

# GX<sup>®</sup>

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

OCTOBER 2007  
VOLUME FOUR ISSUE NINE

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THROUGH LIFE

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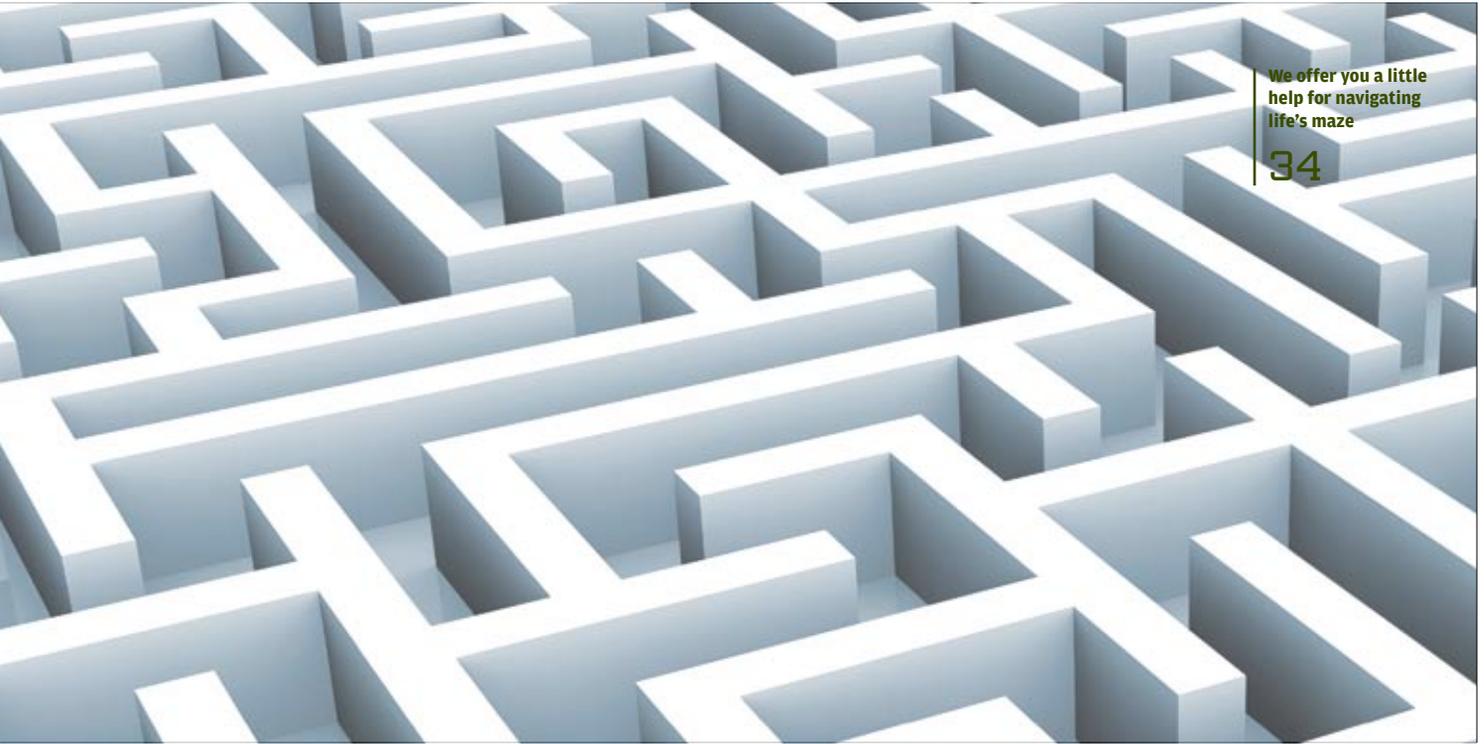
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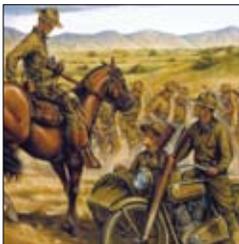
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# LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

**MG William D. Wofford**



Soldiers and Airmen,

The role of today's Guard is, no doubt, much greater than we have seen in our past. Along with numerous missions to support civil authorities during natural disasters and state emergencies, we are playing a vital role in our national defense here at home on our nation's border as well as overseas in the Global War on Terror.

Today, with a force of over 10,000 Soldiers and Airmen, like many other states, Arkansas has deployed about 85 percent of the number representing our total strength through multiple deployments since the Global War on Terror began. With the recent alert of our state's largest subordinate command for a potential second deployment to Iraq, the number of individuals our state has deployed since 2001 will potentially exceed our total strength count by over 1,500.

More than 1,600 Soldiers in this unit, the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, have already been to Iraq once, and are now sharing that experience with their fellow Soldiers who are preparing to go for the first time.

This is not uncommon for our state, as the 213th Area Support Medical Company of Arkansas' 87th Troop Command departed for their mobilization station shortly after we celebrated Independence Day. The unit is 70 Soldiers strong, 30 of whom are heading to the desert for their second round in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This is a common sight across Arkansas and the nation.

