



A

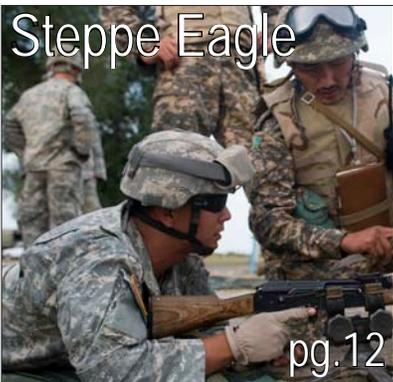
# Desert Voice

September 2011

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# Sept. 11 Edition



**A** **Ask your buddy**

- Have the courage to ask the question, but stay calm
- Ask the question directly: Are you thinking of killing yourself?

**C** **Care for your buddy**

- Calmly control the situation; do not use force; be safe
- Actively listen to show understanding and produce relief
- Remove any means that could be used for self-injury

**E** **Escort your buddy**

- Never leave your buddy alone
- Escort to chain of command, Chaplain, behavioral health professional, or primary care provider
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
1-800-273-8255 (TALK)  
TA - 095 - 0510

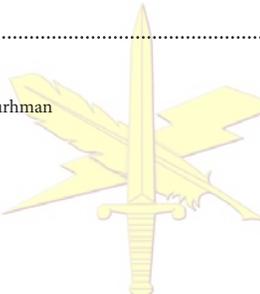
USAMHC  
http://hrc.army.mil

## Suicide Awareness Month

Preventing Suicide  
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From the Chaplain  
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Lt. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks  
Third Army Commanding General  
Command Sgt. Maj. John D. Fourhman  
Third Army Command Sgt. Maj.  
Col. Gerald O'Hara  
Third Army Public Affairs Officer  
Sgt. Maj. Christopher Fletcher  
Third Army Public Affairs Sgt. Maj.



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# From the commanding general

Third Army/ARCENT Team of Teams:

The Third Army Family remembers, and will never forget, that fateful day, nor the men and women whose lives ended due to the extreme acts of violence on the morning of Sept. 11, 2001. And we will not forget the lives that have been lost fighting for our way of life since then.

Many of you have deployed one or more times to take on the sacred duty of fighting for our country.

In the wake of 9-11-2001, we answered the call to duty and now we serve as members of the historic Third Army, an organization that was instrumental in the initial response to the attacks and remains instrumental today having played a key role in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In Nov. 2001, Third Army was designated the Coalition Forces Land Component Command for Operation Enduring

Freedom. Just over a year later, the same role was assigned for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

On March 19, 2003, Third Army initiated and commanded the land portion of a historic attack into Iraq by U.S. Forces and allied partners. Three weeks later, Third Army land forces had toppled Saddam Hussein and captured Baghdad.

In March of 2007, Third Army provided

transportation and support during the troop surge in Iraq, which saw 20,000 servicemembers increasing the U.S. pressure needed to defeat the many enemies of Iraq who sought to plunge it into failure and ethnic strife without an apparent end.

With Third Army receiving, training and equipping the force faster than the enemy could counter, operations in Iraq remained successful, setting the stage for Allied Forces to begin the process of a drawdown.

On Dec. 1, 2009, as part of the U.S. effort to consolidate success in Iraq, Third Army initiated Operation Nickel II, the largest logistical operation since World War II. By Aug. the following year, our unit was able to accomplish Nickel II, which entailed a simultaneous and sustained drawdown in Iraq and buildup in Afghanistan. Present day, the focus is on meeting the Presidential

directive in Afghanistan and the drawdown in Iraq.

The images of 9/11 will forever be engrained in our memories. This month, we honor our nation by remembering those who gave some, and never forgetting that some gave all. On 9/11, be proud of your service and the contribution of this great command. Lead the way to victory and to peace.

Third – Always First



*-Lt. Gen. Vincent K. Brooks, Commanding General, Third Army/ARCENT*

# Where were y

## Troops share their reaction to the U.S. being attacked



"I was sitting on the couch in my mom's house when I turned on the TV. The first thing that came on was the news; it was still the raw images, so you could see people jumping. I couldn't believe it at first."

-Sgt. Keenan Miles, health care specialist 6250th United States Army Hospital.

