



Published for Soldiers, staff and families of the Seattle Recruiting Battalion

# Swooping in | Recruiters, WNBA star team up for youth fitness



Photo by Michael Tuttle

Sgt. John Thompson, Tukwila Station, and WNBA star Sheryl Swoopes ensure that these Hazen High School students do an abdominal exercise correctly during a fitness presentation at the school in January. Swoopes joined Seattle Company recruiters for two high school presentations to promote physical fitness and stem the growing epidemic of childhood obesity. See the full story on page 4.

## Introducing the new Seattle Battalion Logo

### ***BLAZ'N THE NORTHWEST***

Developed by:

NCO of the Year Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Forsythe

Recruiter of the Year Sgt. 1st Class Scott Yochum

Soldier of the Year Staff Sgt. Michael Crosby



# COMMAND CORNER

## Wellness stand-down feedback

Good news forthcoming. As you're well aware, the battalion conducted a well being stand-down training session on February 13th. The intent of the session: improve the command management of the organization through effective leadership, focused training, timely planning and astute caring. During the session, we affirmed good aspects of our operation and discovered other aspects that will require improvement.

Leaders and Soldiers across the command feel that we continue to improve the quality of life for the battalion. I ask that each Soldier, civilian, contractor and family member take the time to both communicate our



**Lt. Col. Andrew Oakes**  
Seattle Bn. Commander

“Leaders and Soldiers across the command feel that we continue to improve the quality of life for the battalion.”

**Lt. Col. Andrew Oakes**

outstanding success and to enjoy time off to the fullest extent. Our command and the people in this organization are

extraordinary!

To continue to ensure that information regarding recruiting operations and predictability make it all the way to your homes, Command Sgt. Maj. Lynch, Command Sgt. Maj (Ret.) Benedictus and I ask you to correspondence with us regarding any command incentives, initiatives or

calendar events that you have interest in or want more information about. Everyone continues to make a positive difference to make our organization one of the best to serve in Army-wide!

Thanks for your personal efforts to keep our Army Strong and to improve the command climate of our organization. It is an honor and privilege to serve with you. I appreciate everything you do and look forward to seeing you all in the near future.

Sincerely,  
Lieutenant Colonel Oakes

## Accomplishments abound

### Dear Families, Friends, and Soldiers of Seattle Recruiting Battalion,

It is a pleasure to tell you how much the Soldiers, Civilians and Families of this organization accomplished since fiscal year 2009 started.

Month after month the battalion moves forward with superb accomplishments. During February, we achieved 100% enlistments for Regular Army and U.S. Army Reserve; the first time since 2001!

For recruiting phase-line March, we achieved over 100% which helped us close out 2nd quarter over 100% RA and AR.

These accomplishments reflect your dedication and the effort of every Soldier, contracted recruiter, civilian and family member.

We continue to strive to improve the operating environment and command climate of our organization.

If you're one of the many spouses that received a time-off letter on behalf of your Soldier, good-on-you and congratulations!

I feel that you earned those days just as much as your Soldier as you've worked tirelessly to take care of many other aspects of everyday life - maintaining the home, helping the children, and in many cases, work a job and career yourselves.

The battalion finished Phase Line



**Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Lynch**  
Seattle Bn. Command Sergeant Major

April at 106% RA and 117% AR. We finished number 7 in U.S. Army Recruiting Command for April.

Olympia Company was ranked #1 in brigade for RA/AR and combined and #3 in USAREC for April.

Congratulations to Tacoma Mall and Fairbanks Recruiters for their win in the Super March Madness competition. You will be in the Trailblazer Hall of Fame.

We are proud to serve with and for all of you.

Thank you for all your efforts, friendship and teamwork.

Michael J. Lynch  
Command Sergeant Major

# Army plans to reduce stop-loss

**Lt. Col. George Wright**  
**OCPA Media Relations**

The Army announced March 18 that Soldiers affected by “Stop-Loss” will begin receiving \$500 per month soon, and the Total Army will gradually reduce the number of those affected by the program that involuntarily extends Soldiers beyond the end of their enlistment or retirement dates in units deploying to combat areas.

Under a comprehensive plan to reduce Stop-Loss, the Army Reserve will begin mobilizing units without Stop-Loss in August 2009, followed by the Army National Guard in September 2009.

