 1842 musket; an Australian sniper suit donated by the Chief of the Infantry Center, Singleton, Australia; a 9mm Beretta pistol; nineteenth century Massachusetts Militia buttons; a swagger stick made of wood carved by a North Vietnamese POW; a Cooper revolver; a variety of reference books; and letters, photographs, and other papers relating to General Asa L. Singleton, a past Fort Benning commanding general.

The National Infantry Museum Society, formed at Fort Benning a number of years ago to assist the Museum with financial and volunteer support, is open to anyone who is interested in joining. The cost is \$2.00 for a one-year membership or \$10.00 for a lifetime membership.

Additional information about the Museum and the Society is available from the Director, National Infantry Museum, Fort Benning, GA 31905-5273;

AUTOVON 835-2958 or commercial (404) 545-2958.

NEW PROTECTIVE ensembles for use by explosive ordnance detachments (EODs) have been ordered by the Army. The new protective system, designed by the U.S. Army Natick Research, Development, and Engineering Center, will give EOD soldiers an edge in safely defusing the small explosive devices favored by terrorists.



Until now, the Army has not had a complete armor system to protect EOD technicians in performing their delicate tasks and to prevent or at least minimize injury.

Consequently, Natick was tasked with developing protective equipment that would be lightweight and flexible enough without creating unnecessary encumbrances.

The suit is made of Kevlar, a tough synthetic fiber woven into a durable, strong fabric that, pound for pound, is twice as strong as steel. The outer shell is made of fire retardant Nomex, which is light but durable.

For head protection, the PASGT (Personnel Armor System, Ground Troop) helmet is used and reinforced with a bonnet that contains 12 extra layers of Kevlar. A great deal of consideration was given to head protection, not only from

a ballistic point of view but also as to weight and heat stress. The chest plate and face shield are designed as one piece. The face shield is made of a polycarbonate and acrylic material, mounted on a form-fitted fiberglass chest plate that is inserted in the chest pocket of the protective jacket. Ballistic eye wear is also worn.

A MICROWAVE FIELD FEEDING program is being developed that will allow small groups of soldiers in isolated sites to prepare "shelf stable" foods without leaving their sites. Shelf stable foods are pre-cooked and preserved and do not need refrigeration. Final preparation consists of warming the foods in a microwave oven that can be plugged directly into a NATO plug on a tactical vehicle or into a standard 110-volt outlet on a communication shelter.

The tray pack feeding system now being used is designed in modules to feed up to 36 people and, once opened, cannot be transported to smaller sites and still maintain sanitation. A common alternative therefore has been for the soldiers in isolated sites to eat MRE rations three meals a day.

The food in the microwave field feeding program consists of individual packets of meat, casseroles, vegetables, and desserts, supplemented with beverages and bread. A typical breakfast is juice, a bacon omelette, corned beef hash, and fruit. Lunch or dinner might be a tuna-noodle casserole, carrots, and pudding.

Still under development and not yet tested with the microwave oven is the "thermostabilized meal tray," which is also shelf stable and looks like a TV dinner. MREs cannot be heated in a microwave oven unless the food is removed from the foil packages and placed on a paper plate.

Resupply is simplified since several days worth of meals can be left at a site in advance, and troops can take their oven and food with them when they do move to a new location. Maintenance is not a problem, since small commercial ovens are relatively inexpensive and can often be replaced instead of repaired.