

7th Signal Command (Theater)

Spectrum

Fall 2010 • Volume 1, No. 1



**New
Commanding
General**

**Network
Enterprise Center
of the
Year**

**Fort Carson,
Colorado
(Large Post)**



7th Signal Command Spectrum

Fall 2010

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On the Cover



Photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

Network Enterprise Center

Fort Carson, Colorado

John Mayfield (left) and Troy Richmeier inspect a cable pedestal to isolate and tone specific cables for locating and marking for a dig permit. The Fort Carson NEC recently received honors as the 7th Signal Command (Theater) NEC of the Year (Large Post).



7th Signal Command (Theater)
One Team, One Network!



4



6



9

Leverage Your Expertise:

Our Team Provides Network Support from Foxhole to President

Quick Shot: About Our New CG

Brig. Gen. Patterson's career has encompassed a wide range of command and staff positions in the U.S., Korea and Germany, including assignments at the Pentagon and with the United Nations.

He also deployed to Operation Desert Storm, serving as the Signal Officer for 4th Squadron, 7th Cavalry, 3rd Armored Division.

The general graduated from Norfolk State University, receiving his commission as a second lieutenant in the Signal Corps in 1982, and earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Mass Communications.

He also holds a Master of Science Degree in General Administration from Central Michigan University, and a Masters in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College.



BG Patterson

By Brig. Gen. LaWarren V. Patterson
Commanding General
7th Signal Command

It is a privilege and an honor for me to be on the 7th Signal Command team.

As your new Commanding General, I am awed by the breadth, complexity and necessity of our mission to provide, operate and defend the Army's network in the Western Hemisphere as we support a host of special missions and requirements.

While our primary mission resides in CONUS, our diverse team helps provide connections and support from the foxhole at the tactical edge to the President of the United States.

At any given time, members of our team remain deployed from South America to Iraq to Afghanistan.

During my change of command speech I said, "The U.S. is the most technically advanced country with the greatest dependency on computer-based systems and networks, therefore, making it also the most vulnerable nation in the globally connected world."

We are inextricably linked together by networks in almost every aspect of our

lives. We spend much of our time living and operating in cyberspace. It is now the primary vehicle we use to share information and collaborate as we conduct humanitarian, peacekeeping, and combat missions around the globe.

While very useful, convenient and effective, cyberspace is also a very dangerous and dynamic battlefield.

Even though most of us are not directly involved in the kinetic battle, putting steel down-range, all of us are involved in a different engagement called cyber warfare each and every time we connect by computer, Blackberry, cell phone or other electronic devices.

You are all warriors in an asymmetric, non-kinetic type



“You all are active warriors with boots on the ground, fighting an asymmetric battle in which exists real enemies who relentlessly strive to cause harm to our systems, capabilities and nation.”

Brig. Gen. LaWarren V. Patterson
Commanding General
7th Signal Command (Theater)

of warfare with real enemies who can cause us real harm.

As you support the down-range Warfighters, remember you are also in the fight. Remain vigilant because our adversaries are working to exploit any mistake we make.

This is an exciting time for the command, so hang on and keep your head in the fight.

Thank you for your service!

Spectrum is an authorized publication produced by the 7th Signal Command (Theater) Public Affairs Office staff in accordance with AR 360-1 to provide the command with information on people, policies, operations, technical developments, trends and ideas of and about the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army and 7th Signal Command (Theater). The views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the Department of the Army or this command. Send submissions and correspondence to Editor, *Spectrum*, Public Affairs Office, 423 22nd Street, Bldg. 21715, Fort Gordon, Ga., 30905-5832 or to: neil.guillebeau@us.army.mil. For more information, call 912-787-7906.

7th Signal Army CORE Site

<http://www.army.mil/info/organization/unitsandcommandcommandstructure/7thsignal/>
<http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Army-7th-Signal-Command/11882131483088>



Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Washington Army, Air Force Partnership Saves Big Bucks

By Rich Bartel

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Joint Base Lewis-McCord
Public Affairs

An astute Airman on McCord Field and a tech-savvy Army civilian on Lewis Main came up with a winning idea that likely saved Joint Base Lewis-McCord (JBLM) several millions dollars.

