

Auto enthusiast Hannon looking forward to Power Tour

By Liz Adrian

Army Contracting Command – Rock Island, Ill.

The rumble of thousands of car engines will be heard loud and clear June 12 as the 20th Annual Hot Rod Power Tour makes a stop for a night at the Isle of Capri, Bettendorf, Iowa. At least one member of ACC-RI is already geared up and waiting for the opening flag to drop on the event.

Col. John P. Hannon, ACC-RI military deputy director, registered months ago to participate in the

Power Tour's stop in the Quad Cities. This year's tour starts on June 7 in Concord, North Carolina, and winds its way through stops in Tennessee, West Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana before making its penultimate stop in Bettendorf.

On June 12, one of Hannon's cars will be on display with thousands of other cars during the show hours in Bettendorf. On June 13, he will drive in the convoy on the final leg of the tour, which

starts in Bettendorf and ends in the Wisconsin Dells.

"It's been a dream of mine to participate in the Power Tour ever since I heard about it, because it is such a neat concept," said Hannon. "It brings thousands of cars to local communities, which is incredible. This year it's predicted that between 4,500 and 5,500 cars will

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Col. John P. Hannon, Army Contracting Command-Rock Island military deputy director, purchased his 1972 Mercury Marquis Brougham from a WWII Veteran's estate while he was a student at the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Hannon's passion for cars began when he started college, and he now owns approximately a dozen cars. (Submitted photo)

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participate.”

Hannon’s passion for cars began when he started college. He owns approximately a dozen cars, which are held in storage facilities around the Midwest. He maintains a spreadsheet to keep track of where all of his cars are, and in what condition.

He owns a few modern cars – including a couple of police cruisers – but the majority of his cars are classics.

“It is definitely my hobby and my passion,” said Hannon. “It is a good distraction in this modern world that can get so hectic and fast-paced. I call it automotive therapy. Even if it’s as simple as detailing the car, washing, waxing it and changing the oil, there’s something satisfying about it.”

He said he is particularly fond of maintaining older cars because they teach him how to troubleshoot and analyze problems, as well as reminding him to be patient and keep his sense of humor.

He owns a couple of older Lincolns, a 1960 Buick Electra, and a 1972 Mercury. His favorite



Col. John P. Hannon, Army Contracting Command-Rock Island military deputy director, has four of his cars on display at an auto museum in Kansas City, including his Chrysler 1958 300D Coupe (foreground) and his 1955 Oldsmobile Super 88 (two-tone in background). Hannon said he has approximately a dozen cars that he stores around the Midwest. (Submitted photo)

car as far as visual appeal is his 1957 Chrysler 300C.

“It’s a really cool car with a big 392 (cubic inch) hemi, two four-barrel carburetors, factory-installed push-button ignition, and great big tail fins,” said Hannon. “They call them the Dodge Viper of the ‘50s because they were very high-performance, and loaded with luxury options, like a full leather interior, power windows and power seats. For 1957, that was

advanced.”

Hannon’s other favorite car is his 1968 Mustang fastback, which is a near-replica of the car Steve McQueen drove in the 1968 movie “Bullitt.”

“That was my favorite movie growing up, because there is this phenomenal chase scene between Steven McQueen in a ‘68 Mustang

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U.S. Army Contracting Command-Rock Island Executive Director Melanie A. Johnson

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fastback chasing a black Dodge Charger through the streets of San Francisco,” said Hannon. “Some people call it the most famous car chase in film history, and it hooked me as a kid.”

Deciding which car to register for the Power Tour was difficult for Hannon, as he has several options. Hannon ultimately registered his Chrysler 1958 300D Coupe in the Power Tour earlier this spring. However, he recently noticed there is something wrong with the car’s driveline.

“I have one expert mechanic working on that, but I will probably have to change my car to the ‘68 Mustang,” said Hannon. “However, that car is in Kansas with the transmission out right now, so I’ve got to come up with a third option.”

Once he makes a final decision on a car, Hannon said he can concentrate on what he is most looking forward to: meeting other car enthusiasts, learning new tips and tricks, and seeing a wide variety of cars.

“There will certainly be modern Mustangs, Corvettes and a variety of classics,” said Hannon. “There might even be a couple of minivans because some families like to make it a vacation. Some people will tease the guy who shows up in a minivan or a station wagon, but it’s done in good fun, and they are still part of the fun and camaraderie. Events like this are special because you will see anything and everything vehicle-wise.”