"I was a senior in high school, in gym class. After everyone watched the news for a while, they sent us home. I had an older group of friends who were in the military, and I knew they would be heading overseas."

-Spc. Curtis Donner, contractor officer representative, 1188th Deployment Distribution Support Battalion.



"I was on a ship doing inspections. Word spread rampant. I didn't have a way of contacting my wife or kids for awhile, so once I could, I went straight home. I thought America was under terrorist attack."

-Navy Cmdr. Paul Durant, director for admin, Expeditionary Medical Facility - Kuwait.



# you Sept. 11?

"I was in Jacksonville, N.C. at work. It was unbelievable. At first I thought some random idiot had gotten a hold of a jet and decided to hit the towers, but when the second plane hit, I knew it was clearly planned."

-Marine Maj. Derwin Moody, strategic planner, Command Distribution and Deployment Operations Center



"My unit had just returned from PT. I was sitting on the couch, putting my boots on and eating breakfast. When the first plane hit, I thought it was a horrible accident, maybe mechanical failure with the plane."

-Chief Warrant Officer Jason Dunn, enterprise engineer, 335th Signal Command, Third Army

"I was in middle school when it came on TV. I'm from Russia and didn't speak English very well, so I thought it was a movie. It wasn't till I got home and my mom explained it in Russian that it really hit me."

-Spc. Pavel J. Bomar, paralegal specialist, Staff Judge Advocate, Third Army



"I was an Army recruiter in Conyers, Ga. I was in disbelief. I figured there would be some sort of conflict because of what happened on 9/11. The next two days were the only times people returned my recruiting calls."

-Sgt. 1st Class James Hunter, transportation, 1st Sustainment Command (Theater)

“Ten years later, servicemembers are still making the ultimate sacrifice and we must continue to recognize this every day.”

-Petty Officer 3rd Class Amber Smith,  
Expeditionary Medical Facility Kuwait

“I feel like I have fulfilled my mission so far, but there is always more I can do for my fellow Soldiers and the people of the world.”

-Sgt Keenan Miles, health care specialist,  
6250th U. S. Army Hospital

# Sept. 11 Ten Years Later

“I’m honored and grateful to serve with so many troops coming from various branches of our Armed Forces to support the Third Army mission here.”

-Capt. Hubert James Little III, combined operations and information center officer in charge,  
3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support) Operational Command Post (Forward)

“My family wishes I was home; however, they know duty calls. We’re deployed here for a reason. Our national strategy and policy will prevent a future Sept. 11.”

-Lt. Col. Mark W. Leahey, deputy commander,  
197th Fires Brigade

“Being a member of the service now marks a unique time in our history, and I’m glad to be part of the process.”

-Lt. Col. Mike Pelletier, electronics federal technician  
human resources

# National Guardsman serves in memory of slain friend

Photo and story By Cpl. Christopher A. Calvert  
Third Army/ARCENT PAO

Sept. 11th. Everyone remembers where they were that fateful day when terrorists hijacked four airplanes destroying the twin towers, part of the Pentagon and so many innocent lives.

As citizens of our nation came together that day, the military took on an even greater meaning for one Soldier serving in the N.H. National Guard.

"I lost a close family friend during Sept. 11," said Lt. Col. Mark W. Leahey, deputy commander for the 197th Fires Brigade, N.H. National Guard. "He was our next-door neighbor growing up outside of the Boston area."

Almost a decade later, Leahey still remembers his fallen comrade, and feels the pride of serving each-and-every day as an Army Reservist alongside Third Army, he stated.

"I proudly serve with him in mind," Leahey said. "It motivates me to do the best I can, especially while I'm here deployed."

Leahey mobilized in 2004 with the N.H. National Guard, and again in 2009 with the Center for Army Lessons Learned as an embedded analyst with the 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Division.

"I observed both friendly and enemy tactics, techniques and procedures," said Leahey. "I reported them back to the CALL headquarters, where the information was then forwarded to the Pentagon."

Now on his third deployment with the N.H. National Guard, Leahey stated he still serves as proudly alongside Third Army as when he entered the Army in 1986 as an active-duty Soldier.

