

# In Honor of Grid Gypsies

Posted At : July 28, 2015 1:58 AM | Posted By : Admin

Related Categories: UXO Guest Author - Jack Imber

Article by Guest Author: [Jack Imber](#)

Author of the book DEMINER available from [Amazon](#)

A large squadron of dragonflies approaches a group of UXO field techs working in a marshy area at a southern military base. One man looks up and seeing them yells "Incoming!" Like tiny attack helicopters the dragonflies begin to wipe out the clouds of biting gnats that everyone calls "wings with teeth".

"Die suckahs!" shouts another man as the one sided battle continues. We all smile, receiving a reprieve from the tiny gnats that no longer are getting into our eyes, ears and up our noses. Perching on our hats and shoulders our winged friends devour their 'gnatty grits' for breakfast.

Metal detectors continue their high pitched squeal as the team moves slowly through a patch of crushed speaker magnets. Bits and pieces of a target vehicle are also found strewn around the area. "More seat springs" a woman says as she places a jangled mass of large gage wire into her bucket.

"Another mortar!" yells someone on the left of the sweep line. "It's a sixty H-E with a P-D fuse".

"Mark it!" shouts the team leader as he prepares to document one of hundreds of mortars and other UXO's found in this five acre area.

The team complains little about the humid hundred degree day. They have come from all over the US to fulfill a company contract of clearing several live fire ranges. Leaving their families these men and women, strangers to each other, are clearing the land of military debris.

On these types of job sites there seem to be very distinct personality types. During a project the blending of these personalities may result in hilarious and spontaneous comments between the group members. The following labels are given to one another in good humor. They all rib each other which results in making the tedious work bearable. The team is like a small family unit even though they have only worked together for a few short weeks. Here are just a few of the regular grid personalities:

**A SLAVE TO FASHION** always arrives sporting some new shirt, cargo pants or boots. He/she looks like they just stepped out of a Cabela's or Bass Pro Shop catalogue.

**THE ROMEO/JULIET** talks, nonstop about the opposite sex and various recent conquests.

**THE SURVIVALIST** is a quiet loner who is always there with resources that helps to get the job done.

**THE GEAR ADDICT** has a new field knife every week. He is always showing off some high tech

contraption which is usually more a whimsical gadget then a useful tool in the field.

**THE GUN FANATIC** knows all about ammunition and muzzle velocities. When he is not talking about his next gun purchase he is willing to talk about the next arms legislation initiative.

**THE OLD TIMER** likes to try to keep up with the 'kids'. He often offers his worldly advice but it is seldom listened to.

**THE WALKING ENCYCLOPEDIA** has an answer for every question or situation. Sometimes he is right, but even if he is not his perspective is always of interest.

**THE METRO** adores hair and skin products. The rest of the team appreciates him since the flying insects zero in on his location on the sweep line leaving the rest of the team nearly bug free.

**THE FINANCIAL ADVISOR** constantly gives advice on business investments and the lottery. The way he talks he should certainly be retired in less than a year.

**THE STORY TELLER** has been everywhere and has done just about everything. Whatever you have ever done he has done it better. When he tells the same story to a different team usually there seems to be different facts added as embellishment.

**THE TICK MAGNET** hates every single leggy crawly thing. Somehow he always seems to have at least one of them hanging on him somewhere.

Sometimes something special happens during an afternoon. The day seems to be dragging on. Thick hot air is slowing the team's progress. Suddenly four Hawaiian voices join together to sing a traditional ballad in their native language. Those listening to the amazing voices wish they could sing as well. A new energy replaces the sameness. The team moves forward onto unknown land discovering undocumented failed ordnance with a renewed focus. They are doing a job that not many other people would do or perhaps could do.

**THE FINANCIAL BENEFITS ARE SMALL BUT THE CHALLENGES AND RESULTS ARE REWARDING. MAY GOD BLESS OUR UXO TECHS FOR THEIR SACRIFICES AND DETERMINATION.**