Airman 1st Class Eric Tedor and Tim Allman were working on a project that gave Air Force employees computer access to Air Force networks on Lewis Main.

Separate Networks

Conversely, the network would give Army employees on McCord Field access to the Army's network.

Tedor is a 21-year-old computer network technician known as a cyber transport specialist with the 62nd Communications Squadron.

Allman is a network engineer for the Network Enterprise Center, or NEC.

Sure, it seems like a simple problem, until you find out that each military service must use its own proprietary network.

For security and administrative reasons, there is not a way for the military to use a central network.

According to Department of Defense regulations, service networks are separate, so Army and Air Force networks can't commingle.

With the joining of Fort Lewis and McCord Air Force

Base, there is ample reason to ensure all civilian and military leaders can communicate with one another via e-mail and computer.

Fixing the problem looked complex and expensive. One of the primary solutions to the problem on JBLM was to run fiber-optic cable from McCord Field to Lewis Main.



Official U. S. Army photo by Rich Bartel

Airman Eric Tedor (left) and Tim Allman

"We aren't allowed to create an integrated or 'purple' network, one that would combine Army and Air Force," said Air Force 1st Lt. Mica Myers, 62nd Communications Squadron officer in charge of networks and infrastructure.

"So it looked like the only option was to run one from McCord Field to Lewis Main. It was estimated it would cost up to \$13 million to run a fiber-optic network to Lewis Main," she said.

Not only was the price tag high, the major construction project would have taken time and effort. According to Myers, just digging the trench for the cable would have taken several months.

With sharp analysis and creative thinking, Tedor and Allman came up with an inexpensive way to piggy-back the systems - and save

““ This joint effort ensured the solution was accepted and accredited by both services... we are able to save both the Air Force and Army millions of dollars in new infrastructure costs. ””

Heather Robinson
Chief of Services Management
JBLM NEC

said. "With this solution in place, we are able to save both the Air Force and Army millions of dollars in new infrastructure costs."

Tedor explained how the solution saved money.

Efficient Solution

"When we came up with the proposal of a virtual network, or VLAN, it seemed like a best way to proceed," he said. "It was the best use of our time and money.

"We used a VLAN network to extend one network through the other network. It allows us to tunnel the Air Force network through the Army's network without the networks touching each other, which keeps data from each branch isolated.

"In the field, we have a way of incorporating a network within a local area network. We thought this would be a perfect use of that configuration."

With low start-up, maintenance and upkeep costs, the network appears to be an efficient and economical solution for Air Force and Army users on JBLM.

the joint base considerable time and money.

"The NEC worked in coordination with the 62nd Communications Squadron to develop the proposal of this solution that was presented to both the Air Force and the Army," said Heather Robinson, chief of services management, JBLM NEC.

"This joint effort ensured the solution was accepted and accredited by both services and is being implemented on base," Robinson

New General Takes Charge of 7th Signal Command

Network Enterprise Centers Crucial to Army' C4MI Across U.S.

By Neil R. Guillebeau
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Brig. Gen. LaWarren V. Patterson assumed command of 7th Signal Command (Theater) from Brig. Gen. Jennifer L. Napper during a ceremony at Fort Gordon's Barton Parade Field Pavilion Sept. 8.

"Warren is an exceptional visionary, technically one of our best, and a superb leader," said Maj. Gen. Susan Lawrence, former Commanding General (CG) of 9th Signal Command (Army), Fort Huachuca, Ariz., 7th Signal Command's reporting senior.

Patterson reported here after serving as the deputy CG at 9th Signal Command. He has 28 years of experience as an Army officer commanding at all levels.

A Great Gift

"Warren is best known for his ability to masterfully steer through a maze of organizational bureaucracy and overcome institutional resistance to accomplish any mission," said Lawrence.

"His unique qualities guided the 9th Signal Command through a complicated web of transformation while responding to multiple cyber threats to our nation."

Patterson acknowledged the significance of becoming the new CG of 7th Signal.

"I am well aware of the great gift that has been given to me today," he said.

"Command is always a privilege and I am excited today to be joining the 7th Signal family."

The new 7th Signal Command CG also expressed the implication of the challenges facing the command as it operates and defends the Army's network in the Western Hemisphere.