Emergency responders make a simulated rescue effort during a May 14 emergency response exercise at the arsenal. A team of Army Contracting Command-Rock Island employees provided support to the Rock Island Arsenal Garrison during the exercise. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Shannon Wright, ASC Public Affairs)

ACC-RI supports May 14 RIA emergency response exercise

By Liz Adrian

Army Contracting Command – Rock Island, Ill.

A team of Army Contracting Command-Rock Island employees provided support to the Rock Island Arsenal Garrison during a May 14 emergency response exercise here.

Lisa Determan, chief, Garrison Contracting Branch; contracting officers Michele Ross and Molly Lewis; and Lynn Baker, contract specialist, provided contracting expertise. Myrna Dowell, Government Purchase Card team lead, supported the garrison with making required credit card purchases.

Though planning for the exercise had been underway for several months, Determan said the team didn’t know what the emergency situation would be ahead of time,

though they were told in general terms what types of items they might be asked to procure. As it turned out, the exercise tested the arsenal’s emergency response capability following a tornado. In the simulation, the tornado damaged buildings, including several of which collapsed and trapped victims. Other scenarios hampered emergency efforts, such as downed trees and blocked entryways.

The ACC-RI employees were co-located with garrison staff for the majority of the exercise. Any need that required an actual or a notional purchase would come

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into the emergency operations center from a mobile command center located outside, near the simulated disaster area. Garrison staff members identified what items were truly needed and coordinated those needs with ACC-RI employees who then determined appropriate procurement methods.

Determan said that the exercise revealed the need for specific purchase requests from first responders should a true emergency take place.

“In one instance, people in the field needed saw blades, but they didn’t specify pertinent information such as size and type,” said Determan. “We reiterated that they need to be more specific for those types of requests.”

The importance of communication was apparent from the beginning, according to the team. For instance, Ross said that when the first purchases were delivered, it was not clear how the people in the field would receive those items. Working with the EOC, first responders and the command center, it was determined all items would be delivered to the mobile command center for pickup.

Determan said several benefits to garrison contracting were realized through the planning stages of the exercise. One key benefit, she said, was that prior to the exercise, they realized local hardware and building supply stores would be an integral part of the emergency response.

“We worked with local hardware distributors to set up government accounts as a means to procure

items quickly,” said Determan.

Ross agreed it was a good thing that these accounts were established ahead of the exercise.

“It took coordination to set up these accounts, including aspects such as availability and same-day delivery,” said Ross. “I don’t know if we would have had time during an actual emergency to do that work.”

From a GPC perspective, Dowell was instrumental in getting the appropriate merchant codes on the cards, ensuring cards users would be able to make purchases. She also worked with people who were calling in with GPC purchases to make sure they understood roles, limitations and how to process orders.

“Working with the garrison folks throughout the exercise gave everyone a better understanding of the GPC limits and the obstacles we would face during a real disaster,” said Dowell. “Addressing the systemic, regulatory and threshold limits up front allowed

the GPC team to react immediately when an issue was identified.”

This was the first exercise on the arsenal in which local Mutual Aid Box Alarm System partners joined together as community partners to exercise technical rescue teams. MABAS is a collective support agreement system that allows departments to request resources locally, regionally and from all Illinois MABAS partners, should their agency become overwhelmed responding to an emergency.

Ross said she believes this exercise will have a measureable effect on the performance of everyone involved should a true emergency occur.

“I can’t imagine an emergency such as this happening and not having learned the lessons that came from this exercise,” said Ross. “As with any emergency there would be a lot of chaos and misunderstanding of roles. This practice helped us tremendously to be better equipped to respond effectively.”



ACC-RI employees who supported this year’s emergency response exercise were (l-r): Lisa Determan, chief, Garrison Contracting Branch; Molly Lewis, contracting officer; Lynn Baker, contract specialist; Myrna Dowell, Government Purchase Card team lead; and Michele Ross, contracting officer. (Photo by Liz Adrian)

Army contracting leaders educate, encourage communication

By Liz Adrian

Army Contracting Command – Rock Island, Ill.

Government and small business leaders from across the country gathered at the National Defense Industrial Association's Midwest Small Business Government Contracting Symposium and the Rock Island Center of Excellence Advanced Planning Briefing to Industry, held May 7-8 at the iWireless Center, Moline, Illinois.

This year's symposium focused largely on how the Army is changing to adapt to force reductions, restructuring, budget cuts and ever-changing needs. Army leaders also briefed industry on how they can identify the Army's needs and alter their business plans in order to align with those needs.