It is an honor to serve with all of our men and women in uniform who are willing to set their lives aside in order to answer that call to duty. It is an even greater honor to serve with these Soldiers and Airmen who continue to wear the uniform after living such an extreme sacrifice, and even more so with those who are standing up to endure it again. That is the definition of selfless service.

Like many other combat veterans we currently have in the National Guard, I fully understand the sacrifices and many challenges our men and women endure in order to serve. Those of us in uniform share a common bond and have felt the sacrifice of service, but few suffer through deployments more than the families that we leave behind. And none suffer more than the families of our injured and fallen Soldiers, whom we will never forget.

For years I have contended that the unsung heroes in the Guard are the family members who valiantly keep the home and family together—before, during and after deployment. I encourage your family's involvement in your state family readiness programs to help ease the uncertainty and burdens that they endure during these deployments. Success cannot be achieved without unit readiness, and unit readiness cannot be fully achieved without family readiness.

The support of our families and employers continues to carry us through to success. Due to your efforts at home and on the battlefield, that support does not stop there. Never before have I witnessed such an outpouring of pride for our men and women in the Guard. Our Soldiers and Airmen have stepped up honorably throughout our transition to become full partners with the Army and Air Force, and they continue to lead the way as absolutely essential assets to our nation's defense. Through our trained, ready Soldiers and Airmen, a grateful nation will continue to look upon you as Warriors who live and breathe the motto "Always Ready . . . Always There . . ."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William D. Wofford".

MG William D. Wofford  
Adjutant General of the State of Arkansas

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**[T]he unsung heroes in the Guard are the family members who valiantly keep the home and family together.**

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We want to hear from you!  
Send your questions or comments to:  
[feedback@GXonline.com](mailto:feedback@GXonline.com)

Dear GX,  
Thank you for your magazine and a special thank you for the coverage of the Soldier of the Year competition! My son, SPC Kyle Brewer, said he had a wonderful time with your camera crew! Both our sons are National Guard members and ROTC cadets. The majority of their mail still comes to our home . . . and that means I get to read the magazine first! We have some [photos] from the DVD at Fort Benning, GA, and they are wonderful. We sat at the computer with Kyle telling us stories! It was so much fun to listen to all that they went through and survived! Accept our heartfelt thanks and keep up the good work!

Sincerely,  
Christine Brewer

SSG Heather,  
I just wanted to express my deepest thanks to you and everyone at GX who played a part in supporting the Home for a Hero concert in July. We were able to donate over \$100,000 to SGT Kevin Downs. Plus, his father tells me he's a different man since the show. He has always shown exceptional spirit and determination, but there is a fire in his belly like never before. He realizes he is surrounded by thousands of strangers who see the Soldier, and not the burns. You were a huge part of making that happen for him. Also, it is equally as thrilling for me to tell you how much the event succeeded in raising the spirits of countless current and former military members. I am still receiving emails from even Vietnam Veterans who say they really felt like the event was for them, too. Thank you so much for being a part of making Home for a Hero a success on every level.

Sincerely,  
Patz Fischer

Dear GX,  
I really look forward to receiving your magazine each month even though I am no longer in the Army National Guard. I especially enjoy reading the articles about education and the use of my educational benefits that I earned. The reason I am writing this is because new reserve unit needs something like GX. I am currently in the U.S. Navy Reserve as a Seabee. GX is a great program that should be expanded to other branches of the reserve service too. I look forward to getting your magazine each month.

Sincerely,  
UT3 Catharine Bevona

October's T-shirt Giveaway Winner:  
UT3 Catharine Bevona



## GX REVIEWS

So, you've spent the year reading our reviews, and now we want to hear from you.

**Did we get something wrong in a review? Is there something we forgot to review? Most importantly, do you have a review of your own you'd like to see published in GX?**

**Send your feedback and gear reviews to [BrothersWest@GXonline.com](mailto:BrothersWest@GXonline.com).**

We will randomly select a winner from the published letters to receive a new 80 GB iPod Classic and two others will win an iPod Shuffle!

All submissions must be emailed by November 1!



# WHY DID YOU RE-ENLIST IN THE NATIONAL GUARD?

**GX wants to know!**

Tell us why you've solemnly sworn to support and defend the Constitution more than once.

Send your stories (including location of re-enlistment) and photos to [Editor@GXonline.com](mailto:Editor@GXonline.com).



**ON THE COVER**

**A little boy sits and holds the hand of SGT Resolve Savage from C Company, 1-158th Infantry Regiment, Arizona National Guard in the Paruns District, Nuristan Province, Afghanistan.**

PHOTO BY SSG ISAAC GRAHAM, COURTESY OF DVIDS

## Stocking Stuffers, Words of Wisdom and a Million Thanks

We're closin' in on Christmas if you can believe it. Personally, I'm still trying to hang on to the summertime and refuse to put the windows on my Jeep till I see snowflakes. Regardless, it's time for the much-anticipated (right?) *GX* Gift Guide! We're showcasing a slew of cool gadgets, weapons and whatnot that we know you'll want to add to your wish list. So, be sure and drop this issue on the kitchen table, opened up in plain sight to p. 74. Your family will get the hint.