"The U.S. is the most technically advanced country with the greatest dependency on computer-based systems and networks," he said, "therefore, making it also the most vulnerable nations in the globally connected world."

Patterson told the 7th Signal Command team to enjoy their accomplishments, thank their families and catch their breath. "...but just take a moment because the next challenge is right around the corner," he said.

Patterson also acknowledged Napper and her husband Mark's accomplishments during their time at 7th Signal Command.

"I congratulate and commend you and Mark for the admirable job you have done in guiding the unit's mission, for our Soldiers and families, Fort Gordon, the City of Augusta and the surrounding communities. You can be extremely proud," he said.

The general concluded his remarks, emphasized his commitment, and underscored his expectation of the 7th Signal Command team with a quotation from

"I will give you my utmost, I shall expect yours."



Official U. S. Army photo by Marlene Thompson

Catch Your Breath — Brig. Gen. LaWarren V. Patterson, the new Commanding General of 7th Signal Command, speaks during the change of command ceremony. With a quote from General Matthew B. Ridgway, he told the 7th Signal Command team to enjoy their accomplishments, thank their families, and catch their breath. "...but just take a moment because the next challenge is right around the corner."

General Matthew B. Ridgway, commander of United Nations forces in the midst of the Korean conflict.

"I will give you my utmost, I shall expect yours," he said.

Remarkable Job

Brig. Gen. Lawrence also praised Napper for her many accomplishments while serving at 7th Signal Command the past two years.

"Building the 7th Signal Command from the ground up, transforming the NECs (Network Enterprise Centers), establishing baseline and enhanced services and educating customers on a new approach of doing business are all remarkable accomplishments," she said.

NEC teams are instrumental in applying the command's approved Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Information Management (C4IM) services across the CONUS (Continental United States) enterprise network according to Lawrence.

"NECs give customers a much needed and uniform standardization of information technology, which is crucial to the realizations of the Global Network Enterprise," she said.

In farewell to Napper, Lawrence said, "It is no understatement to say that General Napper was just the right person at just the right time to fulfill these roles."

Network Enterprise Center of the Year: Fort Carson

Common Mentality: “We Are Here to Support the Warfighter”

By Neil R. Guillebeau

7th Signal Command
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Family. Teamwork. Mission. Collaboration internally and with customers and peers outside the building. Understanding “we are not perfect.” Focus on the Soldier and Army Civilian team - all necessary for success.

The Network Enterprise Center (NEC) of the Year, Fort Carson, Colo., leaders and workers also know they must manage change as they listen to, and support, their customers.

“Knowing the mission and caring about the people here at Fort Carson is what we believe in and I believe it is one reason why we were selected as the NEC of the Year,” said Shawn Harris, Systems Manager Branch chief at the Fort Carson NEC.

“Exactly, it’s customer service,” confirmed coworker

Ken Brooks, NEC exchange administrator. “We want to try to do what the customer wants to the best standard we can within the guidelines; it matters to us that they get what they want.”

Vicki Craig, NEC Policy and Governance, service level manager, agrees that customer service is a hallmark trait of the NEC team, and that is possible because “we’re family,” she said.

She also believes the NEC is architecturally strong and their tactical services are on target.

“They are in tune to what the Soldiers are doing,” she said.

Maj. Dawn Longwill, S6, 2nd Brigade, Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, said the NEC team provides a host of services to her units when they go downrange or into the field.

“I just can’t say enough good stuff about the tactical support branch,” she said.

“Any time we give them a requirement they program the switches and get them in place ahead of time before we arrive.

“They drive to Pinon Canyon or out to Camp Red Devil, an hour away. They get it out there and they get it up and running for us.”

