

# lay cheer to **Geon orphanage**

By Spc. Daniel Okada  
1st Sig. Bde. PAO

Members of the 41st Signal Battalion returned to the Geon Christian Children's Home in December for a day of holiday festivities with children. Although such trips have been regular occurrences in the past for the 41st, Battalion commander Lt. Col. Darin Talkington, expressed the importance of maintaining the long-standing relationship between the Geon orphanage and the 41st. He hopes that through continued participation within the Korean community and service through organizations such as the Geon Orphanage, that strong United States Forces Korea / Republic of Korea relations can continue to be maintained.

Talkington was joined by soldiers of all ranks and Korean Augmentees to the U.S. Army from the 41st during the day of activities. While there, volunteers provided hands-on clean up of the facilities and grounds followed by an outdoor barbeque for the children of Geon. During the barbeque, members of the 41st engaged in a friendly game of soccer with several of the young aspiring soccer players residing at the orphanage.

Following the outdoor activities, the events were shifted indoors within the Geon chapel where the children performed a traditional Korean fan dance in full Hanbok dress, complemented by various musical performances. After the children completed their performances, the members of the 41st had the opportunity to spend some one-on-one time with each of the children. Kook Ja Park, director of the Geon Children's Home had multiple activities coordinated, which included making ornate Christmas cards, folding origami and even making balloon animals for the children. Although everyone had the chance to participate, the children appeared genuinely happy to have the members of the 41st help them with the activities. As a conclusion to the holiday festivities, the Geon coordinators had prepared a huge banner for everyone present to sign and print their

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*The Geon Orphanage performed a well-played  
costumes for the soldiers of the 41st Signal Bn.*



*Pfc. Kim, Min Hyuk, HHD, 41st Signal Bn., played a spirited game of soccer with  
several enthusiastic children from the Geon Orphanage .*

# 307th soldiers share Thanksgiving with area orphanage children

Story and photo by Sgt. Sarah Maxwell  
1st Sig. Bde. PAO

Through tensions during the holidays, soldiers still showed their foreign hosts what gracious guests they can be. The soldiers and leadership of the 304th Signal Battalion, 1st Signal Brigade at Camp Colbern reached beyond cultural differences and into the young lives of the Myung Jin Orphanage from East Seoul. Ranging from 3 years old to high school ages, the unit invited more than 70 children from the orphanage to play sports, have fun and get to know the U.S. and Korean soldiers Nov. 27th. With warm holiday spirits, there were enough soldiers who volunteered their

time to make it almost one child per servicemember.

Language and culture were no barrier for this communion of friendship and goodwill between the two groups.

Showing an evident ease and comfort with each other, Pfc. Richard Deprima, Company C, ran around the gym with his young playmate. The 5-year-old child screeched with joy as they tumbled to the ground and playfully wrestled on the mats.

“I think he’s having a blast so far,” Deprima said with sweat on his brow and catching his breath but watching his little buddy attentively. “It’s been pretty fun. He wants to run around and try everything. I’m just trying to keep up with him.”

While the gymnasium was alive with the energy of the younger children, second graders were playing dodge ball and the junior high and high schoolers were having an active game of soccer. The high school young ladies were entertained in the recreation center.

The experience gave the soldiers and the orphans’ family, if only for one day. And with the holidays, for some soldiers, it’s just what they need to make the season better while they’re away from home.

“We don’t get any-

time to spend with kids like we would if we were with our families. So, this is not only important for them, but also for us,” Deprima said. “This is different for us because it’s something we’re not getting here, but we’d be getting at home.”

According to the Battalion and Installation Chaplain (Capt.) Dwight Croy, who administers the 304th Sig. Bat. Commander Lt. Col. John Holwick’s program with the orphanage, the servicemembers have been involved with the orphanage for five years.

They not only invite the orphans to the installation, but they visit the children at their home too. Clothes and money are also given to the children not only during the holidays but throughout the year, he said.

“These soldiers share the best that they have with the children,” said Croy.

With the high operation tempo of keeping the communication systems going full swing, the soldiers are in and out of the field on a constant basis, said Croy.

“They’re usually busy getting this or that ready for the field,” he said. “It’s nice to see them take the time out and investing half their day with these kids.”

Although it’s a small step toward better communication between the soldiers and their community. According to Croy, it’s the small things that matter. “These soldiers are having an impact on the world by introducing and influencing these children,” he said. “It’s like I say in Chapel. You change the world one person at a time.”



*Pfc. Monica Vasquez, HHC, 304th Sig. Bn. takes a moment from playing to brush back her orphan playmate’s hair.*

# Thanksgiving Gala brings HHC soldiers, leaders together

By 2nd Lt. Patrick Clary  
HHC, 1st Sig. Bde.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Signal Brigade continued its tradition of celebrating Thanksgiving Nov. 14 with the soldiers by holding a Thanksgiving Gala in the Naija Ballroom at the Dragon Hill Lodge.

