



INSIDE PEO STRI

NOVEMBER 2008

IN THIS ISSUE

Tips for a Safe Holiday Season for You and Your Family... Page 2

Dated Acquisition Policy Revised to Meet Current Standards... Page 5

Blake, PEO, Receives the 2008 Presidential Rank Award... Page 6

Teach Your Children the Principles of Money Management... Page 7

WORTH REPEATING

“ I have never considered myself anything but a Soldier. I recognize that with this selection, some will view me as a trailblazer, but it’s important that we remember the generations of women whose dedication, commitment and quality of service helped open the doors of opportunity for us today.”

— Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody, who became the first female four-star general in U.S. military history Nov. 14

VOLUME VIII | ISSUE VII



PEO STRI to Exhibit Many Training Devices for the First Time at I/ITSEC

By Kristen Dooley McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

The U.S. Army takes the reins as the lead service for the 2008 Interservice/ Industry Training, Simulation and Education Conference, the world’s largest symposium for military simulation and training professionals. On behalf of the Army, PEO STRI is responsible for fulfilling the role and obligations of the conference’s lead service, which includes providing administrative and logistical support to the conference’s host organization, the National Defense and Industrial Association.

“PEO STRI takes great pride in being the lead service for I/ITSEC as simulation and training are, today more than ever, fulfilling the needs of our Warfighters who are conducting very complex military operations,” said Dr. Jim Blake, program executive officer for PEO STRI.

In addition to providing support to the conference as the lead service, PEO STRI will exhibit a wide array of training systems at the 29th annual I/ITSEC set to take place Dec. 1 through Dec. 4 at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, Fla.

PEO STRI’s exhibits will be displayed in

three locations, Booths 131, 1929 and 3901, on the conference show floor. Booth 131 will house the exhibits from the Project Manager Combined Arms Tactical Trainers, or PM CATT; Booth 1929 will showcase the products from Project Manager Instrumentation, Targets and Threat Simulators, or PM ITTS; and Booth 3901 is PEO STRI’s main booth that will display products and services from Project Managers Training Devices and Constructive Simulation, and Program Manager Field Operations.

Of the 12 training devices on display at the PM CATT booth, five of the systems will be exhibited at I/ITSEC for the first time ever. These systems include the Stryker Mobile Gun System Advanced Gunnery Training System, the Construction Equipment Virtual Trainer Hydraulic Excavator, the Buffalo Route Clearance Trainer, the Shadow Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, and the Close Combat Tactical Trainer–Reconfigurable Vehicle Simulator.

Stryker Mobile Gun System Advanced Gunnery Training System

The Stryker Mobile Gun System Advanced

Continued on page 3

Holiday Safety

By Bill Osborne and Donnette Hart, *PEO STRI Security Office*

With the holiday season quickly approaching, we envision great times and holiday cheer. Family gatherings, joyous laughter and holiday lights all come to mind when thinking of the season ahead. We must also remember to include safety as part of our holiday plans in order to keep the season jolly.

There are many resources online where you can find all of the holiday safety tips to help you through season. You may want to check the American Academy of Pediatrics website, www.aap.org, for tips on keeping small children safe during the holidays. The site includes guidance on "Toy Safety" and "Food Safety" which are certainly important to remember while preparing for the holidays.

Toy Safety

- * To prevent both burns and electrical shock, do not give young children (under age 10) a toy that must be plugged into an electrical outlet. Instead, buy toys that are battery-operated.
- * Children under age three can choke on small parts contained in toys or games. Government regulations specify that toys for children under

age three cannot have parts less than 1 1/4 inches in diameter and 2 1/4 inches long.

- * Children under eight-years-old can choke or suffocate on uninflated or broken balloons. Remove strings and ribbons from toys before giving them to young children.
- * Watch for pull toys with strings that are more than 12 inches in length. They could be a strangulation hazard for babies.

Food Safety

- * Bacteria are often present in raw foods. Fully cook meats and poultry, and thoroughly wash raw vegetables and fruits.
- * Be sure to keep hot liquids and foods away from the edges of counters and tables where they can be easily knocked over by a young child's exploring hands.
- * Wash your hands frequently and make sure your children do the same.
- * Always keep raw foods and cooked foods separately and use separate utensils when preparing them.

- * Always thaw meat in the refrigerator, and never on the countertop.

- * Foods that require refrigeration should never be left at room temperature for more than two hours.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals offers great advice to those of us who love our pets and want to assure that they also have a safe and happy holiday season. Among the things to keep in mind while decorating for the holiday season, the following live plants are harmful to dogs and cats: holly, mistletoe, lilies and poinsettias. You may not know that tree water may cause stomach upset to pets as well since stagnant water is a potential breeding ground for bacteria. So keep your pets and children away from tree water.

Aside from the potential for an upset stomach, another reason to keep your pets away from tree water is of course to keep your tree fresh in order to avoid home fires. The National Fire Protection Association suggests several other ways to keep your home safe from fires during the holidays. Remember to use only flame resistant materials to decorate your tree. Keep candles away from your tree and other home decorations. Never overload extension cords. And of course, be sure to turn off Christmas lights before leaving home or going to bed. For other holiday fire prevention tips, you can go to www.nfpa.org. ■

Gunnery Training System will be fielded April 2009 for the first time to Vilsek, Germany. The training device offers simulation-based instruction for the new gunnery system on the Stryker vehicle.