While she said service and support are not always perfect, they have had

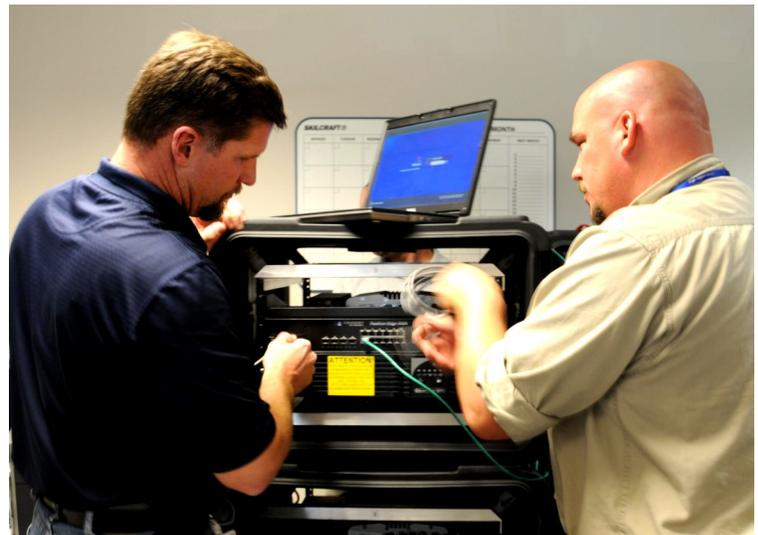
very few problems as long as requirements have been coordinated ahead of time.

“And even when it hasn’t been coordinated as soon as it should have been on my end, they are quick to jump up and make it happen as soon as possible,” the major said.

While she believes the NEC understands the needs of the Soldiers, they serve other

“Working closer with other NECs, talking with customers one-on-one and talking formally and informally with each other in the NEC is key.”

Vicki Craig
Policy & Governance
Service Level Manager
Fort Carson NEC



Official U. S. Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

Monitoring Networks — Ken Codiga (left) and Bruce Long of the Fort Carson’s NEC’s Tactical Support Division work on a tactical stack used by Soldiers during de-

customer well, too.

“They also support all of the civilian offices because we have a lot of civilian support on post,” said Longwill.

That service is in the here and now. Maj. Longwill and workers at the NEC contribute much of their success to vision, planning, collaboration and innovation.

“They had a lot of innovation in the Lean Six Sigma realm and so they were able to utilize that program to improve their processes and

services,” said the major.

Brooks and Craig cite collaboration as a key ingredient of the NEC’s success.

“One thing I’ve seen is communication where the rubber meets the road,” said Brooks. “The NEC admins [systems administrators] are actually calling other admins. They are asking each other, - ‘How are you doing this?’ - That’s good. We have more close communication and collaboration,” he said.

Craig said she believes working closer with other



Official U. S. Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

**Network Enterprise Center,
Fort Carson, Colorado**



Official U. S. Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

Troy Richmeier Cable Locator

NECs, talking with customers one-on-one, which is paying dividends because the comments from some of the customers has been “eye opening,” and talking formally and informally with each other in the NEC is key.

“Hallway conversations are the basis of moving forward,” she said.

“We have our engineering review board where we get IAs [information assurance] and SAs and even the business section involved, and we have a great configuration change process which holds the pieces together.

“But without the hallway conversations, we would be somewhat disjointed.”

On the tactical side of the house, one-on-one and hands on contact unite the NEC with its customers according to Craig.

“We have dedicated folks that help train Soldiers, and we go onsite where they train,” she said.

“They also rotate through our SA branch and get hands

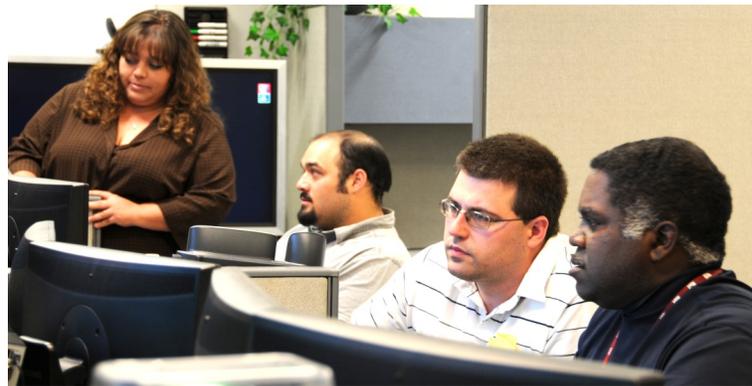
on experience with activating accounts, and other technical and admin support.”

Harris believes vision plays a huge part in the NEC’s success and selection as a NEC of the Year.