"I'm very proud," he added. "The reason being is I do believe there are bad people out there who wish our country harm. I'm saddened to think that our fellow Americans on Sept. 11 had to make a choice to either burn alive or leap to their deaths."

After serving for more than 24 years, Leahey said he's proud of both the National Guard and Army Reserves for stepping up and accomplishing the Third Army mission, as well as countless other overseas endeavors.

"The National Guard and all Army Reservists have grown from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve," added Leahey. "We help to fill in the gaps of prolonged military endeavors."

"This is a watershed moment for the Army Reserves and National Guard," Leahey said. "During these long, protracted military operations we have lost many, many Soldiers. We have shown we are very capable in accomplishing all missions assigned to us."

Chief Warrant Officer Charlie Morgan, 197th FiB, said that Leahey, her first line supervisor, has inspired her from the first time the two met.

"Lt. Col. Leahey's work ethic is impeccable," said Morgan. "He seeks to understand any issue brought forth and always considers any advice I may have as the Equal Opportunity Advisor."

"His professionalism and can-do attitude is reflective of his success in completing any mission assigned," she stated. "His dedication to a command climate free of discrimination, harassment, and toxic leadership has inspired me. He loves his country and is willing to make the hard decisions to lead his troops and effectively defeat the enemy."

The key behind Leahey's drive and motivation lies in his family's support, he said. His wife and two children give Leahey the motivation to accomplish the mission at hand.

"My family is very proud," stated Leahey. "I have tremendous respect for all military families, as they truly have served our country. My family wishes I was home; however, they know duty calls."

"We're deployed here for a reason," he said. "Our national strategy and policy will prevent a future Sept. 11."

With Soldiers like Leahey within its ranks, Third Army's commitment to providing leadership for Soldiers, the strength of our nation, has helped pave the way for the U.S. Army to be fully mission capable, ready to sustain the fight, and prepared to shape future military endeavors.



Lt. Col. Mark W. Leahey, Deputy Commander for the 197th Fires Brigade, New Hampshire National Guard, recalls the tragic events of Sept. 11, and how it motivates him every day to accomplish his mission.



“Sept. 11 pushed me to join the Army. It was hard to see the attacks and not want to do something about it.”

-Sgt. Keenan Miles

Sgt. Keenan Miles, Health Care Specialist with the 6250th United States Army Hospital, verifies an address. Despite his original mission's completion, Miles still shapes the future by ensuring mail is delivered properly while he is temporarily attached to Third Army.

# Soldier keeps true to reason for joining after Sept. 11

Photo and Story By Spc. Bradley J. Wancour  
Third Army/ARCENT PAO

In Sept. 2001, Keenan Miles was sitting on his mother's couch when he turned on the television. The first thing he saw was images of the twin towers burning, smoke billowing from where commercial jet liners had impacted them. While watching people jump from the burning towers, Miles could not believe his eyes.

Miles was already considering service in a branch of the Armed Forces prior to the attacks, due to his family history.

“Most of my family is in military,” he said. “I have a lot of pride in my country and I've always wanted to serve.”

Watching the U.S. come under attack affected Miles so deeply, he was instantly motivated to join the Army Reserve; today he holds the rank of sergeant.

“9/11 pushed me to join the Army,” Miles said. “It was hard to see the attacks and not want to do something about it.”

Ten years later, Miles has gotten over his disbelief and serves as a health care specialist with the 6250th U. S. Army Hospital in Fort Lewis, Wash. Miles brought his self motivation to the Third Army team, while deployed to Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

Miles picked his job because of his desire to help people, which stems from his family's military history.

“I chose to become a health care specialist because I could

chameleon into any unit and help anyone and everyone,” Miles commented.

Even outside work, Miles shapes the future by helping where he can, said Capt. Carpaccio Owens, deputy surgeon, 1st Theater Support Command.

“He gives pointers to people working out in the gym, even people he doesn't really know,” stated Owens. “People take one look at Miles and can tell he works out a lot, so they usually follow his advice.”

Owens explained how Miles' mere presence inspires the best in people by giving them an example to follow.

“He brings a lot of energy to our workout,” Owens mentioned. “I can see his motivation and it pushes me to try harder.”

Miles said he feels good about what he has done with the Army, and is so dedicated to improving himself that he and Owens work out at the gym daily.