It provides Stryker Brigade Combat Teams with precision virtual gunnery simulation training for mobile gunnery crews and platoons. It is equipped with a high-fidelity crew station that accurately replicates the gunner and commander positions within the vehicle. The system offers precision and degraded-mode gunnery simulation training as well as real-time control and a monitoring capability for the company commander.

It is equipped with three crew stations linked for platoon training, an after action review capability for playback of exercises using a two-dimensional plan view display and a three-dimensional view of the battlefield.

The training device is scheduled to be fielded to Stryker Brigade Combat Teams at Forts Knox, Lewis and Wainwright, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, Vilsek, Germany, and the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

Construction Equipment Virtual Trainer Hydraulic Excavator

The Construction Equipment Virtual Trainer Hydraulic Excavator was fielded for the very first time Oct. 3 to Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., to train Soldiers the basic principals of operating an engineering vehicle, to include the location and functions of the controls and instruments on an excavator.

The simulator is based on the commercially-available John Deere 200D Excavator Operator Training System, but has been customized to meet Army training requirements. It includes a computer with display station, audio headset, and the excavator's actual hand controllers, foot pedals, and shut-off lever.

These capabilities represent only the first phase of the virtual trainer. As noted by Jim Crabtree, the program's former project director, eventually the training program will offer "high-fidelity, large scale simulators with six degrees-of-freedom motion systems mounted in mobile trailers. They will replicate the form, fit and function of the construction equipment from the operator's seat."

Virtual Route Clearance Trainer – Buffalo Configuration

The Buffalo Virtual Route Clearance Trainer instructs Soldiers how to operate a route clearance vehicle and locate, mark, investigate

and sweep for improvised explosive devices. To do this, the simulator includes 40-inch LCD monitors for a realistic out-the-window view, driver controls for steering, transmission, brake and accelerator, and an engine start and stop push-button, along with many other instruments and controls to create a high-fidelity training experience. The speedometer, tachometer and parking brake are virtually represented.

The Buffalo Route Clearance Trainer is one of multiple simulated vehicles that is part of this training system; other simulated route clearance vehicles fielded by PEO STRI include the RG-31, Husky, and Joint Explosive Ordnance Disposal Rapid Response Vehicle, along with explosive ordinance disposal robots. The simulated vehicles and robots are part of the Route Clearance Training Services contract that provides both classroom and hands-on training.

"The [contract] provides the capability to conduct pre-deployment training on route clearance operations that would not have been possible otherwise due to the lack of tactical vehicles in [the U.S.]," said Fran Fierko, deputy project manager for PEO STRI's Project Manager for Combined Arms Tactical Trainers.

Shadow Crew Trainer

PEO STRI awarded the Shadow Crew Trainer contract July 2008 in support of sustainment training for Army National Guard Shadow platoons in using unmanned aerial vehicles.

The trainer is a mission simulator that provides platoon-level sustainment training for the lightweight, rapidly deployable, short range, airborne reconnaissance device that provides the battlefield commander with a day or night, multi-sensor intelligence collection system.

The effort will consist of up to 41 Shadow Crew Trainer systems, 18 part task trainers, training courseware, integrated logistics support and interactive multimedia instruction.

Close Combat Tactical Trainer – Reconfigurable Vehicle Simulator

The Close Combat Tactical Trainer – Reconfigurable Vehicle Simulator, or CCTT-RVS for short, trains Soldiers in a high-fidelity reconnaissance and convoy environment using a three-dimensional view and accurate weapons systems.

Each training device supports up to five crewmembers: a vehicle commander, a driver, two crewmembers, and a gunner. The design of CCTT-RVS allows crewmembers the opportunity to dismount the vehicle to engage threats and communicate via simulated voice and

digital communications systems that increase the realism of the simulation.

CCTT-RVS, a mobile system contained in an expandable trailer, compliments the traditional combined arms CCTT family with the representation of a wide variety of wheeled vehicles, including multiple variants of the High-Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle and Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck, all equipped with precision small arms simulators.

CCTT-RVS easily integrates with more than 400 CCTT modules in use today or serves as a stand-alone reconnaissance trainer. Integrated training delivers convoy vehicle crew skills supporting the M1 Tank, M2/3 Bradley, Apache attack helicopter, and Bradley Fire Support Vehicle virtual simulators which create an unprecedented training environment in its realism and mission application.

The CCTT-RVS, along with all the products and services being exhibited by PEO STRI at I/ITSEC, will be displayed and demonstrated while the exhibit floor is open at the conference. ■

DON'T MISS THESE I/ITSEC EVENTS!

CONGRESSIONAL MODELING AND SIMULATION CAUCUS

★ Monday, Dec. 1 at 8:30 a.m., Room 414 CD

OPENING CEREMONIES

★ Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 8:30 a.m., Room W320

GENERAL/FLAG OFFICER PANEL

★ Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 10:30 a.m., Room W320

BOOTHS 131, 1929, 3901: PEO STRI EXHIBITS

★ Monday, Dec. 1 from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m.

★ Tuesday, Dec. 2 from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m.

★ Wednesday, Dec. 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

★ Thursday, Dec. 4 from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

BOOTH 3439: WARFIGHTERS' CORNER

★ Monday, Dec. 1 at 2:30 p.m.

★ Tuesday, Dec. 2 at 2 p.m.

★ Wednesday, Dec. 3 at 10:30 a.m.

★ Thursday, Dec. 4 at 11 a.m.



Legal Office Grows to Meet Program Executive Office Requirements

By Kristen Dooley McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

Since November 2007, PEO STRI's legal office has more than doubled in size. Three new attorneys and a new administrative assistant came on board to support the organization's legal demands since becoming an Army contracting activity in February 2007.