“This organization has vision,” he said. “For example, we invested in virtualization ten years ago. There are things we did ten years ago that are making us better today.

“We researched, documented and figured out what will work better not only now but later.”

The NEC’s deputy director, Frank Davis, believes smart, long-term resourcing contributed to the NEC’s consistent improvements and success, but the money, and resources did not come to them automatically.



Official U. S. Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

Monitoring Networks — (left to right) Kristy Schleiker (Operations Center), Andrew Villamarin (Desktop Support Branch), Jason Knepp (Networking & Switch Branch) and J.W. Slone (Server Management Branch) monitor Non-Classified and Classified Protocol Router Networks in the NEC Operations Center at Fort Carson.

“We fight for money and we’re ready with a vetted laundry list for whenever and from wherever funding becomes available.

“We are well resourced, but we have to fight for money just like everybody else.”

He also believes being part of the change process is key.

“We try to be part of things so people can hear our voice, he said. “The only way you can make change is to be part of the change; we try to be involved.”

Being closely involved with customers helps Davis and his team to better understand their needs. While they use information from the automated Interactive Customer Evaluation system, they also put out feelers locally.

“Not through email, that’s non-touchy stuff,” he said. “We want to go out and see the commanders and customers eye-to-eye and ask, ‘Boss, what can we do for you?’”

The NEC team also invites commanders and customers to the NEC, and they provide contact numbers so units can

work is huge here, and it is not unusual for me to have to kick people out of here at night and tell them to go home; they are dedicated to their jobs. We are here to



Official U. S. Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

John Mayfield Transmissions Branch

support the Warfighter.”

With a recent influx of 20,000 people to the Fort Carson area, a military construction program of \$2.8 billion slated through FY15 and the deployments of Carson-based units, the post has huge demands for information technology (IT) according to Col. John Keenan, deputy garrison commander (transformation).

“We are an IT-dependent Army, and the support the NEC provides is crucial,” he said

“The ability of the NEC to support us when we need help, whether it is for one individual system having difficulty or a system-wide improvement on the IT structure for the installation, the NEC has been proactive and responsive to our needs.”

call them when they go downrange to places like Iraq or Afghanistan.

“And we get calls from them, and it’s not always during the normal work day,” said Davis.

“Our folks will stay to help, no questions asked. Team-

Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Washington Network Enterprise Reps Provide Units Face-to Face Service

By Neil R. Guillebeau
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In a faceless world where people routinely communicate with computers and telephones, technicians at the Joint Base Lewis-McCord (JBLM), Washington Network Enterprise Center (NEC) now go face-to-face with customers to establish relationships.

Smiles and handshakes are included as part of their efforts to enhance customer service - they are base line services, provided at no extra charge.

With more than 17,000 customers in units that routinely deploy and redeploy to or from places like Iraq and Afghanistan, keeping their information technology (IT) clients connected and happy was a more decentralized and time-consuming chal-

lenge, especially without a formalized and coordinated customer service process.

"That's the way it used to be," said Barbara Estrella, chief Desktop Services Branch, Desktop Support Division, who also directs the NEC's Network Enterprise Representative or NER program. "Before we used NERs, it was more like putting out fires and now it's

said Vanessa Wentz, an IT specialist and NER.

"During the initial meeting, we also try to understand the unit's IT requirements, needs and wants. Hopefully, the meeting helps us understand the unit's requirements, and they understand exactly what we can do for them so we can have a good hand shake and better team work."

All Tier II technicians also

assistance they need without getting the run-around.

"Having NERs involved early on in the planning phases with units helps make projects go smoothly and with few surprises.

"We've helped units with major exercises, mobilizations, redeployments and prepared units to base other places. Our main projects include deployments because we are mainly a combat installation," said Wentz."

NEC Helps Plan

The NEC team and NERs try to make deployments and redeployments as seamless as possible because they understand units, and people want email, internet, telephone connections and other data support as soon as they return from a deployment.

In this case, they ask the unit's rep to contact their appointed NER 90 days before returning from a deployment.

"An organization's point of contact will contact a NER to start the account management process," said Wentz. "Accounts must be created before they arrive back to JBLM and verifications have to be done on training before the AD [active directory] account can be created."