“I feel like I have fulfilled my mission so far, but there is always more I can do for my fellow Soldiers and the people of the world,” Miles said.

Despite being removed from his job, Miles' innate desire to help is evident. While on temporary assignment in the mailroom at Camp Arifjan, Miles strives to shape Third Army's future by helping Soldiers increase their physical fitness.

# Soldier recalls the loss of his nephew on Sept. 11

“It was just terrible for the entire family to lose someone so quickly, violently and in such a horrific manner.”

-Lt. Col. Mike Pelletier

Photo and Story By Staff Sgt. Regina Machine  
Third Army/ARCENT PAO

Sept. 11th brings somber thoughts to many Americans as we near its 10th remembrance. For one Third Army Soldier, Sept. 11 also marks the death of his 21-year-old nephew, whose American Airlines Flight 11 was hijacked that fateful morning.

It all started as a normal day when Lt. Col. Mike Pelletier, electronics federal technician with human resources, N.H. National Guard, received a call from his wife. His wife told him the first plane used in the attacks of the twin towers was the one his nephew, David Dimeglio, boarded earlier that morning.

Dimeglio had graduated from college in the spring of 2001 and was looking for a job. He landed a job at a local video store and worked all summer to save up money to visit family and friends in California.

His parents dropped him off that morning; they never saw him again.

“There was something real strange about her voice and how she told me that Dave was on that flight,” said Pelletier. “It was a real tragedy that a young person in his early 20s, a college graduate who would never hurt a fly, would lose his life in that type of disaster; a tragedy.

“He was murdered that day.”

“It was terrible for the entire family to lose someone so quickly, violently and in such a horrific manner,” noted Pelletier.

It wasn't long before Pelletier made the tough decision to find out what he needed to do to re-enter the N.H. National Guard Manchester State Armory, after a nine year break in service. He received a call back the next day and almost four months later, in Jan. 2002, he was sworn back into the National Guard.

The Guard he knew had changed, Pelletier remarked. The Guardsmen were no longer the ones who only drilled Friday through Sunday. The guard is now filled with professionalism and camaraderie among those who serve, and with fellow National Guardsmen embracing a level of education and dedication above their status, said Pelletier.

Two years later, he mobilized for Operation Enduring Freedom II and now for Operation New Dawn.

“Lt. Col. Pelletier is a true, professional Soldier dedicated to the success of our mission,” said Lt. Col. John LeBlanc, 197th Fires Brigade, N.H. National Guard.

Lt. Col. Mike Pelletier, electronics federal technician with human resources, New Hampshire National Guard recounts the call he received from his wife telling him that his nephew's flight, American Airlines flight 11, was used in the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11th.



“Being a member of the services now marks a unique time in our history, and I'm glad to be part of the process,” said Pelletier.

Since Sept 11., Third Army's Servicemembers have accepted the commitment of fortifying America's borders, which extends to 20 countries. The relationships forged in these interactions build a deep-rooted trust, ensuring Americans can continue to thrive in their way of life.

Third Army continues to safeguard democracy and establish domestic tranquility wherever U.S. forces are needed, as they persist to honor the past and shape the future with all their endeavors.

# STEPP



# EAGLE



# Multi-lateral exercise Steppe Eagle Begins



Col. Stanley Reedy, Third Army /ARCENT chief of exercises, speaks during the opening ceremonies of exercise Steppe Eagle here today. Steppe Eagle is an annual multi-lateral exercise hosted by the Kazakhstan Government and conducted with the participation of troops from the United States Arizona National Guard, Third Army/ARCENT, U.S. Colorado National Guard and the Kazakh Peace Keeping Battalion.

Photos and Story By Staff Sgt. Mylinda Dourousseau  
Third Army/ARCENT PAO

CAMP ILLISKY, Kazakhstan – Flags from five nations were raised as more than 200 U.S. Soldiers participated in the opening ceremony for exercise Steppe Eagle at Camp Illisky, Aug. 8.

Kazakhstan began hosting Steppe Eagle in 2003 and Third Army/ARCENT has been a participant from the beginning.

The annual multi-lateral exercise is conducted with the participation of troops from the Arizona National Guard, Third Army/ARCENT and the Kazakh Peace Keeping Battalion.