The legal staff, once consisting of just Harlan Gottlieb, chief counsel, Laura Cushler, associate counsel, and Beverly Fisher, administrative assistant, has welcomed three new attorneys: Steve Faherty, Erin Delevan and Joe Fratarcangeli.

"The addition of three experienced contract law attorneys has given the PEO STRI legal office the ability to proactively support our clients as they award direct mission and customer-funded requirements," Gottlieb said.

Faherty, who received a law degree and M.B.A. from St. Louis University, began working for STRI in November 2007 as part of the Judge Advocate General's Corps, otherwise known as JAG, on active duty orders. In July 2008, he began working at PEO STRI as a civilian.

"Steve originally came to us as a National Guard Bureau JAG and was able to bring the Guard's perspective and knowledge of their unique requirements," Gottlieb noted.

"In Steve's 'day job' [before coming to STRI], he worked as a senior defense analyst at the Government Accountability Office," Gottlieb said. "Steve's experience gives us a unique ability to have the eyes and ears of a former auditor, which is important because all actions taken in contracting have the potential of being audited."

As a professional with experience in both legal and business positions in both the private and public sectors, Faherty said he enjoys working for PEO STRI because of the support he can provide to the project manager shops and having the chance to "work with many dedicated colleagues."

Like Faherty, Delevan was a JAG prior to accepting a civilian position with PEO STRI. After graduating from law school at the University of Arizona in 2004, she

served on active duty in the legal office at the Contracting Command Korea.

"Erin's work at the Contracting Command Korea gives us an attorney who is attuned to working with the Warfighter on the ground. She has done a lot of work in contingency planning and the unique requirements imposed on our contracts by a foreign nation's sovereignty," Gottlieb said. "She is also a superb researcher and writer which will greatly aid the PEO when we are in protest litigation."

Delevan said she hopes to "contribute a positive, collaborative, team-oriented approach [to the legal office]...by providing timely and useful legal advice [to the organization]."

The last of the new attorneys, Fratarcangeli, came to PEO STRI in August 2008 from the Department of Homeland Security. He graduated law school in 1999 from the University of Pittsburg, and then served on active duty in a number of legal positions at Fort Sam Houston, the Pentagon and the U.S. Army Legal Services Agency.

"Joe's experience at Homeland Security provides us with an outside Department of Defense view," Gottlieb noted. "DHS is at the forefront of defending our nation from terrorist attacks and providing disaster assistance. The DHS contracting efforts have provided Joe, and now us, with new ideas on contracting methods and skills."

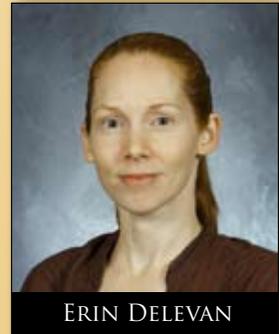
Fratarcangeli said he hopes his professional background will bring to the PEO a "broad range of experience in government contracts."

In addition to the three attorneys, the legal office also has a new administrative assistant. When Fisher recently deployed to Afghanistan with her Air Force unit, Lisa Campbell took over the legal office's administrative roles and responsibilities. When Fisher returns from active duty, she will be a paralegal for PEO STRI.

"The new legal staff allows us to be on the line with our clients. My goal is to have zealous advocacy for our clients in an efficient and timely manner because, after all, our Warfighters will benefit from this," Gottlieb stated. ■