Army Contracting Command was represented by Michael R. Hutchison, deputy to the ACC commanding general, and Melanie A. Johnson, executive director of ACC-Rock Island. On Wednesday, Hutchison provided an overview briefing about ACC, while Johnson updated industry on Enhanced Army Global Logistics Enterprise contracting efforts, and led a session outlining some of ACC-RI's current and upcoming requirements. Both Hutchison and Johnson took part in the senior leader panel on Thursday afternoon.

Hutchison and Johnson shared ACC's myriad of challenges – a balancing act of budgetary restraints, insufficient staffing levels, an inexperienced workforce, additional workload assigned to the command, and continuous policy

changes.

Despite challenges, Hutchison and Johnson see several areas of opportunity that industry can assist the government with in order to foster a more streamlined and effective contracting environment, including simple day-to-day business practices.

Hutchison said the biggest challenge facing ACC is staffing levels and the pressure to obligate money. He asked that industry help government contracting by fully understanding requirements, not performing any work beyond those requirements, and submitting complete information in a timely manner, to include invoices.

"We need you to submit your invoices in a timely manner," said Hutchison. "The DoD is pulling

dollars back from the Army because we are not getting them on contract fast enough, but they are also pulling back dollars because we are not disbursing money fast enough. Invoicing is key to disbursement."

Johnson stressed the importance of feedback – both constructive feedback that can be used to enhance processes, as well as positive feedback about processes that are working well. She also discussed improving open communication, particularly between contracting officers and contractors.

"I think it would be good to develop some ground rules

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Col. David J. Luders, commander Rock Island Arsenal Joint Manufacturing and Technology Center, and Melanie A. Johnson, executive director of ACC-Rock Island, sat on a panel of senior leaders that answered questions from industry as part of this year's National Defense Industrial Association's Midwest Small Business Government Contracting Symposium. The symposium was held May 7-8 at the iWireless Center, Moline, Ill. (Photo by Liz Adrian)

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outlining the things that we can talk about and when, and also the things we can't talk about and why we can't discuss them, so that there's not a perception of there being any secrets," said Johnson.

ACC leaders were joined by several other Army leaders during the symposium, including John Nerger, executive deputy to the commanding general, U.S. Army Materiel Command. During Wednesday morning's keynote speech, Nerger discussed the importance of an industrial base

that can adapt and transform itself to meet the shifting needs of the government.

He said that industry's continued partnership and adaptation is critical for two very important reasons. First, the reliance on having the most advanced, effective, and efficient capabilities will increase as budgets decline; active duty and reserve strengths decrease; and the U.S. military's global footprint changes. Second, Nerger said the development and proliferation of more advanced military technologies by other

nations has ushered in an age in which American domination can no longer be taken for granted.

"These two facts make the industrial base one of the most important elements — maybe the most important element — of our national security," said Nerger. "The United States Army can recruit the best force, but we are depending on [industry] to help sustain and maintain the best force. There remain great opportunities, and a need for your services as we move forward."

EAGLE: lessons from the year and a focus on the future

By Liz Adrian

Army Contracting Command – Rock Island, Ill.

The Enhanced Army Global Logistics Enterprise Program was a hot topic around the Quad Cities May 6-8, as business leaders nationwide gathered to attend the National Defense Industrial Association's Midwest Small Business Government Contracting Symposium.

The EAGLE Program is a unique contracting tool that the government uses to award task orders to a pool of qualified Basic Ordering Agreement holder companies for supply, maintenance, and transportation functions. According to the EAGLE contracting office, the program is intended to find efficiencies and standardize contracting processes in order to save the government money, increase competition, and

expand the role of small business.

Prior to the symposium, Army Contracting Command-Rock Island and Army Sustainment Command's EAGLE Program Management office held a meeting on May 6 at Rock Island Arsenal for more than

70 EAGLE BOA holders.

During the meeting, Melanie A. Johnson, ACC-RI executive director, D. Scott Welker, ASC deputy to the commander,

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Melanie A. Johnson, Army Contracting Command-Rock Island's executive director, D. Scott Welker, ASC deputy to the commander, and (seated, on stage) Joseph Schultz, deputy director, ASC Installation Logistics, hold an EAGLE update during the National Defense Industrial Association's Midwest Small Business Government Contracting Symposium. The symposium was held May 7-8 at the iWireless Center, Moline, Ill. (Photo by Liz Adrian)

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and Kathryn T.H. Szymanski, chief counsel for ASC and the Joint Munitions Command, each provided introductory presentations. ACC-RI contracting professionals and staff from the ASC EAGLE program office then provided updates, explained workload data, and answered BOA holders' questions.