The U.S. has increased the number of it's participants in this exercise at the request of the Kazakh military leadership. The 1st Battalion 157th Infantry Regiment of the Colorado National Guard from Fort Carson, Colo., provided the additional personnel.

“Nothing can replace the kind of cooperation and camaraderie that results from Soldiers interacting with each other on the ground at exercises such as Steppe Eagle.” said Col. Stanley Reedy, Third Army/ARCENT chief of exercises and plans and chief of Steppe Eagle.

Throughout the next ten days Soldiers of the 1-157th will train with the Kazkhastan military, developing the skills and understanding necessary to work together during peacekeeping and emergency missions.

Cpl. Daniel Breneman, third platoon weapons squad leader for Alpha Company 1-157 said he is looking forward to training alongside the Kazakh soldiers.

“I have enjoyed meeting the Kazakh people.” said Breneman.

Third Army/ARCENT's role in Steppe Eagle is to provide

military decision-making process training to the Kazakh brigade and battalion staff.

The United Kingdom has played a role in Steppe Eagle since 2003, while the Kazakh government invited Kyrgyzstan and Lithuania to participate in this year's exercise.

“As I look out upon the soldiers in formation I can see that they are ready.” Reedy said. “They are ready to create a bond from common experiences.”

Opportunities like Steppe Eagle help us build trusted relationships and mutual understanding, while allowing Third Army/ARCENT to practice interoperability and continue their mission of shaping the future.



Reedy and Col. John Burke, commander of the 158th maneuver enhancement brigade of the Arizona National Guard stand with Maj. Gen. Mukhan Dusekeyev, Kazakhstan Deputy Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff, during the opening ceremonies of exercise Steppe Eagle here.

# Care in Kazakhstan

Staff Sgt. Scott Linnell, 3rd Medical Deployment Support medical noncommissioned officer in charge for Steppe Eagle, checks a casualty for head injuries as he is being transported to an international clinic.



Photo and Story By Staff Sgt. Mylinda Dourousseau  
Third Army/ARCENT PAO

CAMP ILLISKY, Kazakhstan – How do you get from Valparaiso, Ind., to Camp Illisky, Kazakhstan? Fall in love with a girl.

Staff Sgt. Scott Linnell joined the U.S. Army Reserve in 2001 to impress his girlfriend's family, ten years later he is at Camp Illisky providing medical support for exercise Steppe Eagle.

Steppe Eagle is an annual multi-lateral exercise hosted by the Kazakhstan government and conducted with the participation of troops from the Arizona National Guard, Army Central Command, Colorado National Guard and the Kazakh Peace Keeping Battalion. The first Steppe Eagle joint military exercise was hosted by Kazakhstan in September 2003.

Linnell, the medical noncommissioned officer in charge for Steppe Eagle, came to Illisky as part of a three-man team from the 3rd Medical Deployment Support Command at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, but this isn't his first time here.

Joining the Army Reserve isn't the last thing Linnell did because of a girl.

"I joined and she broke up with me," Linnell said. "I was like, 'Oh my gosh, what did I do?'"

Although he originally joined the military because of a girlfriend, Linnell has continued to serve for a variety of reasons.

"I take a lot of pride in my country," Linnell said. "I'm really grateful to have the opportunity to serve."

As a Reserve Soldier, Linnell has not had the opportunity to work overseas as much as he had hoped, until now.

Linnell first traveled to Illisky in July for an information exchange with the Kazakhstan military. During the exchange Linnell and Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Lewis, a health care specialist with the 3rd MDSC, and Kazakhstan soldiers trained together to improve their combat lifesaver skills.

"Being able to come and work with the Kazakhs the way that we did was definitely a highlight," Linnell said. "Now I get to follow through and see the information exchange we did actually being retained and put to use."

During a medical evacuation exercise at Steppe Eagle, Linnell once again worked with the same Kazakh soldiers he trained with just a few weeks ago. As Linnell and Kazakh soldiers worked together to care for a casualty, he said he was pleased at how well the two nations were working together and that the information exchange did make a difference.