STEVE FAHERTY



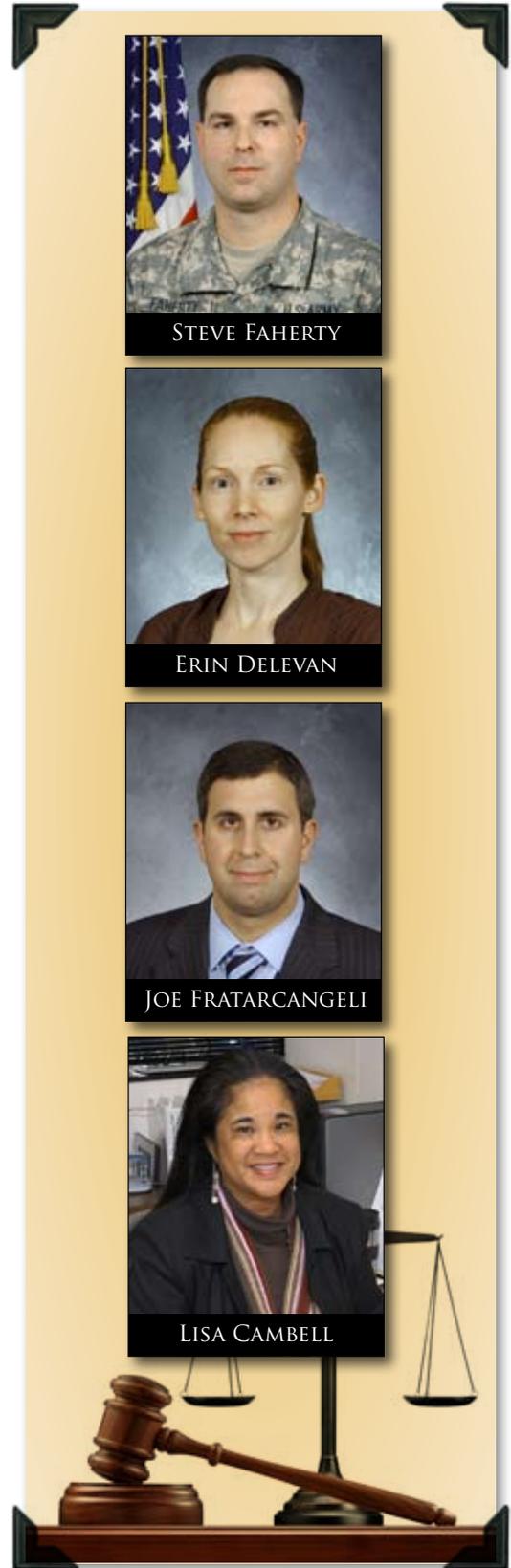
ERIN DELEVAN



JOE FRATARCANGELI



LISA CAMPBELL



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photos

PEO STRI REVISES INTERNAL ACQUISITION POLICY: SOP 70-1

By Doug Smith, PEO STRI Acquisition Management Support Manager

As part of the PEO's strategic plan, a tactical action team was formed to rewrite Standard Operating Procedure 70-1—a document last updated four years ago. Standard Operating Procedure 70-1 helps guide the workforce through the acquisition process by applying the Department of Defense and Army directives and regulations to the work being accomplished by the PEO. The document is important because, as an acquisition organization, PEO STRI must apply acquisition rigor to its programs.

The tactical action team, with representation from each of the project management offices and the corporate information office for information assurance, took on the task of rewriting the standard operating procedure so that it is applicable to the work performed by PEO STRI. The updated plan was approved by the PEO STRI Board of Directors on Sept. 15, 2008.

The majority, more than 90 percent, of PEO STRI's development and procurement work falls in one of the following categories: Acquisition Category III, Non-ACAT, support mission and foreign military sales. The one thing these programs have in common is they are all managed the same way, using the same acquisition rules and requirements.

The remainder of the organization's development and procurement work involves the acquisition of services, efforts, Congressional provisions, and Acquisition Category II programs. PEO STRI also performs sustainment of training and testing devices that have been fielded.

Standard Operating Procedure 70-1 only applies to the acquisition of services and the requirement to prepare the documentation necessary to transition a development or procurement program to sustainment.

PEO STRI has a number of programs that would normally be designated as Acquisition Category III, however the total funds, in fiscal year 2008 constant dollars, do not exceed \$50 million.

With Dr. Blake's approval, the organization has determined that these programs will be classified as Non-ACAT programs. They will be managed just like any Acquisition Category III program with the exception that the project

manager will be the Milestone Decision Authority. If the Project Manager or the PEO prefer to elevate it, a request will be submitted to the Army Acquisition Executive requesting that it be designated as an Acquisition Category III program with the PEO as the Milestone Decision Authority.

The appendices in the standard operating procedure identify the documents that are required for the acquisition programs PEO STRI manages. The first appendix is formatted to cover the majority of the organization's development and procurement workload. The appendix is organized by the program acquisition life-cycle phase.

The second appendix covers the additional documents required for Acquisition Category I, Acquisition Category II and major automated information system programs. These lists of documents come from the Department of Defense and Army sources. Not all of them are applicable to PEO STRI programs, so the project manager is able to prepare a memo with the rationale for not completing a required document, get it signed by the Milestone Decision Authority, and keep it in the project files.

By now, many PEO STRI employees have been introduced to the Program Management Tracking element in the Enterprise Business System. The standard operating procedure requires that all programs and efforts be listed in the Enterprise Business System. In the coming months, the Enterprise Business System will have a release that incorporates dashboards with a red, amber or green assessment of the program data.

Next on the agenda for the tactical action team is the new Department of Defense Instruction 5000.02 that is expected to be signed by the under secretary of defense for Acquisition Technology and Logistics in the near future. There are some changes in the instruction that will impact PEO STRI's Standard Operating Procedure 70-1.

As soon as the new 5000.02 is available, the standard operating procedure will be red-lined with the changes, the tactical action team will review and concur with the changes, the PEO STRI Board of Directors will approve the revised Standard Operating Procedure 70-1

and a new version will be released.

Direct any questions concerning the standard operating procedure to the tactical action team lead, Doug Smith, at 407-384-5300. ■

Information ASSURANCE

Because of data security issues, information assurance has become a very important aspect of any program. If a system connects to a network, it needs to be registered in the Army Portfolio Management Solution and it needs to be certified and accredited. If a system is registered in Army Portfolio Management Solution, then PEO STRI needs to be careful in identifying the system owner. In most cases, the system owner of a support mission program is the customer. The system owner is responsible for ensuring the security of the system, determining the designated accrediting authority and maintaining the data in Army Portfolio Management Solution.



DR. BLAKE WINS HIGHEST CIVIL SERVICE AWARD

By Kristen Dooley McCullough, PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

James T. Blake, Ph.D. (SES)
*Program Executive Officer for
Simulation, Training and Instrumentation*

President George W. Bush recently named Dr. Jim Blake one of the few recipients of the Presidential Rank Award. The highly-coveted award is granted annually by the U.S. government to career Senior Executive Service members and senior career employees.

According to the website of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management, the entity responsible for the federal government's civilian workforce, "the president recognizes and celebrates a small group of career senior executives...with the Presidential Rank Award. Recipients of this prestigious award are strong leaders, professionals and scientists who achieve results and consistently demonstrate strength, integrity, industry and a relentless commitment to excellence in public service."