The meat and potatoes of this issue is our handy *GX* field manual for life, p. 34. Here, we've gathered a bunch of little gems that will help you over some of life's hurdles. You don't have to thank us; that's what we're here for!

I'm especially psyched about our *GX* Hero this month: Shauna Fleming p. 80. See, a few years ago, I was sitting in church and a guest speaker started ranting how there weren't any heroes anymore. I wanted to stand up and shout, but . . . we were in church, so I just sat there all bitter and dreamed up a new section for *GX*—a section to spotlight the real heroes who I read about and meet everyday in this job. Proactive, positive individuals who inspire others to get off their butts and make a difference. Shauna Fleming was one of the very first folks who came to my mind. It took a little while, but we finally had a chance to talk to her. She really is a national role model, and makes me look really lazy. All I cared about when I was her age were guitars and the tinted windows on my Geo Tracker.

And you'll see a new name in our masthead this issue. I'm proud to announce we've added SPC Miko Holloran to our team. SPC Holloran joins us from the Arizona Guard. She's a killer photographer and a tornado of enthusiasm.

One final note, we are heading to the National Guard Public Affairs Training Workshop this month in Anchorage, AK, on the 22nd through the 24th. If you're an attendee, you better drop by and say hello! Scheduled to attend from the *GX* camp are myself, Chris West, CPT Tim Irvin and SSG Heather Allen. Hope to see all my ol' PAO pals there!

Thanks,

Keith Kawasaki



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**MISSION:** To celebrate and support the Soldiers and families of the National Guard. To provide today's Army National Guard members with information for becoming a better Soldier and better citizen. To encourage and assist Guard Soldiers in maximizing the benefits of their military career as well as their personal and family goals.

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## ACCURACY

### New Hanover, NJ

U.S. Army Soldiers of the 143rd Field Artillery Battalion, California Army National Guard, conduct fire team movement techniques during mobilization training at Fort Dix, NJ, Aug. 6, 2007.

Photo by SSG Russell Lee Klika





RECON >>





## GRADUATION DROP

### Alaska

Honor graduates of the Alaska Assault class t rappel from a HH-60 Black Hawk helicopter into their graduation. 126 Soldiers from both active duty Army and the Alaska Army National Guard graduated, Aug. 24.

Photo courtesy of CPT Gwyll Hayes







## STREET PATROL

### Kapisa Province, Afghanistan

SSG Ronny Burt, from the 3rd Battalion, 172nd Mountain Infantry Regiment, Vermont National Guard, conducts a dismounted patrol with Afghan National Police officers in the Kapisa province of Afghanistan, Aug. 16, 2007.

Photo by SSG Isaac A. Graham

Distance from Vermont to Afghanistan: 6,500 miles







## CONTAINMENT

### Montana

Pilot-in-Command CW4 Scott Baer of the Montana Army National Guard navigates his UH60A Black Hawk toward a raging forest fire July 29 to drop water over the deadly flames. Photo courtesy of Montana National Guard Public Affairs.

Photo Courtesy of MT NG PAO





**HEROIC ACTIONS** SGT Robert W. Betterton Jr. of the Tennessee National Guard is awarded the bronze star.

## TN SOLDIERS AWARDED SILVER, BRONZE STAR

By MSG (ret.) Nathan Crawford and SFC Randy Harris, TNARNG PAO

MILLINGTON, TN—Two Soldiers from Tennessee's 278th Regimental Combat Team were honored Aug. 25 for their heroic actions in Iraq on April 4, 2005.

1LT David J. Tiedeman of Colorado was awarded the Silver Star and SGT Robert W. Betterton Jr. of Tennessee received the Bronze Star with the "V" (Valor) Device. The ceremony was held at the 230th Sustainment Brigade Headquarters. MG Russ Cotney, Tennessee National Guard's assistant adjutant general, made the presentations.

The two Soldiers were part of a joint American and Iraqi reconnaissance operation south of Balad Ruz, Iraq, searching for a weapons cache after the fall of Saddam Hussein. As the team began to negotiate a series of canals, it was ambushed and came under heavy and well-organized fire from enemy small arms, heavy machine guns, mortars and RPGs. In the first volley of RPG fire, two Iraqi army gun trucks were rendered combat-ineffective.

As 1LT Tiedeman's team took heavy fire while maneuvering to engage the insurgents, SFC Stephen Kennedy, also a Tennessee Guard member, was fatally wounded.

1LT Tiedeman crossed the battlefield under intense enemy fire to render aid to SFC Kennedy. While administering aid with two other Tennessee Guard members, 1LT Tiedeman was forced to stop twice to return fire on the nearly face-to-face enemy.

SGT Betterton, who had earlier dismounted his vehicle to engage the insurgents in the canals, observed an RPG gunner firing and maneuvering on the team's flank within 25 meters of SFC Kennedy, 1LT Tiedeman and the two Tennesseans.