"Staff Sgt. Linnell is very well trained," said Lt. Col. John Johnson, medical consultant for the 3rd MDSC Camp Arifjan Kuwait and medical officer in charge for Steppe Eagle. "He is culturally open-minded, and very respectful to the Kazakhs."

Johnson is here with Linnell and Cpt. James Jammel, assistant officer in charge of clinical operations for 3rd MDSC at Camp Arifjan Kuwait, to provide medical care for the more than 200 U.S. Soldiers participating in Steppe Eagle.

When Linnell first became a Reserve Soldier he was a nuclear, biological and chemical specialist, after four years he transferred to the medical field, once again, because of a girl.

"I had a girlfriend I helped to join [the Army Reserves] and she broke up with me two months before she went to basic training," Linnell said.

Linnell's girlfriend at the time was a nurse and was slotted to become part of the 7218th Medical Support Unit in Louisville, Ky. but when she didn't take the position, Linnell did, driving more than 6 hours from his home near Chicago, to attend monthly drills.

Although the girl is gone Linnell doesn't regret the decision.

"I have the greatest job in the world, taking care of soldiers," Linnell said.

His mission here is medical but the experience goes beyond the clinic.

"What is learned at Steppe Eagle is not just military but interpersonal and international," said Linnell. "[U.S. and Kazakh soldiers] have learned something about a different culture."

It may not have happened the way Linnell originally planned, but he loves what he does; traveling overseas, taking care of soldiers and serving his country.

# Soldier shows devotion in face of tragedy in 2001

Capt. Hubert James Little III, combined operations and information center officer in charge, 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support), has spent the majority of the last two decades serving his country.



Photo and Story By Cpl. Jordan Johnson  
Third Army/ARCENT PAO

9/11. With nothing else being read or spoken, all types of emotions, feelings and memories are evoked. Few events are strong enough to bring an entire country together, yet the nation bonded as one during that faithful September morning in late 2001.

All Americans felt the effect of being attacked, but servicemembers knew they were suddenly fighting a greater fight. For Capt. Hubert James Little III, Sept. 11 re-affirmed his commitment to service.

"I was in the middle of transitioning from the Air Force to becoming an officer in the Army," said Little, a combined operations and information center officer in charge, 3rd Medical Command (Deployment Support) Operational Command Post (Forward).

During his brief break in service while transitioning from the Air Force to the Army, Little was in the midst of waiting for his household goods to be delivered to his new home when he first heard of the attacks.

"I didn't have a TV at the time, but I was able to listen to some of the coverage on the radio," Little said. "After the events unfolded, I called my recruiter to speed up the process."

Despite committing to the Army during a turbulent time in U.S. history, Little was able to stay positive and see the light at the end of the tunnel.

"Being commissioned as an officer offered a great opportunity for me and my family," Little said. "I've always had a very supportive family."

Not even three months after the events of Sept. 11, Little officially became an Army officer. After a tour of duty in Hawaii with the Air Force, Little knew when he'd like to be commissioned in the Army as a 2nd Lieutenant.

"I was commissioned on Dec. 7, 2001," Little said. "I chose the date in memory of Pearl Harbor."

Since his commissioning, Little has spent numerous months outside the U.S., supporting a variety of missions throughout the world. Now on his fourth overseas tour, Little is part of the Third Army team stationed at Camp Arifjan.

"I'm honored and grateful to serve with so many troops coming from various branches of our Armed Forces to support the Third Army mission here," said Little.

Interacting daily with a diverse group of servicemembers gives Little the chance to work with all different ranks. However, he strives to treat all with dignity and respect.

"Capt. Little is a consummate professional who has the welfare of the Soldiers, above and beneath him, as his top priority," said Maj. Morgan Brantley, military intelligence officer, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

Nearing his 19th year serving his country, Little could begin taking the steps necessary to retire from the service. However, he won't soon be turning in his Army Combat Uniforms.

"I love what I do too much to retire," Little said. "I am more committed than ever after seeing the Third Army mission."

Third Army's mission is to be ready tonight, sustain the fight and shape the future of our forces. Little gets a gratifying feeling from his duty.

"I am very appreciative of joining the Third Army team," Little said. "I volunteered for this deployment, and I am very grateful to be here and serve the mission."