The Active Army will begin deploy-

ing units without Stop-Loss beginning in January 2010, according to Lt. Gen. Michael Rochelle, Deputy Chief of Staff for Personnel.

“The Army has used Stop-Loss since 2001 to ensure that units that have trained together remain together in combat, and that they have the qualified and experienced troops necessary for the full spectrum of military operations,” Chief of Staff of the Army Gen. George W. Casey, Jr. said.

“With conditions changing in Iraq, a gradual restoration of balance between deployments, and an increase in the size of the Army, we’ll now be able to begin weaning ourselves off of Stop-Loss,” Gen. Casey said.

There are approximately 13,000

stop-lossed Soldiers across all three Army components. In the Active Army, there are 7,307; 4,458 in the Army National Guard; and 1,452 in the Army Reserve.

“Stop-Loss is a legal tool that has allowed the Army to sustain a force that has trained together as a cohesive element.

“Losses caused by separation, retirement, and reassignments can adversely affect training, cohesion, readiness, and stability in deploying units,” Gen. Casey said.

“Limiting the use of Stop-Loss balances the need for unit effectiveness against the impact on individual Soldiers and their Families,” he concluded.

## USAAC CG sits down with state politicians



Photo by Michael Tuttle

From left to right, Lt. Col. Andrew Oakes, Seattle Recruiting Battalion Commander, Lt. Gen. Benjamin Freakley, Commanding General, US Army Accessions Command, Lt. Governor Brad Owen, State Senator Steve Hobbs, and Lt. Col. John Keith, Pacific Lutheran University Professor of Military Science, talk after lunch at the State Capital in Olympia. During the meeting, Hobbs invited Freakley to support legislation to maintain military recruiters’ access to Washington schools.

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# Tackling youth obesity

## Recruiters, Swoopes encourage students to exercise

Michael Tuttle  
A&PA

Seattle Company recruiters teamed up with a WNBA all star in January to urge high school students to fight the temptation of fast food and to exercise more.

Former Seattle Storm forward and three-time Olympic gold medalist Sheryl Swoopes joined recruiters at Lake Washington and Hazen High Schools for presentations aimed at stemming the growing epidemic of childhood obesity.

While Swoopes admitted to the Hazen HS students that she ate McDonalds while growing up in Texas, she stressed that she has exercised vigorously since beginning to play basketball at age seven.

"I know that you're spending all your time updating your Facebook and Myspace pages," Swoopes joked, "but everyone needs to find some way to be active."

After a brief speech about the importance of healthy eating and exercise habits, Sgts. John Thompson and Candace Davis pulled volunteers from the bleachers to help with a physical training demonstration.

The entire Hazen HS student body packed the gymnasium stands.

Swoopes strolled between two ranks of demonstrators as Davis led them through a warm up, stretching, exercises and cool down. Thompson addressed the audience, talking through the benefits of each exercise and the components of a good workout program.

At Lake Washington High School,



Photo by Michael Tuttle

**Sgts. John Thompson and Candace Davis, Seattle Company, lead a formation of Hazen High School students in pushups as former Seattle Storm player Sheryl Swoopes observes. Swoopes joined recruiters at Hazen and Lake Washington High Schools in January to urge students to be more active and eat healthy.**

Sgts. 1st Class Jacqueline Habaluyas and Daniel Forsythe joined Swoopes to conduct similar presentations for several physical education and health classes.

While the workout demonstrations were based on the Army physical training program, Swoopes and the recruiters suggested the students exercise by doing an activity they enjoy.

"It could be as simple as chasing your girlfriend or boyfriend around the house," said Swoopes, a three-time WNBA MVP.

"Dancing is also a great form of exercise," Swoopes said.

Childhood obesity has been on the rise for more than two decades and the number of obese children has almost tripled during one generation. In 1980, 6.5 percent of children ages

6-11 were obese. By 1994, the number climbed to 11.3 percent.

Today, it's about 17 percent, according to surveys compiled by the National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Being overweight is a major reason why less than 3 of 10 17-24 year-olds are fully qualified to join the Army.

Darralita Taylor, a Hazen HS senior and varsity basketball player, said that the message to live an active lifestyle resonated with her.

"We have to realize that eating right and exercise is important for our health," Taylor said.