Disregarding his own safety, SGT Betterton advanced under fire and was able to eliminate the RPG gunner. However, he was critically wounded by a sniper, taking shots to the hand, leg and stomach multiple times. Laying down all the fire he could muster while wounded, SGT Betterton diverted insurgents from those rendering aid to SFC Kennedy long enough for them to evacuate him.

Seeing that SGT Betterton was now wounded, pinned down and alone, 1LT Tiedeman made his way through enemy fire to reach him, pulling a lifeless insurgent in front of them to provide cover.

1LT Tiedeman refused to abandon the sergeant in the canal even though SGT Betterton urged him to leave because of the heavy fire they were receiving from a sniper. A short time later, members of the team were able to move alongside the canal, destroy the sniper who had them pinned down and rescue the two.

The Silver Star and Bronze Star citations state that their actions reflected great credit upon themselves, "the 278th Regimental Combat Team and the United States Army."

The team eliminated 17 of the heavily armed insurgents, captured a large cache of weapons and destroyed an insurgent cell that was responsible for training, financing and employing forces throughout central Iraq. **GX**

# 1/158TH INFANTRY HUNTS INSURGENTS IN AFGHANISTAN

Story and photo by PFC Daniel Rangel  
 Courtesy of DVIDS



FOBMEHTARLAM, AFGHANISTAN—Taliban and al-Qaida insurgents manufacturing improvised explosive devices (IED) in the caves and compounds of the Aleshang Valley are being hunted day and night by Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, Arizona National Guard.

The 1/158th has been conducting regular patrols with Afghan security forces as part of a greater effort to push farther into northern Laghman province where, up until now, insurgents have been known to roam relatively freely.

“We’ve seen an increase in insurgent activity in the Aleshang Valley,” said 1LT Darcy Jones, the battalion intelligence officer from Maricopa, AZ.

“Foreign fighters, IED financiers and weapons caches have been identified in the valley,” said CPT Jon Cookson, the battalion plans officer from Phoenix.

The 1/158th mission in Afghanistan is two-fold: In addition to the traditional infantry missions involving patrols and area responsibility in Laghman province, the battalion also provides security forces for Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) across Afghanistan.

“The security our troops provide the PRTs is essential so that the teams can focus on their mission—working with the local Afghans to build schools, roads, infrastructure and support for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan,” said MAJ John Bozicevic, the 1/158th public affairs officer from Chandler, AZ.

The vast majority of the unit’s Citizen-Soldiers hail from Arizona. Additional troops from the Individual Ready Reserve and the Hawaii, New Jersey and New York National Guards fill the ranks. For some, this is their fourth deployment in support of the Global War on Terror.

When not deployed, most of these Soldiers have regular full-time jobs or attend college, but after mobilizing in January, the 1/158th began training for their mission at Fort Bragg, NC, and arrived in Afghanistan in late March.



The 1/158th Soldiers out of FOB Mehtar Lam make regular visits to the Afghan national police compound in Laghman province to link up and conduct patrols alongside them.

The unit also maintains a combat outpost halfway up the Aleshang in Najil in order to maintain a presence there with the Afghan National Army.

“The COP is very austere,” MAJ Bozicevic said. “We need a place where we can operate out of, a place to store water and food. G Battery, 4/319th AFAR of the 173rd [Airborne BCT] runs supplies up all the time.”

During one mission, the 1/158th conducted a foot patrol in the dark and traversed the many different ruins in Laghman province. For this particular mission, the unit was searching for an IED manufacturing site hidden in the bombed-out mud huts of the province.

“Night patrols deter IED emplacement in key areas,” CPT Cookson said.

“The majority of IEDs are emplaced at night,” 1LT Jones added.

The team going out on the dismounted patrol conducted in July included SGT Corey

**IN PURSUIT** SGT Anthony D. Roberts, of Pennsauken, NJ, who helped lead the mounted and dismounted patrols in the Aleshang Valley, Afghanistan, last week, mans the Humvee turret before going out on another patrol.

Conaway, SGT Jose Rodriguez and CSM John Bauer, all from Chandler.

“I think we had good discipline out there,” SGT Rodriguez said.

The terrain is challenging and keeping a low profile requires discipline, strength and stamina.

The process of spreading the influence and authority of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan into these austere places where Humvees can’t reach begins with dismounted patrols. After securing a site, Soldiers construct a combat outpost that can store basic supplies for long-term operations.

“We want to establish a foothold in an area that’s historically been a hideout for insurgents,” 1LT Jones said.

With winter coming, it’s a race against time, MAJ Bozicevic said. **GX**

# OHIO SOLDIER PICKS UP THE PACE



Story and photo by SFC Erick Studenicka, NGB

ARLINGTON, VA—The award on the office wall will look good for many years to come.

But the true reward for LTC Joseph Knott, who, on July 27, became the first National Guard Soldier in 45 years to receive the Pace Award, is the knowledge that the results of his endeavors will endure forever.