As far as plans for this upcoming Sept. 11, Little doesn't have anything set in stone, but says he does plan to honor the day.

"I want to be part of any Sept. 11 events held here," Little said.

On that fateful day in 2001, thousands of people had their lives come to a tragic end. Thousands more will forever remember the Twin Towers, the Pentagon and the field in Pennsylvania. Ten years have passed, two wars were started and hundreds of thousands of brave Americans have signed their name on the dotted line to join the military, but those killed on Sept. 11 will never be forgotten.

"I will never take for granted the lives lost and impact we experienced, and continue to experience, due to that horrific day," said Little.

# Third Army stresses suicide prevention

By Sgt. David Kanavel  
1st TSC PAO

Have you ever felt hopeless? Have you ever felt life doesn't matter and no one would miss you if you were gone? If so, you've experienced possible indicators of suicide.

Research doesn't point to any single catalyst for suicidal thoughts; rather, a series of stressors could all lead to thoughts of harming one's self. Family issues, money, deployments and a loss of a loved one are all possible leads to despair.

"Depression is the number one sign of suicidal tendencies" said Chap. (Col.) Michael Strohm, 1st Sustainment Command (Theater) Command chaplain.

Peers, leaders, friends and family members should all keep their eyes and ears open and look for signs of anguish.

"Look for signs of depression or isolation," Strohm said. "The highs are too high and the lows are too low. The guy who is usually outgoing and loud is now very quiet."

In an effort to help Soldiers, the Army developed the ACE card. The card encouraged servicemembers to ask their battle buddies if they are thinking of harming themselves, care for the troop by removing harmful objects and listening, and escort their peer to get help.

Another important step in preventing suicides is erasing the stigma of only weak Soldiers would seek help. Leadership is encouraged to let their subordinates know that reaching out for help is confidential and will not hinder promotions or evaluations.

"Many people needing help won't seek it," said Col. Jo Grandelli, chief of clinical operations, 3rd Medical Deployment Support Command.

If a Soldier is ever feeling down in the dumps, someone is always available and willing to help. Someone is always willing to help.

"Army One Source has a toll-free number," Grandelli said. "A Soldier can call and there will always be a person on the other end."

One of the Warrior Ethos states "Never leave a fallen comrade." A Soldier can fall upon difficult times back home just as easily as in battle. Every life is valuable, and 1st TSC continues to ensure all Soldiers are prepared to step in and save a life.

One life lost to suicide is one life too many, said Strohm.



U.S. ARMY

# ACE

## Suicide Intervention

# Sept 11. inspired high school graduate to join Navy

Photo and Story By Staff Sgt. Rael Tirado  
Third Army/ARCENT PAO

In 2001, Amber Smith was a senior at Kearney High School in San Diego, and planned to enlist in the Navy after graduation.

On the fateful morning of Sept. 11, she woke up to the breaking news on the attacks and began watching the images on TV with her family. As the high school senior watched the destruction and chaos on the screen, she could not believe what was happening, said Smith, who is now a Petty Officer 3rd Class assigned to the Expeditionary Medical Facility Kuwait.

“Is this real? How can this be happening at this moment of time?” said Smith in disbelief.

Smith was now undecided about her future. Her family knew Sept. 11 was going to change the way of life in America and the lives of our servicemembers.

The following day in school the topic was Sept. 11. The teacher in her government class was a veteran, said Smith.

“He spoke about the history of the events that lead up to the attacks and what this would mean for the future of our military and country,” stated Smith.

Besides Smith, five other students in the class were planning

to enlist in the military. The teacher took time to talk with them and let them know what to expect if they were to join.

“It became real all of sudden,” said Smith. “Before, I was thinking about enlisting in the Navy and sailing around the world. Now, I may go to war and maybe lose my life.”

“It was my father who talked to me about the benefits of the military and opportunities the service has to offer,” mentioned Smith. “He wanted to enlist in the military himself, but never did.”

After graduation, Smith decided to put her plans for the Navy on hold. She enrolled in San Diego City College to study nursing. Many of her friends enlisted in the military. While living in San Diego, she had the chance to interact with a lot of servicemembers.

“I met a lot of people who served in different branches of service and have gone overseas to war,” said Smith. “By talking to them and listening to their experiences, I was able to gauge what my life would be like in the military.”