The people in the rear detachment tell NERs what buildings and rooms returning leadership and Soldiers will occupy. The NEC teams help units make plans, coordinate paperwork and training in advance, setup networking and open port security so



Official Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

Barbara Estrella (left) and Vanessa Wentz

more like fire prevention."

NERs serve as single points of contacts for each unit on the base. The NERs help units coordinate IT requirements for projects or exercises, prepare for deployments or redeployment or help them with routine or emergent requirements.

"We contact each unit's S6 to arrange a meeting with a prospective NER and the appropriate people in their command so we can introduce our point of view, let them know where we are coming from, and help them understand what support we can provide,"

serve as NERs. Each unit at JBLM has a primary and alternate NER to serve as their direct representatives at the NEC. Units communicate with their NERs in advance as much as possible about their situations, such as upcoming requirements, and they discuss requirements that involve the network, telephone, desktop support, imaging, or other IT services.

"We task an individual or a team to tackle each project. It seems to work very well for the NEC and helps keep the complaints down because units can talk to their primary or alternate NER and get the

“The NEC teams help the units make plans, coordinate paperwork and training in advance, setup networking and open port security so people can start plugging in machines and telephones as quickly as possible when they return to the base.”

Vanessa Wentz
IT Specialist & NER
JBLM NEC

people can plug in machines and telephones as quickly as possible when they return to the base according to Wentz.

The NERs help the NEC team better manage a large geographical area with huge training areas according to Amy Ridgeway, the JBLM NEC director, and she believes the whole NEC team is in sync with its customer base at Lewis-McCord.

“I think we do a very good job, but I’m not naïve because I know the NEC has challenges we need to improve upon, but we are working on them as we get better at listening to and responding to our customers,” she said.

One customer, Timothy Alsop, believes the JBLM NEC stands as a mature, respected and well-established technical and customer service organization.

Alsop, the S6 information management officer for the 6th Military Police Group at JBLM, manages units that receive services from more than 20 NECs across the U. S. and overseas.

“As far as being responsive to our needs here and comply-

Bits ‘n Bytes About the Work

Each deployment and redeployments requires the NEC staff to create, disable, delete or manage thousands of accounts and provide assistance for a full range of communication services including email, internet, telephone and data.



Official U. S. Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

Timothy Alsop (left) and Amy Ridgeway

ing with different policies, this NEC has, by far, provided world-class support and complied with more policy and regulatory guidance than any other NEC I’ve ever dealt with,” said Alsop.

Full Range of Services

Ridgeway credits the NER process as one tool that helps her highly trained and experienced staff meet the IT requirements of customers, especially during the joint basing ramp up to Full Operational Capability and the recent large numbers of JBLM deployments and redeployments.

She said the NER process served the NEC and customers well the past 18 months, especially with the high volume of deployments and reintegration of Soldiers returning from Iraq and Afghanistan.

Each deployment and redeployments requires the NEC staff to create, disable, delete, or manage thousands of accounts and provide assistance for a full range of communication services including email, internet,

telephone and data.

“NERs help us be ahead of the units needs and wants by them telling us what it is they need before they get here,” said Estrella. “We try to get all of their comms [communications] taken care of before they step into the building.”

“We also created an AKO [Army Knowledge Online] site for unit reintegration so the downrange units can get information and documents they need to transition back to McCord,” said Wentz.

While NERs mainly provide assistance at the unit level, customer service technicians consider themselves NERs whether they are talking to one customer or working with an assigned unit.

“We are all representatives of the network and the NEC, and we are here to support our customers here at JBLM,” said Estrella.

Reliable Network

“Our vision is simple: Provide and operate a reliable and secure network so units and people can accomplish their missions, whether they are I Corps, the airfield or the garrison,” said Ridgeway.

The NEC is all over great service said customer Col. Arlester Vernon Jr., Headquarters I Corps, assistant chief of staff (G6).

“Their leaders have the background and experience to understand the sense of urgency associated with what they do.

They understand that the NEC is here for the customer, and they have excellent folks taking care of business. Their heads are in the right place.”