The Pace Award recognizes those whose personal efforts have made a contribution of outstanding significance to the Army. LTC Knott, 46, received it for his work as program manager for the Army Compatible Use Buffer (ACUB) program. The program establishes buffer areas near Army and Army National Guard installations to protect endangered species and natural landscapes, and to prevent incompatible development near military installations. The buffers significantly reduce the impact of encroachment on Soldier training and military-equipment testing.

“These buffers are forever,” said LTC Knott, a full-time Soldier from Cincinnati, OH. “The thousands of acres that the Army and its partners have preserved can never be changed. That’s the law. Our grandkids can walk onto that land in the future, and it’s going to be the same as it is today.”

According to the citation, read by Joyce Morrow, administrative assistant to the Secretary of the Army, LTC Knott partnered with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, various federal and state agencies and conservation groups to secure more than 50,000 acres of permanent buffer areas. He also ensured that 18 Army installations now have long-term plans, funding methods and actions to protect accessibility, capacity and capability for Soldier training.

“LTC Knott took this program in its infancy and turned it into the Department of Defense standard for buffer programs,” said Morrow during the ceremony in the Garand Conference Room in the Pentagon. “He was

the right person at the right time for this program. Through his dedication and hard work, the ACUB became the premier tool for the Army to ensure installations can continue to train Soldiers.”

LTC Knott was passionate about the two ideals surrounding the ACUB. “This program incorporates two of the most important things in the world—training Soldiers and preserving the environment,” he said. “That dual concept is what Soldiers should take a look at when they think about the ACUB program. It enables them to continue their realistic training but also protects the earth for their kids and grandkids.

“Those parks, nature preserves and streams that are protected now, they’ll be there until no one else is around,” LTC Knott said.

Established in 1962, the Pace Award is named after former Secretary of the Army Frank Pace, in office 1950–1953. The award is presented annually to one Army officer—lieutenant colonel or below—and one civilian employee.

LTG Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, attended the ceremony and said LTC Knott’s award was just another example of the exciting things he’s seeing from talented National Guard Soldiers. LTG James Campbell, the Department of the Army’s director of Army Staff, was also present.

“It’s historic and we continue to have our Guard members do historic things,” LTG Vaughn said. “We are seeing more Guard Soldiers in greater positions of trust than in the past. The Army is embracing all of its components.”

LTC Knott is currently assigned as a military construction specialist team leader in the Department of the Army’s Base Realignment and Closure Office.

The civilian Pace Award recipient was Kathryn Herhusky. She was unable to attend the ceremony because she is currently in Iraq, embedded with the Provincial Reconstruction Team, 2nd ID. **GX**

## VICTORY MAP >>>



### UNITED STATES



38 00 N, 97 00 W (North America)  
Capital: Washington, DC  
Population: 301,139,947

### Alaska

More than 120 Soldiers graduated from Air Assault School Aug. 24. Hosted by the AKARNG’s 207th Infantry Brigade, the 10-day course was taught by instructors from the National Guard Warrior Training Center from Fort Benning, GA. The Air Assault Course is broken into three phases: Air Assault

Operations, Sling-load Operations and Rappelling Operations. During the course, Soldiers are put through strenuous physical and mental drills, training 10-12 hours a day.

### Arizona

Over 170 Soldiers from the 222nd Transportation Company returned home

# MS SFC RECEIVES BRONZE STAR

Story and photo by SFC Erick Studenicka, NGB

WASHINGTON, DC—Two men SFC John Craig met in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina—LTG H Steven Blum and Mississippi representative Gene Taylor—played a predominant role in recognizing an important chapter in SFC Craig’s military career on Aug. 2, when LTG Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, (NGB) and Taylor presented the Bronze Star to Craig for his service in Iraq.

SFC Craig, 41, received the Bronze Star for meritorious service for his work from February–November 2003, while he was deployed as a base defense NCO supporting the 31st Rear Operations Center, 43rd Area Support Group (ASG), Iraq. He was responsible for the defensive posture of four base camps that housed about 2,500 Soldiers. No casualties were reported during SFC Craig’s stint as base defense NCO.

SFC Craig, a 19-year member of the Mississippi Army National Guard, subsequently had two jobs in Mississippi over the course of six months following Hurricane Katrina. He was the military liaison for Hancock County and then he was a platoon sergeant in Gulfport for the Joint Task Force. SFC Craig’s superior work in Mississippi was noticed by both Taylor and LTG Blum. In fact, at LTG Blum’s invitation, SFC Craig now works as an operations sergeant at NGB in Arlington, VA.

“I was witness to John’s work in Hancock County after Hurricane Katrina,” Taylor said. “With a small contingent, he really did an outstanding job in tough circumstances. He never lost his cool, and he really did save the day.”

“This award is for leadership, courage and common sense,” LTG Blum said. “Not only in Iraq, but in Mississippi, post-Katrina.”

But while LTG Blum and Taylor both remembered SFC Craig for his work in Mississippi, the ceremony in the Rayburn Building adjacent to the Capitol focused on SFC Craig’s achievements in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. With a shortage of staff officers,

SFC Craig was placed in charge of base defense at Log Base Seitz and supervised the building of 95 survivability bunkers at the base. Just days later, the bunkers proved invaluable.