After a year of college and putting her plans on hold for the military, Smith decided to join the Navy and serve her country.

In Dec. 2003, she enlisted as a Navy Corpsman. It took a year to go through the enlistment process and leave for basic training, she stated.

“I don’t see myself doing anything but medical,” said Smith.

After basic training and schooling, her first duty station was in San Diego. She is now stationed at Camp Lejeune, N.C. and recently deployed to Kuwait this past spring.

She is the only orthopedic technician on camp and is on call 24/7. She sees patients from around the region including those in Iraq and Afghanistan. After the deployment, she plans to continue her college education at North Carolina University.

Smith said she is interested in NCU’s Reserve Officer Training Corps program.

“She has great potential to excel within the Navy,” said Petty Officer 1st Class John Watkins, lead petty officer at EMF-K.

“She contributes fresh ideas that will nurture today’s Navy into the future as the world changes.”

After a few years of service, Smith reflects on 9/11 and what it has meant to her.

“For the younger generation in our country, this was a major event that happened in their lives,” said Smith. “I don’t want people to lose sight on what happened that day. Ten years later, servicemembers are still making the ultimate sacrifice and we must continue to recognize this every day.”

Third Army and the Navy at Camp Arifjan are working together to provide a medical facility for servicemembers in the region. Joint service partnership benefits the region in sustaining the health and welfare of our servicemembers.



Petty Officer 3rd Class Amber Smith, an orthopedic technician assigned to the Expeditionary Medical Facility Kuwait, examines and removes a splint off of Sgt. Gregory Cosby’s finger. When the attacks on 9/11 took place, she was a senior at Kearney High School in San Diego, Calif.

# Suicide Awareness Month



“The suicide of any servicemember or civilian erodes the unity of any organization.”

-Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Juan Crockett ASG-Kuwait Command Chaplain

One suicide is too many. Suicide affects everyone; the individual's family, friends and relatives, the unit, and the community in which that person was a vital and contributing member.

The suicide of any servicemember or civilian erodes the unity of any organization. It adversely affects the spiritual, emotional and psychological dimensions of family and friends, even those who may not have known the individual personally. It hurts the community.

I believe that we can prevent Soldiers from committing suicide. It isn't as difficult as it seems; however, it does take fortitude. That means reaching out, providing a helping hand and hope to others; especially those who may experience trouble or find themselves in a crisis.

Preventing suicide is about caring for others and implementing the Army's seven values, one of which is personal courage. Helping Soldiers is having the personal courage to ask if they are thinking about committing suicide. It is a strange question that feels awkward. As individuals, we must be willing to help and provide hope. This means getting involved.

Whether Soldier or civilian, you can assist one another. You do not need to have training as a counselor, chaplain or mental health professional.

The Army has made it simple. Help can be something as simple as a playing card, the ace of hearts. ACE stands for Ask, Care and Escort.

Life is filled with those who suffer pain, rejection, isolation, depression, fear, persecution and abuse. There have been people who have suffered inhumane treatment, those who faced concentration camps with unbroken spirits and unbowed heads, people who have been devastated by trials and yet found the strength to persevere. With hope, humans can survive the loss of almost anything.

This simple truth gives us comfort and hope in the midst of tough times. “The important thing is not that we can live on hope alone, but that life is not worth living without it,” said Harvey Milk. Let's make a decision to be proactive in encouraging

others. Through our demonstration of encouragement and support, our community will thrive in ways we never imagined. When we encourage others, we encourage ourselves to accomplish the mission.



## Ask your buddy

- Have the courage to ask the question, but stay calm
- Ask the question directly: Are you thinking of killing yourself?

## Care for your buddy

- Calmly control the situation; do not use force; be safe
- Actively listen to show understanding and produce relief
- Remove any means that could be used for self-injury

## Escort your buddy

- Never leave your buddy alone
- Escort to chain of command, Chaplain, behavioral health professional, or primary care provider
- Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

TA - 095 - 0510

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:  
1-800-273-8255 (TALK)

USAPHC <http://phc.amedd.army.mil/>





We are strong,  
We are not afraid,  
We are resilient,  
We are Third Army  
And we will Never  
Forget Sept. 11