Official U. S. Army photo by Neil R. Guillebeau

NEC JBLM Lewis-McCord, Washington

Army Moving to Enterprise Email

7th Signal Command (Theater)

Migration begins in February 2011

During 2011, Army email users will transition to an Enterprise Email service managed by the Defense Information Systems Agency. Instead of accessing email through local email servers at each installation, users will reach through the network to access email services from DoD data centers. This new approach provides significant capability improvements for email users.

Benefits of Enterprise Email

- **4 gigabytes** of on-line email storage – **40 times** the current 100 megabyte limit, at no additional cost
- **500 megabyte** webmail accounts for those who don't normally use Army email to perform their duties
- **Better webmail** interface with the look and feel of Microsoft Outlook
- **Access** to email from anywhere, at any time, from any authorized device
- **Share** individual, organizational, and resource **calendars** across the enterprise
- **Find email addresses** and contact information for Army and DoD email users at other locations **across DoD**
- **Keep your email account active** during PCS moves and unit relocations

Migration

- All current email and calendar data will be transferred to your Enterprise Email account. No data will be lost during the migration.
- Migration will be performed installation by installation. The schedule is still under development and will be published IAW an Army level OPOD. The intent is for all Army email users worldwide to migrate to Enterprise Email by 30 Sep 2011.
- Local Network Enterprise Center personnel will guide the migration process and help email users prepare during the weeks prior to migration.

Questions or Concerns? Contact your local NEC Support Team to learn more as program details are developed. An Enterprise Email FAQ website will be available soon. More to follow!



SOLDIER PROFILE

Staff Sergeant Garrett Grubb

Years In Army: 7

Hometown: Queens, New York

Family: Married, three children

MOS: Network Systems Operator/Maintainer

Job: Team Chief

7th Signal Organization: South-Theater Network Operations and Security Center
Fort Gordon, Georgia

Enjoyment: Family, collecting exotic fish, coaching youth football

“My two basic responsibilities will always be uppermost in my mind — accomplishment of my mission and the welfare of my Soldiers... I will always place their needs above my own...”

These words from the Non-Commissioned Officers Creed frame Staff Sergeant Garrett Grubb’s Army walk; this sacred creed is not just cheap or idle talk to him.

When Grubb was up for orders to a new duty station, his Soldiers, about to deploy to Iraq, asked him to go with them. He obliged.

Instead of transferring to a new duty station, he went downrange with his team for a 15 month deployment “because they asked me to go with them and bring them home,” he said.

What does he like about the Army? Discipline. Cohesiveness. Family, on and off the job.

“The Army gives you a job that you can feel good about when you look at yourself in the mirror,” said Grubb. “It’s not just about helping yourself, it’s about helping Soldiers and others.”



**Story & Photos By
Neil R. Guillebeau**



Off the Beaten

Q Army life can be hard — really hard! Long or repeated deployments to hostile and dangerous areas such as Iraq and Afghanistan or working late on post can take toll on mind, body and soul. Families, too, feel the burden when their Soldier or Army civilian departs for the tactical edge or stays late at work.

Wives, husbands and others who remain behind assume roles as both mom and dad, or live without their partner, friend or family member for 12, 16 or more months in a row. Children miss their deployed moms and dads at birthdays, ball games and holidays. Long months can seem like eternity for a youngster. While the young ones fall asleep and wait, visions of them can help to remind us why we serve.

Mission. Security. Safety. Service to America and freedom-loving people. An opportunity to help people reach a better quality of life in war-torn areas. A chance to prove that goodwill can prevail over tragedy and evil.

In contrast to the challenging side of Army life — at every post, camp and station across America and around the world — another part of Army life reveals itself outside the gate: a mountain peak, a seaside beach, a dusty dirt road, running salmon, a hunting lodge, or simply a park in which to swing your kid. These are the places where the pace of deployments or long work hours live in the past, at least temporarily.

While Army life can be hard, it also takes us to places resplendent with history, charm, beauty and tranquility. These are places for sharing or just being ourselves again. Keep your head in the right place with work and take time to renew by spending time with yourself or loved ones... **Off the Beaten Path.**

Path

Story & Photos By
Neil R. Guillebeau



Eleven Mile Canyon - Pike National Forest, Colorado



Puget Sound, Washington Gig Harbor area