In total, 353 civilian executive employees were named recipients of the 2008 Presidential Rank Award. There are two categories of rank awards: Distinguished and Meritorious. Blake was nominated for, and received, the Presidential Rank Award for Meritorious executives. This year, 291 other senior government employees were named Meritorious executives, limiting the honor to merely five percent of the entire federal government's Senior Executive Service members and senior career employees. The remaining 61 employees received the Presidential Rank Award for Distinguished executives.

"Winners of the prestigious Presidential Rank Award represent the cream of the crop within the federal executive ranks," Office of

Personnel Management acting director Michael Hager said in a statement announcing the 2008 awards. "Their professional dedication and commitment to excellence is helping to advance President Bush's agenda for enhancing federal government performance and creating a more effective civil service."

Blake was nominated by PEO STRI for leading a workforce of more than 900 employees, obligating more than \$2 billion annually and overseeing the operation of 613,000 training devices worldwide.

According to the organization's nomination packet, "PEO STRI has rapidly grown in size and number of programs, both mission and customer funded, under Dr. Blake's leadership. PEO STRI is widely recognized as the leader in developing and delivering training and testing products and services needed to support our Army at war. Dr. Blake's commitment to our customer—the Warfighter—is unmatched."

From this nomination packet, Blake was evaluated by different citizen panels, and once chosen, his selection for award was approved by President Bush.

Blake, and all the rank award recipients, will receive a cash reward, lapel pin and a signed certificate from the president. ■

Army Promotes First Woman to Four-Star General

By Jacqueline M. Hames, U.S. Army CIO/G-6

Gen. Ann E. Dunwoody became the first female four-star general in the U.S. armed forces at a promotion ceremony Nov. 14 in the Pentagon. "History will no doubt take note of [Dunwoody's] achievement in breaking through this final "brass ceiling" to pin on this fourth star," Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates said during opening remarks. "But she would rather be known and remembered first and foremost as a U.S. Army Soldier."

Gen. George W. Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army, hosted the ceremony, praising Dunwoody as a "premiere logistician." He thanked her for her dedicated

service to the Army, and wished her well.

"What's happening here today is something our Army can celebrate and take pride in," Casey said of her achievement.

Casey and Dunwoody's husband, Craig Brothie, pinned on her new rank amidst applause and an enthusiastic "hooah" from the audience.

The promotion ceremony in the Pentagon auditorium was packed with well-wishers, friends and family. "We invited everyone but the fire marshal," Gates said to the standing-room-only crowd.

"Well, thank you," Dunwoody said with a smile after being promoted. "I

wish I could begin to describe the incredible feelings of gratitude, humility, and love that are absolutely consuming me at this very moment. But it's impossible." ■



U.S. Army Photo

Let's Talk Finance: Teach Your Children Well

By John W. Kirch, PEO STRI Chief Financial Manager

From kindergarten through college, our school systems focus on both basic and specific knowledge to prepare our children for careers. In preparing our children for life, there is a dreadful gap in teaching them how to conduct their lives in a fiscally responsible manner. As parents, we need to fill this gap and use the opportunity to impart our philosophies of how our children should conduct themselves throughout life.

Like it or not, financial matters are a key component of everyday life and we should ensure that our children have the proper tools to avoid the worrisome burdens resulting from poor spending habits, lousy credit and heavy debt.

Look for opportunities to teach your children well in financial matters and you will go a long way to bringing happiness into their lives. Some of the essential skills our children need to learn are balancing a check book, using credit cards, financing cars or homes, understanding the value of credit history and credit scores, managing expenditures, and saving.

The following are some teaching points you can use to start the discussions with your children to encourage them to think about properly managing their money and feeling comfortable in seeking your advice throughout their lives.

Balancing a Check Book

For those of us who have balanced check-books for many years, it seems to be a simple matter of addition and subtraction. For a person who has never had to do it, it is not that simple. They'll have to learn many of the mechanisms we take for granted.

Start with the simplest parts of just recording entries (deposits and checks) and build slowly by showing to add one, subtract the other, and keep a running balance. Build their confidence in mastering that and the other parts will follow naturally. Once they have mastered keeping a running balance updated, teach them to be diligent about recording automatic deductions and any charges from debit cards. Most people run into trouble when they forget they have an automatic deduction coming in a couple of days and they let their balance get below

that amount.

Let them know how overdraft charges occur, how they feed on themselves, and how quickly they add up. Upon receiving a monthly statement, show them how to reconcile their check book to make sure it balances with their statement.

The most important thing to remember is to make it a fun interaction between the parent and child so they feel comfortable with coming to you with questions and problems.

Using Credit Cards

Credit cards have the potential to ruin a person's life. The best habit you can teach a child is not to let the charges on a credit card build up, but to pay it off monthly. If they currently have credit cards with a balance that can not be paid off immediately, lay out a plan to pay it off in a set period of time, such as 12- or 18-months.

The problem most people face is by only paying the minimum required. The average credit card will take 17 years to pay off if they only pay the minimum required every month.

Financing Cars or Homes

Most people will have to incur some long-term debt in their lives when buying a home or a car. Some key pieces of wisdom to share with your children in making long term investments are:

- Identify the difference between your needs and wants.
- Homes increase in value, cars do not.
- You make more profit from buying at a good price than by selling at a good price.
- The old adage is true that the three most important factors in buying a home are "location, location, location."
- Interest rates are very important, but look at the total cost to buy; there are often hidden fees and costs that could be quite hefty.
- Getting a car or home with all the "bells and whistles" will not be that much fun if you cannot afford the monthly payments.

