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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

National Guard Engineers conduct two great community events: Battle of the Blades and Operation Red Welt

SPEARFISH, S.D. – Member of the 842nd Engineer Company (Horizontal), South Dakota Army National Guard, will host the 5th Annual Battle of the Blades/Slashing Steel 2007 Open House at noon on Saturday, Oct. 6, at the Spearfish City Rubble Site, north of Spearfish on Highway 85.

The public is encouraged to attend.

This event will consist of senior heavy equipment operators coaching junior heavy equipment operators through a series of courses designed to challenge the team in developing their operation and communication skills.

The heavy equipment involved in this competition include: bulldozer, scraper, road grader, dump truck, tractor/trailer, and excavator.

A pre-operation equipment inspection is conducted by the operator on each piece of equipment prior to the event. All equipment involved has been used by the 842nd in blizzards, floods, and fires in South Dakota, as well as overseas in Iraq.

The Battle of the Blades began in 1997 as a multi-faceted challenge where junior operators can learn specific operation techniques for each piece of equipment. Senior operators learn how to verbally convey their intentions instead of getting on the equipment and demonstrating. The leadership has an opportunity to evaluate the capabilities of their operators by acting as judges of the events. Each course is designed to be achievable; yet remain challenging at the same time.

The unit will also hold its 3rd Annual 842nd Paintball Tournament, Operation Red Welt, that is open to all interested high school students who wish to enter as a team or individual for a day of fast-pace excitement in a tournament of “Capture the Flag.”

The tournament will be held at 10 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 6, in the open area on the south side of Camp Comfort Road, north of Spearfish on Highway 85.

All necessary equipment for Operation Red Welt will be provided and there is no cost for registration. Teams and individuals need to contact Staff Sgt. Nathan Juelfs at (605) 641-0849 to register by Thursday, Oct. 4.