

Tooele welcomes Golden Cargo 2011 Exercise

By Kathy Anderson

Tooele Army Depot Public Affairs

Reservists from various states in the Midwest arrived at Tooele Army Depot in June for their annual conventional ammunition, Golden Cargo exercise sponsored by the U.S. Army Joint Munitions Command.

Golden Cargo is a national military exercise which trains Army Reserves, Army National Guard and active Army Combat Service Support (ACSS) personnel in ammunition transportation.

Reservists were stationed at Tooele Army Depot for two weeks, which started June 25. They were here for hands-on training to prepare many of them for real world future deployments.

Operation "Golden Cargo," provided approximately 120 soldiers the opportunity to learn how to load and transport conventional ammunition in a convoy structure to Hawthorne, Nev.

"Golden Cargo gives us the opportunity to take all the things we learn and put it to work," said Lt. Col. John Hahn, taskforce commander, 457th Transportation Company Battalion, Fort Snelling, Minn.

For the two weeks the soldiers were stationed at the depot, they stayed in the depot's three remaining World War II military barracks.

"For a lot of the soldiers, this was their first time out west," Hahn said. From a flat landscape to a mountain area, the soldiers adjusted to various situations; elevation, weather and long distance driving conditions.

The mission of this year's Golden Cargo was to convoy 86 containers, using military vehicles. Approximately 1,015 tons of conventional ammunition was moved from Tooele Army Depot, Utah, to Hawthorne, Nev.

"Some soldiers were not very familiar with the new 14-ton Line Haul Tractor trucks or have never driven these trucks used for the convoy and the geographic conditions in this exercise," Hahn said.

The response from the soldiers regarding the new military trucks was very positive.

The military convoy of 15 trucks traveled on an average of 55 miles per hour, 503 miles per day.

"There is no better place for the soldiers to get real-world mission training and they got to work alongside civilian employees who have already been trained and have been doing this mission for over 50 years," said William Smith, Chief Logistics Support Maintenance and Demil Division, Tooele Army Depot.

Since 1991, Golden Cargo participants have safely trucked over 275,000 tons of conventional ammunition and traveled over 18-million miles on public highways.