

96th Regional Readiness Command Celebrates Earth Day

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In support of the Army's Earth Day theme, **"Sustaining the Environment for a Secure Future"**, and in conjunction with the ARIM Staff Section and 650th ASG, the 96th Regional Readiness Command (RRC) is PROUD to report that it hosted its first Earth Day Activity, Friday 22 April 2005.

Soldiers from the 650th ASG and fifth grade students from Valley Crest Elementary School participated together in a tree planting activity at the Ken Uchida United States Army Reserve Center (USARC), located in Salt Lake City, Utah.



The activity began when students were met at the school by soldiers recently returned from Iraq (419 TC CO) who discussed with them the meaning behind the "yellow ribbon" and how it symbolizes our soldiers in "harms way".



Students were provided ample opportunity to ask questions of the soldiers and discuss issues that ranged anywhere from the different types of uniforms (hats) worn by the soldiers, what the soldiers do with their spare time (in and out of uniform), to what the soldiers experienced while deployed in Iraq.

Students were then escorted from the school to the Ken Uchida USARC by the 650th ASG Painted Humvee where they were divided into groups of three for the tree planting activity.



To ensure that sound environmental practices were employed during the tree planting activity, students were taught about Environmental Stewardship and the importance of preserving the earth's natural resources by Mr. Scott Ziedler, Community Forester with the Utah Division of Forestry, Fire and State Lands.



Approximately 23 trees, of differing deciduous varieties, were planted by the students and soldiers. Once the student's trees were safely planted in the ground, a yellow ribbon, made and personalized by the students themselves, was hung in honor of our soldiers who are still in "harm's way".



After the hard work of planting trees was complete, soldiers and students shared lunch together. Lunch consisted of the student's introduction to MREs which were provided by the G-4 Staff Section in support of the day's activities.



Numerous Earth Day Promotion items were also on hand and distributed to the students. Of special mention were the cloth tote bags which were well received—in fact, students took the initiative and asked the soldiers to autograph their bags.



This activity was an excellent opportunity for the 96th RRC to promote Environmental Stewardship within a local community and for our soldiers to share their experience and good times with the students. It was a huge success and we can all rest assured that the soldiers left a positive impact on the student's lives that day. A wonderful time was had by all!