Another Seattle Storm player will conduct three more high school fitness presentations with Seattle Battalion recruiters in May.

# Heroes read to youngsters



Photo courtesy of Thrasher's Corner KinderCare  
**Staff Sgt. April Simmons, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Randy Brocius** read to children at Thrasher's Corner KinderCare in Bothell in March. Along with Staff Sgt. Krish Lalu, the Lynnwood recruiters took part in the KinderCare's Heroes from the Community Day.

## America's Army nets 5 Guinness World records

**Lori Mezzoff**  
**Amy News Service**

The America's Army PC game, which lets players explore Soldiering, has been recognized with five records in the upcoming Guinness World Records 2009: Gamer's Edition.

The second installment of the "Gamer's Bible," began hitting bookstore shelves Feb. 4, featuring the definitive collection of video game records, facts and trivia. The first edition of Guinness World Records Gamer's Edition was published in February 2008, and received critical accolades from gaming industry reviewers.

In this year's Gamer's Edition, the America's Army PC game received awards in the following categories:

- **Largest Virtual Army** -- In January 2007, America's Army recruited its 8 millionth registered user; at the same time, the actual U.S. Army had just 519,472 Soldiers on active duty. This makes the virtual America's Army 15

times larger than the real thing. Today the game has more than 9.7 million registered users.

- **Most Downloaded War Video Game** -- According to official estimates, America's Army, in all its various iterations, has been downloaded more than 42.6 million times.

- **Most Hours Spent Playing a Free Online Shooter** -- As of August 2008, gamers have spent more than 230.9 million hours playing the PC version of America's Army. Gamers from more than 60 countries have played America's Army since it was launched in 2002.

- **Earliest Military Website to Support a Video Game** -- The Web site [americasarmy.com](http://americasarmy.com) is the first military Web site to support a video game series. America's Army is also the first multi-platform game to receive a government-licensed trademark.



- **Largest Traveling Game Simulator** -- The Virtual Army Experience is a highly modified version of America's Army that includes six life-size vehicles surrounded by multiple flat screens, with room for up to 50 participants. Mounted in the vehicles are modified light-gun weapons. The teams inside each vehicle, which shakes in reaction to nearby explosions, are tasked to drive supplies to a beleaguered group of aid workers in dangerous territory. The exhibit takes up 19,500 square feet.

The U.S. Army recently announced the upcoming America's Army 3 game will be released later this year.

AA3 will be rated T for Teen by the Entertainment Software Rating Board. AA3 will use the state-of-the-art Unreal Engine 3. Highlights of AA3 include authentic weapons and technologies, realistic training and exciting gameplay missions.



# 2009 The Year of the Noncommissioned Officer

Since 1775, the Army has set apart its NCOs from other enlisted Soldiers by distinctive insignia of grade.

With more than 200 years of service, the U.S. Army's noncommissioned Officer Corps has distinguished itself as the world's most accomplished group of military professionals.

Historical and daily accounts of "life as an NCO" are exemplified by acts of courage, and a dedication and a willingness to do "whatever it takes" to complete the mission.

In recognition of their commitment to service and willingness to make great sacrifices of behalf of our nation, the Secretary of the Army established 2009 as "The Year of the NCO."

Throughout 2009, the Army will honor NCOs through initiatives and events that:

- Enhance and accelerate the development of NCOs through education, fitness and leadership development initiatives
- Enhance the awareness of members of Congress and the American public's understanding of roles and responsibilities of today's NCO.



### Year of the NCO

***"The goal of the corps of NCOs, whose duty is the day-to-day business of running the Army so that the officer corps has time to command it, is to continue to improve our Army at every turn. We want to leave it better than we found it. Regardless of the kind of unit you're in, it ought to be an "elite" outfit, because its NCOs can make it one."***

***~SMA William G. Bainbridge,  
5th Sergeant Major of the Army***

We announce 2009 as the Year of the NCO. During this year, we will accelerate previously approved strategic NCO development initiatives that enhance training, education, capability, and utilization of our NCO Corps. We will showcase the NCO story for the Army and the American people to honor the sacrifices and celebrate the contributions of the NCO Corps, past and present.

Today's NCO operates autonomously, with confidence and competence. We empower and trust our NCOs like no other army in the world. In fact, many of the world's armies are looking at our NCO Corps as a model for their own as they recognize the vital roles NCOs play in our Army.