Understanding the Value of Your Credit History and Credit Scores

A good credit score from the three main credit reporting agencies (Equifax, Experian

and TransUnion) will allow you to receive lower interest rates on home loans, car loans, and credit card balances. This can save you hundreds of dollars a month.

Good credit scores are a reflection of paying all of your bills on time and not owing too much on credit. Missing one credit card payment can increase all of your credit card interest rates from 11.9 percent to 24.9 percent within a month.

Having credit card balances that are more than 50 percent of the credit card limit will lower a persons credit scores and more so if they are more than 70 percent.

High credit scores or large amounts owed on credit will reduce what a person can finance for a home or a car and increase the interest rate which will increase the monthly payments.

Managing Expenditures

When your children go out to live on their own, have them record and track every expenditure for the first couple of months. Have them put these into categories of food, utilities, automobile, rent, dining out, insurance, and snacks. It is difficult enough for young people to make ends meet, but what they do not often realize is how terrifically expensive some of their activities are.

Buying one soft drink a day from a vending machine will cost them \$30 a month. Eating one meal a day at a fast food place can cost them \$150 a month. Cutting back one 10 mile drive per day can save them \$60 a month in gasoline. Those three simple areas could save them \$240 a month which is a tremendous amount of money to a young person.

If they track every expenditure they have for a couple of months, they will see just



Continued on page 10



The Higher Education Opportunity Act

By Laura Cushler, *PEO STRI Associate Counsel*

On Aug. 14, 2008, President Bush signed H.R. 4137, the Higher Education Opportunity Act. The Act reauthorizes the Higher Education Act of 1965 for another six years and includes other provisions intended to improve college affordability, access and accountability. The Act includes several provisions that may be of interest to students and their families.

Creates a new website with comprehensive information on college pricing

In an effort to make college costs more transparent to students and their families, the Act directs the Department of Education to create a new user-friendly website that will contain up-to-date information on college pricing, including tuition and fees for the current year, average price after grant aid, recent price increases and changes in per-student spending, among other items. This list will include information for all colleges in the country. The website will also include calculators that students can use to get an early estimate of their expected college costs based on income and family situations, and to estimate the annual and total cost at a particular college.

Encourages colleges to rein in price increases

The Act directs the Department of Education to publish annually the top five percent most expensive colleges in the country, the bottom ten percent least expensive colleges in the country, and the top five percent of colleges with the largest percentage increase in tuition prices over the previous three years. The schools in the last category must then report the reasons for these price increases to the Department of Education.

Simplifies the federal financial aid application process

In an effort to make the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) application less daunting and encourage more families to apply for federal student aid, the Act directs the Department of Education to streamline the FAFSA over the next five years by reducing the number of questions from the current 100-plus questions. The Act also provides a two-page

FAFSA-EZ form for low-income students, and simplifies the FAFSA re-application process. Also, a new calculator will allow students and families to receive estimates of their Expected Family Contribution (EFC) in the years before they officially submit the FAFSA.

Makes textbook costs more manageable

To address the rising costs of textbooks and discourage the practice of “bundling,” in which textbook publishers package books often with expensive supplementary materials like DVDs, CDs, or workbooks, the Act requires college textbook publishers to provide colleges with full price information on both bundled textbooks and unbundled alternatives, which can then be passed on to students. In addition, publishers will be required to sell unbundled versions of every bundled textbook they sell.

Promotes student loan literacy

The Act requires private student loan lenders to first inform students of their federal borrowing options. The Act also mandates that all exit loan counseling be done with the school’s involvement, and ensures that students be informed of all possible repayment options. In addition, the Act requires colleges to fully disclose all relationships with private student loan lenders and makes certain that private lenders to prominently disclose all loan terms and conditions to student borrowers.

Expands the Pell Grant and federal Work-Study program

In an effort to expand access to college, the Act increases the maximum Pell Grant from \$5,800 to \$9,000 per academic year and, for the first time, makes it available year-round. The Act also expands the community service opportunities under the federal Work-Study program.

Increases college aid for veterans and military families

The Act creates a new scholarship program for active military duty personnel and family members, including children and the spouses of active duty military service members or veterans.

Expands loan forgiveness programs

To encourage students to enter vital public service jobs, the Act authorizes up to \$10,000 in loan forgiveness for teachers, nurses, law enforcement officers, firefighters, first responders, military service members, public defenders, prosecutors, and others serving the public interest.

Improves campus disaster readiness plans

The Act creates a National Center for Campus Safety and helps colleges develop and implement state-of-the-art emergency systems and campus safety plans. ■



For more information, see <http://edlabor.house.gov/micro/coaa.shtml>.





“DID YOU VOTE IN THE RECENT PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION? WHY OR WHY NOT?”



“Yes, I did exercise my right to vote in the recent General Election. I utilized the early voting option because I was on travel. I strongly believe that every American citizen has a right to have a say in who represents them in Washington, D.C. Often times, people do not believe their votes counts; I believe they do make a difference. Even the smallest number of people with the same decision can voice their views to candidates who may represent them in the future.”

**Bill Beck,
PM TRADE**

U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub



“I exercised my right to vote in the most recent election. Being able to have a voice in the selection of the leadership that will guide this country into the future is a right that should not be taken lightly and one that is really the responsibility of every American.”

**Sharmila Vaswani,
PM ITTS**

U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub



“Yes, I did vote in the recent General Election. I believe that each vote counts, that we have a duty and a privilege as citizens to make our opinions known, and that the right to vote has been paid for through the blood and sacrifice of all the generations who have gone before us. Freedom is fragile, and voter apathy is a sure way to put our freedom at risk.”