HHC commander Capt. Cenethea Harraway kicked off the evening by welcoming more than 200 people in attendance. She emphasized the meaning of Thanksgiving and taking the time to fellowship together since most soldiers are away from their loved ones. She also reflected over the tragic events of Sept. 11 and how it affected our nation. Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Alan Henderickson followed with the invocation.

Then, the moment came that everyone had been waiting for -- the Thanksgiving feast. The dinner included a hearty feast consisting of traditional American fare, such as turkey and stuffing, ham, sweet potatoes and more -- not to forget the traditional Korean dishes, such as rice and kimchi.

The entertainment festivities of the night started with a slide show presentation displaying the feats of the HHC Hurricane's, such as the change of command ceremony, company flag football team and company training. The evening was also graced with the presence of the Eighth Army Band jazz combo whose musicians played continuously throughout the night. Chief Warrant Officer Elliot Skillern performed a standup comedy act, and as a special treat, brought along his friend, Nick Lewis, who has performed on HBO's Def Comedy Jam.

The 1st Sig. Brigade Commander Col. Ronald M. Bouchard was the guest speaker for the evening. He shared his message with the group and reemphasized the meaning of Thanksgiving and the reasons why we, as American soldiers, should be thankful for many things, especially family and friends.

Appreciation was felt throughout the evening. Sgt. Lee, Tae Ho from training, HHC, 1st Sig. Bde. said, "The food was excellent! I really liked the fact that First Sergeant Flynn came around and shook hands with every soldier and passed out meal coupons and phone cards."

Sgt. Yolanda L. Chaney, training, HHC, 1st Sig. Bde. reinforced his comment and said, "The Gala was an excellent event which brought the soldiers together and promoted esprit de corps."



Courtesy photo

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, the officers, warrant officers, senior noncommissioned officers, and civilians sponsored all the junior enlisted to include all of the KATUSAs in the company. Their generosity, raffles and donations from many organizations throughout the community made it relatively easy to conduct an event that is just a part of taking care of our soldiers.

The evening festivities concluded with Harraway pulling the winning raffle ticket for a brand new Sony DVD player. Congratulations to Sgt. Maj. Robert Evans, communications.

The command team said they were thankful for everyone's generous support in continuing a time-honored tradition.

Sgt. 1st Class James Farley compared his experience at the gala to other military social events, "In all my time in the Army, the Gala was probably the nicest event that I have attended."

# Californian greetings for soldiers spread throughout Yongsan

By 1st Lt. Ericka M. Brooks  
362nd Sig. Co.

As the spouses and senior leadership of the 41st Signal Battalion gathered to make their annual holiday goodie bags for their soldiers, they received an unexpected gift, a huge box of handmade cards.

Under the guidance of Sharon Brooks, a high school art teacher at Quartz Hill High School, Quartz Hill, California, the Rebels of Quartz Hill High School and a second grade class at Rosamond Elementary School, Rosamond, Cali., created more than 1,500 holiday cards and sent them to the 41st.

The effort and caring of those students was evident in the carefully designed and decorated cards. Some students spent hours making the perfect card, while others spent that same amount of time making many different cards.

They made cards for all three major celebrations, Kwanzaa, Hanukkah, and Christmas based on each child's preference.

Some also wrote cards in their native language or in one of their language classes.

Regardless of the major holiday event they addressed, each card had the same underlying themes of "thank you for protecting us" and "hope you can come home soon" expressed in multiple languages.

Brooks stated that she was thrilled by the amount of support she received.

"It was after Sept. 11 and I realized how much

the armed services do protecting us from evil, and they needed to know that we appreciate it," she said.

"You are our first line and defense and we appreciate what you are doing."

This was just one way that she and others with the same viewpoint could express their thanks.

Since the 41st has approximately 500 soldiers, the extra cards were given to other units to include the 304th Signal Battalion, 2nd Infantry Division staff, Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Sig. Brigade, soldiers in the hospital, and they were also taken to church groups.

Some cards were even put on display at Starbucks on post.

1st Sig. Bde. Commander Col. Ronald M. Bouchard and his 12-year-old son handed the rest of them out to soldiers having holiday chow at the Dining Facility.



*Capt. Charmaine Valmonte, Commander, HHD, 41st Signal battalion, gives a Holiday gift bag to Spc. Aminis Williams. The bag contains cookies made by 41st Sig. Bn. wives and Christmas Cards made by students at Quartz Hills High School in Antelope Valley, California.*

# ALOC to the field, trains to succeed

By Sgt. Debora Colligan  
1st Sig. Bde. PAO

For the first time since 1996, the Administrative Logistics Operation Center for 1st Signal Brigade took to the field for Warrior storm Exercise with one goal in mind, to establish their deployability.