Our NCOs lead the way in education, in training, in discipline. They share their strength of character with every Soldier they lead, every officer they serve, and every civilian they support.

NCOs are the keepers of our standards. From the recruiting station to basic training to combat zones; civil affairs to medicine to logistics; natural disaster assistance to graveside attendance at Arlington; whether Active, Guard or Reserve, our NCOs take the lead. Hence the phrase, Sergeant take the lead!

Kenneth O. Preston  
Sergeant Major of the Army

George W. Casey, Jr.  
General, United States Army  
Chief of Staff

Pete Geren  
Secretary of the Army

Visit [www4.army.mil/yearofhtenco/home.php](http://www4.army.mil/yearofhtenco/home.php)  
for more information of the The Year of the NCO.

# Army combats sexual assault

**Edward Benedictus**  
**Soldiers & Family Assistance Program Manager**

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I. A.M. STRONG is the Army's campaign to combat sexual assaults by engaging all Soldiers in preventing sexual assaults before they occur.

Grounded by our shared belief in the Army Values, we are a band of brothers and sisters, placing mission first, never accepting defeat, never quitting and never leaving a fallen comrade.

Our interdependence and shared respect among comrades frames who we are as a Team and an Army - a Team that finds sexual assault reprehensible and beyond toleration. Those who commit assaults hurt a member of our Team and wound our Army. This criminal act is cowardly and damaging to the very moral fiber that gives our Army its innermost strength.

As Soldiers and proud members of our Team, we are duty bound to Intervene, Act, and Motivate others to stop sexual assaults and the sexually offensive language and gestures that create an environment friendly to this abuse.

Visit the Seattle Army Recruiting Battalion's Soldier and Family Assistance Program AKO website at <http://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/405009>.

For more information on Army programs dedicated to the well being of Army Families, contact Edward Benedictus at (206) 764-6743 or at [Edward.Benedictus@usarec.army.mil](mailto:Edward.Benedictus@usarec.army.mil).

## I. A.M. STRONG

**I = INTERVENE:** When I recognize a threat to my fellow Soldiers, I will have the Personal courage to INTERVENE and prevent Sexual Assault. I will condemn acts of Sexual Harassment. I will not abide obscene gestures, language or behavior. I am a warrior and a member of a team. I will INTERVENE

**A = ACT:** You are my brother, my sister, my fellow Soldier. It is my duty to stand up for you, no matter the time or place. I will take ACTION. I will do what's right. I will prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. I will not tolerate sexually offensive behavior. I will ACT

**M = MOTIVATE:** We are American Soldiers, MOTIVATED to keep our fellow Soldiers safe. It is our mission to prevent Sexual Harassment and Assault. We will denounce sexual misconduct. As Soldiers, we are all MOTIVATED to take action. We are strongest ... together.

For more information, visit  
[www.preventsexualassault.army.mil](http://www.preventsexualassault.army.mil).

## USAREC Army Family Covenant

### What it means to you

- Military Family Life Consultants at each brigade
- Personal Financial Counselors at each brigade
- Subsidized Child Care
- Government Leased Housing Option
- Gym membership for Soldiers residing in remote locations

### Future goals

- Expand Family Readiness Support Assistants to all battalions
- Partnership with Army Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation to provide Community Service Coordinators
- Increase Child Care subsidy for Family Readiness Groups
- Gym memberships for Families residing in remote locations

# Battalion snapshots



Photo courtesy of Spokane Recruiting Company  
The Hawkins brothers, Woody, Dustin and Cory, from Sandpoint, ID, recently joined the Army Reserves.



Photo courtesy of Everett Recruiting Company  
Staff Sgt. Jason Hammond from Bellingham Recruiting Station, far left, with a group of veterans after doing landscape work for two elderly men in Bellingham, WA. The group of volunteer veterans do regular community service in the area.



Photo by Megan Hayes  
GI Johnny, AKA Staff Sgt. Daniel Wermuth from Monroe Recruiting Station, rides a mechanical bull during January's Buzz Inn Bullrageous Bull Ridin' in Monroe, WA.



Photo courtesy of Alaska Recruiting Company  
Fort Richardson Soldiers storm the ice at an Alaska Aces game Feb. 27 as part of an Alaska Company recruiting night in Anchorage.