“The week after we completed the building of the survivability bunkers, we took mortar fire at that base and without those bunkers there would have potentially been more injuries and casualties. So that was a good thing that we got done,” SFC Craig said. “We moved many times from one place to another. Our unit didn’t have any casualties. We had 140 Soldiers in the 43rd ASG.”

SFC Craig is the sixth Soldier from the 43rd ASG to be awarded the Bronze Star. He was told he would receive the medal just two days earlier on July 31. Because of the

time lapse, a special board had to convene to bestow the award.

“I’m grateful for it,” said the soft-spoken sergeant, whose hometown is Florence, MS. “I’m happy to serve my state and country, and I thank God for his blessings and the support of my family and friends.”

SFC Craig’s wife, Mitzi Craig, was present for the ceremony, as well as members from NGB operations staff including COL Brent Feick, LTC Michael Stewart and CSM Darrell Clendennen. **GX**

**HONOR** SFC John Craig receives the Bronze Star for Meritorious Service from LTG H Steven Blum, while his wife Mitzi Craig and Mississippi representative Gene Taylor (far right) look on.



on Aug. 21 from Kuwait. During their 12 months in the Central command Area of Responsibility, the 222nd completed more than 220 missions, driving 1.4 million miles to deliver critical supplies to troops. Their mission was to provide transportation support to Allied Forces in support of OIF. For their actions in Iraq, 15 Soldiers were awarded the

Bronze Star, 17 were awarded Meritorious Service Medals and 66 earned the Combat Action Badge for direct enemy contact.

**Arkansas**

As the 449th Aviation Support Battalion arrived home, family and friends began cheering when the first uniformed

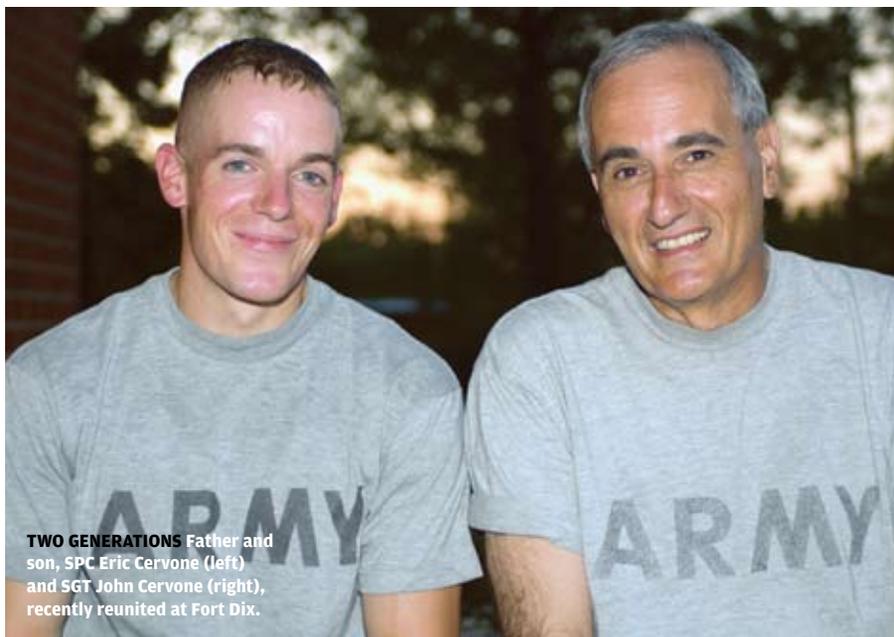
personnel appeared in the passageway. The troops were the final group of the battalion to return. The units’ initial wave of 30 Soldiers came home in July.

**Delaware**

The Delaware Army National Guard graduated its 50th Officer Candidate School class on Sept. 8. The OCS

program is run by the Guard’s 193rd Regional Training Institute and is a commissioning source for Army second lieutenants. The first class graduated in 1957 and each year, with the exception of 1995, there has been a graduating class. The latest class will make a total of 549 lieutenants produced by the program.

# FATHER AND SON REUNITE TO TRAIN AND DEPLOY



**TWO GENERATIONS** Father and son, SPC Eric Cervone (left) and SGT John Cervone (right), recently reunited at Fort Dix.

By SPC Michael R. Sherman II, 65th PAO

FORT DIX, NJ—The thick, mid-Atlantic humidity blanketed a convoy of four armed vehicles like dense, sticky fog. The temperature hovered somewhere in the high 90s. SGT John Cervone felt like he was back in the jungles of Vietnam. He sat motionless in the turret, a constant and uninterrupted flow of perspiration slid down his forehead and cheek until it finally dripped off his chin. His eyes darted back and forth erratically as he studied the landscape, observing anything and everything that moved.