Johnson and Welker were joined May 7 by Joseph Schulz, deputy director, ASC Installation Logistics Division, at the symposium to share EAGLE updates with all businesses.

'THIS IS A TEAM SPORT. IT INCLUDES THE GOVERNMENT AND CONTRACTORS. AS WE GO THROUGH THIS PROCESS, WE WANT TRANSPARENCY, AND WE WANT TO SHARE HOW WE ARE PROCEEDING, BUT WE DO HAVE TO DO WHAT IS IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE ARMY AND THE GOVERNMENT'

- MELANIE A. JOHNSON, ACC-RI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Johnson said that there have been some execution challenges, resulting in a task order award life cycle averaging 158 business days. This longer-than-expected life cycle is attributed to a few unanticipated factors.

Although ASC is a logistics organization, ASC had not handled logistics at logistics readiness centers (formerly known as Directorates of Logistics) prior to 2010, when ASC was assigned the EAGLE mission. Welker said

not having experience supporting logistics functions at LRCs created a learning curve for ASC and ACC-RI.

Additionally, on every single request for proposal — including outside continental United States, — the contracting office has received proposals numbering in the double digits. Johnson said this has helped the office “check that huge mark for competition,” but it has also slowed evaluations.

There are ways in which BOA holders can help the government expedite the process, said Johnson.

guide helps contractors know what information needs to be included in their proposals, and it also makes it easier for the government to evaluate the proposals.

“Based on all of this, we anticipate that, going through due process, we could reduce our acquisition lead time from 158 days to approximately 34,” said Johnson.

Johnson said it is important for current and future BOA holders to stay informed and up-to-date on the EAGLE program. She suggested contractors periodically visit the

“When you have questions at the draft RFP stage and if there is a draft performance work statement and you have issues, get those questions in as soon as possible so that we can act on them and make sure they are incorporated into the final RFP, so we're not losing time,” said Johnson.

Additionally, contractors can help by using the standardized workload data forms provided by ACC-RI when developing proposals, said Johnson. Using these standardized forms as a

EAGLE website (http://www.acc.army.mil/contractingcenters/acc_ri/eagle/index.html) and send in questions to the contracting office's email.

“This is a team sport,” said Johnson. “It includes the government and contractors. As we go through this process, we want transparency, and we want to share how we are proceeding, but we do have to do what is in the best interest of the Army and the government.”



After 41 years, Lashbrook leaves government service

By Liz Adrian

Army Contracting Command – Rock Island, Ill.

The Rock Island Arsenal and Army Contracting Command-Rock Island recently bid happy trails to Rosalie Lashbrook, one of its longest serving employees, during recent retirement ceremony, honoring her for more than 41 years of government service.

During the ceremony, ACC-RI Executive Director Melanie Johnson noted that Lashbrook had been a government employee during every U.S. military engagement since the Korean War.

Lashbrook began her career in 1952, as a typist and switchboard operator. In January 1955, she started at RIA as a clerk. She only held that position until November 1955, at which time she became a stay-at-home mother. In 1973, Lashbrook returned to RIA as a typist and then as a branch chief secretary.

In 1980, Lashbrook began her 34-year acquisition career, as an intern in the Acquisition and Contracting Intern Program, and spent the majority of her career in ammunition contracting.

Shelly Robacker, contracting officer, was Lashbrook's last team leader. She said Lashbrook was a wealth of information and had an extensive history that enabled her to provide tried-and-true approaches to dealing with unique contracting situations.

"She was determined to get the best deal for the government," said Robacker. "During negotiations with contractors, she would often use her charm and fun nature to

achieve the government's needs. She had an excellent relationship with everyone she worked with and I could always count on Rosalie's contract files to be well-documented and organized."

Other co-workers from her most recent team already miss her unique, whimsical personality.

"She enjoyed listening to the older country western songs that were popular in the 1960 and 1970's," said Luana Gredell, contract specialist. "At Christmas time she especially liked Susie Bogguss's song 'Two-Step Round the Christmas Tree.'"

Thomas Rutherford, contract specialist, said he misses her funny quips.

"A couple of her most famous quotes that I'm already missing are when she would exclaim, 'What

a way to run a railroad!' and 'It's another great day in Caseyville!'," said Rutherford.

Gredell also recalls Lashbrook's flair for catch sayings.

"Some of her other frequently used sayings were 'Get a whipp'n with my wet noodle!' and 'In 50 Years, it ain't gonna make a difference'," said Gredell.

Lashbrook was always on point when talking about politics and current events, and loved talking about things that made her happy, said Gredell.