“As a signal brigade our mission is to deploy tactically,” said Col. Michael Brown, deputy commander, 1st Sig. Bde.

“We met our objectives,” said Sgt. Maj. Julio Carrasquillo, logistics, 1st Sig. Bde. “We needed to get down here, setup and operate the ALOC, and establish communication. Now with confidence we can establish a priority of work.”

The training was developed to determine how the ALOC could setup in a tactical environment. Even though this was their first deployment, the unit conducted training prior to the deployment, preparing for the exercise, leading to its success, according to Capt. Cenethea R. Harraway, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Sig. Bde.

“All the soldiers worked together and setup together,” Harraway said.

The training exercise began at 4:30 a.m. Nov. 18. After an accountability formation, soldiers proceeded to conduct the final upload of equipment and vehicle preliminary maintenance preparing for a roll out.

According to HHC 1st Sgt. James Flynn, this roll out was no exception to the previous three the company conducted -- it was also a success. Once the 15



Photo by 1st Sig. Bde. PAO

vehicle convoy reached Camp Carroll, the soldiers set up the ALOC, sleeping tents, camouflage nets and heading system.

“Soldiers were able to conduct training they don’t normally conduct,” said Maj. Leonard Staples, personnel, 1st Sig. Bde. “Now they can relate to the challenges in the field.”

But, they did face challenges. The heaters and communication were some of the areas mentioned by the ALOC staff that needed improvement.

But together as a team the staff was able to work to complete their mission.

“Soldiers were willing to work and their adaptability were some of our strengths,” Flynn said.

“We had great on-site support by 307th Signal Battalion,” Harraway said.

Feeling proud of their accomplishment, but now experienced, the ALOC completed what will now become a yearly training for the unit.

“This was a worth-while venture,” said Chief Warrant Officer Elliot Skillern. “We can see that the training that’s kept the soldiers away from the office was worth it.”

Still, the planning and development of the exercise prior to deployment allowed for the deployment to be a success.

“We can now establish a priority of work,” Carrasquillo said. “This exercise helped highlight the changes and implementations to our Standard Operating Procedures.”



Photo by 1st Sig. Bde. PAO

*Soldiers worked to provide communication to the unit.*

# OPD focuses on history, future of military operations in ROK

By Spc. Daniel Okada  
1st Sig. Bde. PAO

The officers of the 1st Signal Brigade had a unique opportunity to see a ground level view of battle sites from the Korean War as a part of the Officer Professional Development program.

The OPD program was initiated by Col. Ronald M. Bouchard, brigade commander, as a means to enhance the professional development of the 1st Sig's officers.

The Chorowon outing covered a broader view of the Korean theater, "to give everybody an understanding of the peninsula's history and get them on the ground and see the terrain that soldiers have fought on (in the past) and could potentially fight on in the near future," said Maj. Ronald Martin, brigade intelligence officer and coordinator for the event.

"It's really designed to help further our skills and give us a better understanding of where we're at, what we're here for, and what our mission is," he added.

The trip began at Yongsan and progressed directly to the 38th Parallel, which was the pre-war border between the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea immediately after the conclusion of the Pacific War.

Following the signing of the armistice, the border between North and South Korea was redrawn along today's Demilitarized Zone as determined by the current battle lines between the DPRK and the US/ROK combined forces.



Photo by Spc. Daniel Okada

*Col. Ronald M. Bouchard, Commander, 1st Signal Bde. and Lt. Col. Park Mu Chun, of the Republic of Korea Army, ring an Eastern-style Buddhist bell together, signifying hope for a peaceful reunification of North and South Korea.*

In the waning days of the Korean War, both sides were entrenched in fierce fighting for hill-top positions within the "Iron Triangle" between the 38th Parallel and the current DMZ, taking staggering casualties.

Maj. Michael Mansi, 311th Theater Signal Command, commented on the territory the Chorowon outing covered as a former 82nd Airborne Infantry Division soldier, from a tactical standpoint.

He said even by today's standards, with all the modern equipment and weapons available, the battlegrounds toured could be brutal for USFK forces.

Accompanying the Chorowon OPD was Korean War veteran, Cho Park, who provided unique insight as someone who had experienced the war first hand, from a South Korean

point of view.

His perspectives were particularly enlightening in regards to how Koreans at that time viewed the conflict as well as how many view the current circumstances today.

The tour concluded with a stop at Gloster Hill, the site of an epic battle during the Korean War in which the vastly outnumbered "Glorious Glosters" of the 29th Infantry Brigade repelled multiple mass wave assaults by Communist Chinese forces.

"It was very important we got to see and talk about a battle that was critical during the war, which was the battle for Gloster Hill, and have everybody understand the magnitude of the enemy those British soldiers were facing," said Martin.

"I was very pleased with the overall outing."