SGT Cervone, along with the other members of the 65th PAO out of Massachusetts

and Rhode Island, took part in the convoy as a small, yet necessary, part of their training at Fort Dix, NJ. The Soldiers of the 65th are preparing to deploy to Iraq, where they'll support media operations in the Combined Press Information Center in Baghdad. A full-time Guard Soldier, SGT Cervone worked as chief editor of the *Ocean State Guardian* the official publication of the Rhode Island National Guard.

"This is my final hoo-rah," he said with a smile. But that isn't the only reason he's deploying.

His son, SPC Eric Cervone, is also training. He's a member of the 169th Military Police Company out of Warren, RI. The recent

graduate of the University of Rhode Island initially joined the Marine Corps out of high school. Shortly after 9/11, he went to Camp Lejeune in North Carolina and remained on active duty for two years, before returning to Rhode Island to attend college.

SPC Cervone played football in college, while in the Marine Corps Reserve. He finished his obligation and then transferred to the Rhode Island Army National Guard (ARNG). Like his father, SPC Cervone will be deployed to Iraq with the 169th some time in the near future.

The father and son recently reunited at Fort Dix. It was the first time they had seen each other since SPC Cervone graduated in early May, SGT Cervone said. He volunteered to deploy with the public affairs unit shortly after hearing that his son was going over.

"I wanted to be in the same situation as my son," said SGT Cervone, a Vietnam Veteran.

The father and son may look alike, but at their Fort Dix meeting, SPC Cervone had the animated grin of a Veteran-to-be, whereas SGT Cervone rendered a more tranquil look of reflection and pride. They discussed training gone by and drills yet to come.

Though the pair will travel to Iraq at different times and support different missions, their duties are equally demanding.

SGT Cervone will work on the Press Desk at the Combined Press Information Center in Baghdad. It's a round-the-clock job, which requires meticulous accuracy and attention to detail. SPC Cervone will spend many days outside the wire, supporting various military police missions throughout the country. Even at 59, SGT Cervone can still keep up with the best of them. **GX**

## VICTORY MAP >>

### Kentucky

The KY NG History eMuseum has reopened its virtual doors after a significant overhaul, including a new Web address, [www.KYNGHistory.ky.gov](http://www.KYNGHistory.ky.gov). The new site will be a source for users to share and learn KY NG history. It offers extensive resources, such as

historical publications and articles dealing with the KY NG, and more is on the way.

### Maine

Operation Recognition has honored and rewarded more than 12 families with an all-expense paid vacation at the Sheepscoot Harbour Inn and

Resort. The operation is a non-profit, non-partisan organization that is designed to honor and reward military service members and their families. Forty-eight military families will participate throughout the year. To learn more about becoming a part of Operation Recognition, visit the Web site at [www.OperationRecognition.com](http://www.OperationRecognition.com).

### Ohio

Hundreds of people stood behind Ohio's "Gold Star Families" June 30 for the Ohio Fallen Heroes Memorial dedication. The memorial is in remembrance of 169 Ohio Soldiers lost in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Family members took the opportunity to share their experiences with



# ARNG BIKE BUILD UNDERWAY

By Jason West

As part of the ongoing Army National Guard and Orange County Chopper (OCC) custom bike project, GX had the chance to talk with Paul Teutul Sr. and Paul Teutul Jr. (Paulie), shop owners and stars of the hit TV show.

Orange County Chopper (the actual bike shop) was founded in 1999 and debuted their first custom bike, True Blue, that same year at Biketoberfest in Daytona, FL. The shop and its family owners shot to fame in 2002 when they became the focus of a self-titled reality show on the Discovery Channel (now on TLC).

The Teutuls have a history of building bikes with patriotic themes, beginning with the Fire Bike, which was designed by Paulie to commemorate the New York City firefighters who gave their lives on 9/11. Since that time, they have produced theme bikes for several branches of the military.

The duo claims their patriotism is the reason for producing the bikes and embarking on this project.

“Why wouldn’t you be patriotic?” Paul said. “We’re living the American Dream right now, and the only reason is that we

have people like the National Guard who are protecting our country. There’s a lot of gratitude for that.”

Paulie had a similar take, saying, “These men and women are out there fighting for us. So, what can we do for them? The only opportunity we have is to pay tribute to the people who serve—past, present and future—via any outlets we have, like the show, or by showing up at Walter Reed.”

At press time, the winners of the competition had been selected and work was beginning on the bike. Elements for the final design were taken from the essays and drawings submitted by four Guard Soldiers: David Vasquez (CO), Rich Crawford, who is currently deployed (IL), Matthew Billet (GA) and Joseph Scheibe (OH).

Although they didn’t discuss the details of the design, both Teutuls seemed excited.

“It’s going to be hot. The bike is going to be very cool,” Paulie said. “I think it speaks volumes about what we experienced with the Army National Guard. When you see it you’ll know right away that it’s a Guard bike.”

Paul, true to his gruff character, was terser saying, “It’ll be awesome.”

**EASY RIDERS** Three of the four winners of the ARNG Bike Design Contest pose with the Teutuls at the OCC Shop. From left: SFC Matthew Billet (GA), Paul Teutul Sr., PFC Joseph Scheibe (OH), Paul Teutul Jr., CW3 David Vasquez (CO), Micheal Teutul.