"She was an avid listener of many political talk shows and enjoyed watching

Nancy Grace in the evenings," said Gredell. "We will miss her

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Melanie A. Johnson, ACC-RI executive director, presents Rosalie Lashbrook with a certificate of retirement at a recent ceremony celebrating Lashbrook's 41 years of government service. (Photo by Liz Adrian)

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smile, funny anecdotes on every day issues, and hearing stories about her puppy, Star.”

Lashbrook said she stayed so long with the government because she enjoyed her job and knows that the idle life is not for her.

“In 2006, I broke my leg and was in and out of the office for

two months,” said Lashbrook. “I was at home a lot and had to relax, and at that point I realized sitting and watching TV is not my thing. I figured, as long as I felt ok, why not work for as long as I could?”

She said she believes it will take a while for her to get used to retirement. She had planned on spending a lot of time with her

cat, Tonto, and her Shi-Tzu, Star. Unfortunately, 14-year-old Tonto passed away on May 20.

“The Lord does work mysteriously and I think my retirement came at the right time, because that cat was such a blessing and I am happy I had more time with him in the end,” said Lashbrook.

Three ACC-RI Soldiers promoted in early May

By Liz Adrian

Army Contracting Command – Rock Island, Ill.

Three Army Contracting Command-Rock Island Soldiers were recently promoted.

On May 1, ACC-RI employees and special guests honored newly promoted contract specialists Sgt. 1st Class Veronica L. Miller and Sgt. 1st Class Martinson Yeboah. On May 2, newly promoted Maj. Adam A. Salazar, contracting team leader, thanked his family, and, in particular his wife, for the support she has given him at home, which he credited for helping him excel in his career.

During the May 1 ceremony, Master Sgt. Sol Nevarezberrios, ACC-RI’s senior enlisted advisor, removed Miller’s old rank while Miller’s mother, Penzola Phillips, pinned the new rank on her daughter.

Miller enlisted in the Army in August 2002 at 18 years old. Prior to her selection as a 51C (acquisition, logistics and technology non-commissioned officer) and subsequent assignment to ACC-RI in May 2013, she held



Newly-promoted Maj. Adam Salazar’s children remove his captain rank before his wife pinned on his new rank during a ceremony on May 2. Salazar was one of three ACC-RI Soldiers promoted in the first two days of May. (Photo by Liz Adrian)

assignments at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri; Fort Sill, Oklahoma; Mannheim, Germany; Fort Bliss, Texas; and completed her acquisition training at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas.

She deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in

2003 (three months), 2004 (three months), and 2005 (11 months). In 2008 she completed a 15-month tour supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

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Also on May 1, Col. John P. Hannon, ACC-RI military deputy director, removed Yeboah's old rank and Master Sgt. Samantha E. Weatherspoon, ACC-RI senior contracting NCO, pinned on his new rank.

Yeboah was born in Ghana, and relocated to the United States in 2003. He joined the Army in March 2004 at Killeen, Texas. He went through basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and then held assignments at Fort Lee, Virginia; South Korea; Baumholder

Health Clinic, Germany; and Fort Drum, New York. While assigned to Fort Drum, he deployed to Afghanistan for a year.

On May 2, Salazar's children, Aiden, Molly and William, removed his captain rank and his wife, Krystin, pinned on his major rank. Shortly thereafter Hannon re-administered the oath of office to Salazar.

"Promotion to the field grade officer corps is really about joining the professional ranks within the Army organization," said Salazar. "It is a move up to higher levels of responsibility and accountability. The Army expects much of its iron majors. The organization expects me to be a sharp, agile and forward-thinking officer, to demonstrate critical and creative thinking and to foresee and solve problems faced by my organization."

Salazar was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Field Artillery upon his graduation from Lipscomb University, Nashville, Tennessee, in 2004. Upon graduating from the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course, he was assigned to Fort Polk, Louisiana. From there he deployed twice in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as a cavalry scout platoon leader and later as an artillery platoon leader. Prior to coming to RIA, Salazar was stationed in Fort Carson, Colorado.

Salazar attended the Army Acquisition Basic and Foundations Course in 2012 and is assigned to ACC-RI's 620th Contingency Contracting Team.



Newly-promoted Sgt. 1st Class Veronica L. Miller's mother, Penzola Phillips, pins Miller's new rank on her during a May 1 ceremony. (Photo by Liz Adrian.)



Col. John P. Hannon presents newly-promoted Sgt. 1st Class Martinson Yeboah, with Yeboah's certificate of promotion during a May 1 ceremony. (Photo by Liz Adrian.)