**Bob Kipps,
Acquisition Center**

U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub



“Yes, because voting is not only a moral obligation, but a right that many have died for all of us to have. Freedom without obligation is anarchy. Freedom with obligation is democracy.”

**Kyle Platt,
PM TRADE**

Courtesy Photo

Want your opinion heard? Answer December’s Question! **“What is your favorite winter activity?”** Send your response to Kristen.Dooley@us.army.mil and put Citizen STRI in the subject line.

HOLIDAYS Events

November 27

Thanksgiving Day

December 1-4

ITSEC

December 25

Christmas

January 1

New Year’s Day



By Marge Hadbavny, Protocol Officer

HOSTING A HAPPY TURKEY DINNER PARTY

~Make sure your guests know exactly who is invited. Are children or significant others welcome? Do not be vague. Specify who is invited.

~When planning the menu, do not try to please every person with every dish. Offer a variety of foods for guests who may have special dietary needs.

~Do not spend the entire party serving your guests. If you are inviting 20 or more guests, assign a close friend or family member to be a server and/or bartender.

~Do not feel obligated to serve wine that is handed to you as a guest walks in the door. It may not fit with your menu and you might want to save it for another occasion.

~If something unexpected happens, like the Turkey is not done or someone spills a glass of red wine, do not fret over it. Order take-out or do a quick wipe-up and keep the party going. Also, humor goes a long way! ■

HAPPY THANKSGIVING
from the
PROTOCOL OFFICE!



OPSEC AND THE HOLIDAYS

By Bill Osborne and Donnette Hart, PEO STRI Security Office

OPSEC, short for Operations Security, is the process we use to identify and protect sensitive information from our adversaries. While we primarily use this process at work, we can apply the same methodology to protecting our family and our homes over the upcoming holiday season.

With the hustle and bustle of the holiday season, sometimes we forget about common sense security practices. We have compiled a few reminders that will help keep your holiday a safe and enjoyable one.

PRACTICE OPSEC WHILE SHOPPING. HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS:

🔒 **Using Credit Cards and ATMs.** Be wary of “shoulder surfers – cell phone cameras” as you take out cash from ATMs or pay for items with your credit card. Make sure to put receipts in a safe place or destroy them properly.

🔒 **Carrying large amounts of cash.** If carrying a large amount of cash, keep a portion of the money separate from your wallet in case you get pick pocketed or lose your wallet.

🔒 **Purchasing expensive items.** If you bought so many presents that you have to take a trip to your car to unload your packages so that you can buy more, make sure you place the items in your trunk and out of sight. It's also smart to relocate your vehicle to another parking space just in case someone is watching to take advantage of an easy target.

PRACTICE OPSEC AT HOME. CONSIDER THESE TIPS:

🔒 **Throwing away your garbage.** Boxes from items like jewelry or electronics (such as computers, televisions and similar treasures) left curbside for trash collection provide good indicators to potential burglars about what high value items are located in the household. Break down the boxes, throw them in a bag, or put them out just before trash collection time.

🔒 **Allowing others into your home.** Be alert to public works crews and other personnel requesting access to your residence. Verify their identity before allowing entry to your home.

🔒 **Spotting suspicious vehicles in your community.** Write down the license plate number of suspicious vehicles

and note the description of the occupants. Report suspicious activity to local police.

PRACTICE OPSEC IF TRAVELING OVER THE HOLIDAYS. SOME POINTS TO REMEMBER:

🔒 Be cautious about giving out information regarding family travel plans to those who do not have a need to know.

🔒 Leave your home with a lived-in look. Use timers for lights, TVs, etc.

🔒 Have a neighbor collect your mail and holiday deliveries.

For more holiday crime prevention tips, please go to the National Crime Prevention Council website at www.npcp.org. From the Security Office, we wish you a safe, secure and happy holiday season! ■



Let's Talk Finance... continued from page 7

how much money they spend on unnecessary things and give them a better understanding of where they can save money.

Saving

One of the most important things to teach a young person is to save money. Make sure that whenever they get a pay check, some portion, however small, goes into a savings account.

The savings account should not be used to

save up to buy things, but rather only to be used in case of a dire emergency. Let them know that buying a car is not an emergency, buying the latest video game is not an emergency, and paying off a bill is not an emergency. Those are things they should allow for from their monthly expenditures. Saving is an important mindset that will establish a habit that will make their adulthood and retirement much more secure.

The most important philosophy to remem-

ber in teaching your children about financial matters is to pay bills on time, live within their means, and pay attention to their income and expenditures. By doing these simple things, they will take a lot of the worry and stress out of their entire life and keep hundreds or thousands of extra dollars a month instead of giving it away to lending institutions. By taking time to communicate these things with your children will be a phenomenal gift to them. ■



TEAM ORLANDO IN PICTURES

PEO STRI Employee Becomes 2008 Society of Women Engineers Fellow

By Kristen Dooley McCullough,
PEO STRI Public Affairs Officer

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE) named PEO STRI contracted employee Lisa Bird a 2008 fellow of the society Nov. 7 for her technical acumen, contributions to the profession, dedication to the Society of Women Engineers, and inspiration of future engineers.

“Lisa Bird is an exceptional SWE member and leader,” said Virginia Connolly, SWE president. “She created incredible opportunities for numerous women by founding the SWE section at the University of Missouri, Columbia/Kansas City and helping charter the Central Florida Section.”

While attending the University of Missouri-Columbia/Kansas City, she started the first SWE student section and served as their first president. She encountered the same situation after moving to Orlando, Fla., and finding a section did not exist. Bird once again started a section – the Central Florida Section – where she held various positions, including vice president.

“Lisa Bird has been instrumental in the success of the Central Florida Section and has contributed countless hours at the national level. She embodies all the attributes that distinguish SWE Fellow Members,” said Michele A. Mingoia, SWE fellow life member.

Bird works for the U.S. Army as a SETA contractor with Morgan Research, a Stanley Company in the Customer Support Group. She said she is currently working on one of her most challenging projects. It involves an advanced sensor network for monitoring potential nuclear, biological, chemical and radiological attacks.

Bird holds bachelor degrees in textile science from Kansas State University and electrical engineering from the University of Central Florida, and a master’s degree in business administration from the Crummer Graduate School of Business, Rollins College. ■



Photo courtesy of Lockheed Martin Simulation, Training and Support

Lt. Col. Jack Emerson, product manager for digitized training in Project Manager for Training Devices, briefed the Lockheed Martin Simulation, Training and Support workforce Oct. 15 as part of their Quality Focus Month. As part of the initiative, the organization hosted multiple events that highlighted the importance of quality to the Warfighter.



Credit: U.S. Army Photo/Gil Ramos

PEO STRI employees, Lt. Col. Scott Pulford and Frank Schlemmer (center), received the Order of Saint Maurice award Oct. 3 for their support to the infantry community. Fran Fierko, deputy project manager for Combined Arms Tactical Trainers, presented Pulford and Schlemmer with the award.



Walt's GOLF COLUMN



U.S. Army PEO STRI Photo

With the fifth annual PEO STRI Team Golf Championship right around the corner, the organization's golf ranking official, Walt Pezzolo, weighs in on this year's top players:

Once again, Dr. Jim Blake has distanced himself—like Tiger Woods—at the top of the rankings. The next nine positions, however, are extremely close with most spots separated by less than one one-hundredths of a percentage point.

With Dusty Woodlee, last year's second ranked player, departing, Don Stewart takes over the number two spot, but barely edging out Roger Weber. Stewart's first place finish for the Army in the 2008 Army-Navy Golf Championship sealed his number two ranking.

In addition to Stewart, other golfers, namely Mike Landers and Jeff Goodman, made bold moves up the rankings after strong finishes in the 2008 Army-Navy Golf Championship. ■

2008 PEO STRI Golf Rankings

1. Dr. Jim Blake
2. Don Stewart
3. Roger Weber
4. Jim Newkirk
5. Claude Abate
6. Maj. Marc Dorrer
7. Mike Landers
8. Jeff Goodman
9. Carol Murphy
10. Col. Ken Wheeler

Honorable Mentions:

Jim Godwin, Mark Russell, Mike Garretson, Rodney Joyner and Jeff Simons.

For information about the calculation of rankings, please contact Walt Pezzolo at 407-384-3515.



Hails and Farewells

Hails

Michael Adorno	Acq. Center
Diep Chi Arend	PSG
James Brenner	PSG
Tariq Choudry	Acq. Center
Nicole Coeyman	PSG
Amanda Cole	PM ITTS
James Easley	Acq. Center
John Ebanks	Acq. Center
MAJ Dererick Giles	PM CATT
Kathryn Gonzales	Acq. Center
MAJ Jon Haveron	PM ConSim
Armando Hernandez	PSG
William Jordan	PM ITTS
Benjamin Little	PSG
Janet Maldonado	Acq. Center
Timothy McNelly	PM ITTS
John Mendes	PM ITTS
Keith Nielsen	PSG
Aida Osmani	Acq. Center
Terry Pertab	PM CATT
Tien Pham	PSG
Donald Phillips	Acq. Center
Clyde Shreve	Acq. Center
Carol Stewart	Acq. Center
Lesley Sullivan	Acq. Center
Tom Truong	PSG

Farewells

Ronnie Conn	PM ITTS
Melissa Cossentino	Acq. Center
Kim Denver	Acq. Center
Alberto Garcia, Jr.	PM ITTS
Jorge Herrera	PM ITTS
Glenda Jense	PM ITTS
MAJ Vernon Myers	PM CATT
Robert Noelke	PM ITTS
Sean Palmer	Acq. Center
Ramanathan Ramaswamy	PSG
Jorge Rivera-Moner	PM TRADE
Trudy Ryan	PSG
Oakie Williams	CIO



INSIDE PEO STRI

Inside STRI is an authorized publication for military and civilian members of the U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, Orlando, Fla. 32826. Inside STRI is published under the authority of AR 360-1 and applies the Associated Press Stylebook industry standard.

Contents of Inside STRI are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or PEO STRI.

Editorial material for publication should be submitted to PEO STRI Public Affairs Office, 12350 Research Parkway, Orlando, Fla. 32826. The PAO reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication.

For more information about PEO STRI or to view Inside STRI online, visit our Web site at www.peostri.army.mil

Editor:

Kristen Dooley McCullough
Editor-in-Chief
kristen.dooley@us.army.mil

Design:

Dwain Fletcher Co.
CGgraphics@us.army.mil

SAVE THE DATE!

PEO STRI'S TEAM GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP

TUESDAY
DECEMBER 23, 2008

STONEBROOK EAST GOLF COURSE, COST \$35, SHOTGUN START AT 8:30 A.M.

R.S.V.P. to Walt Pezzolo at 407-384-3515