The pair commended the men and woman of the Guard and their families for their constant support and service to our country.

“We love . . . [the Soldiers] and we’re going to keep supporting them,” Paulie shared. “We appreciate them supporting us by watching our show. The families go through an awful lot. Parents with kids overseas . . . kids with their fathers and mothers overseas in the war, and they’re not sure what’s going on—that’s a lot of stress on the family and a lot of sacrifice. And they’re doing it for people like myself who are living a normal, average life . . . at the end of the day, we support them and we love them.”

Foregoing his tough public persona, Paul warmly shared his thoughts and prayers for Soldiers. “I would like to wish them all the luck in the world,” he said. “For the Soldiers out there, be safe. Believe it or not, I pray every day. And I pray for our country and our Soldiers. They’re always in my prayers.” **GX**

CHRIS WEST

each other, and political and military dignitaries such as U.S. Representative Patrick Tiberi, Representative Jon Peterson and MG Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general.

## Oklahoma

The OKARNG announced that the 45th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

received their mobilization order for duty in support of OIF. The unit has been on alert for possible duty in Iraq since April. Last October, more than 2,400 OKARNG Soldiers mobilized for active duty in Iraq. All Soldiers affected by this deployment are expected to be back home one year after their mobilization date.

## South Dakota

CPT Tim Schlotterback accepted the Pershing Trophy Aug. 27 on behalf of the 740th Transportation Company, SDARNG. The first Pershing Trophy was presented by GEN John J. Pershing for team competition at the 1919 Inter-Allied Games in Paris. The original bronze trophy of a WWI Soldier firing a service

pistol was brought back to the U.S. The trophy is now presented as a plaque to the 1st Army unit with the most outstanding marksmanship qualification records during the training year.

## Tennessee

On Aug. 12, SGT James C. Taylor was awarded the Purple Heart for

# OPERATION SOLDIER ASSIST BENEFITS MO SOLDIER AND FAMILY



Grantham University representatives present the Bellis family with a \$10,000 check from Grantham and GX.

By Bethany Buckingham

LOWRY CITY, MO—With saw blades whirring and hammers, more than 40 home-remodeling professionals, Soldiers and volunteers chipped in mid-September for Operation Soldier Assist, a humanitarian effort to remodel the home of SGT (ret.) George Bellis.

Operation Soldier Assist was organized by the Kansas City NARI (National Association of the Remodeling Industry) in cooperation with the Greater Kansas City Association of the U.S. Army (KCAUSA).

“It is our intent, and that of KCAUSA, that this project serves as a model for bringing communities and organizations together to help those who have served and sacrificed for our country,” said Scott Balentine, CR, CLC, Kansas City NARI president and owner of Lifestyles Custom Homes & Remodeling, Inc.

NARI members donated materials and labor to make improvements to the home of Bellis, who lives in a farmhouse in Lowry City with his wife, Tricia, and their three young

children. Volunteers assisted the family and organized support.

Guard members from Recruiting Command and the Clinton Armory assisted the project by helping with demolition, cleanup, moving items, directing traffic, cordoning off parking areas and supporting the remodeling professionals.

“We couldn’t have done this without the National Guard’s help,” said Diane Boeger, KCAUSA member and Operation Soldier Assist co-coordinator. According to Boeger, it was the Guard who identified a Soldier in need for the project.

“We are totally overwhelmed by the generosity of Kansas City NARI and the KCAUSA,” said Tricia Bellis. “While we believe there are other families who may be more deserving, we are most grateful for all of the wonderful volunteers who donated materials and their time to make improvements to our home. We cannot thank them enough.”

Upon his return home from his Operation Iraqi Freedom tour in 2003–2004, Bellis was diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury. He

was medically discharged from the Missouri Guard due to the extent of his injuries. Because of his condition, Bellis’ wife terminated her employment to care for him and their children.

Tricia Bellis was presented with the key to her home and a \$30,000 four-year scholarship for tuition, books and software from Grantham University. She will pursue a degree online and remain at home to care for her family.

To help the Bellis family kick off this new chapter in their lives, GX and Grantham partnered to give the family a check for \$10,000.

“We’re just honored to be a part of this great event,” commented GX’s publisher Mitch Powers. “GX is all about helping our Soldiers and their families. So, when we heard about the Bellis family and Operation Soldier Assist, we were eager to be involved.”

“Patriots come in many forms,” said DeAnn Wandler, director of admissions at Grantham and a director of the local KCAUSA board. “The wives and children of our military members face unique challenges like location, separation and financial hardship. When a Soldier is deployed, the spouse becomes a single parent. These family warriors are often overlooked. We’re excited to invest in the future of this family and give the gift that keeps on giving—education.”

In total, the project consisted of over \$50,000 in donations for furnishings, volunteer meals and the scholarship.

“One organization cannot provide this type of support,” said COL (ret.) Mike Neer, president of KCAUSA. “But, when one group asks two others and those ask another two, and so on—by the end, you have a community providing support. When groups come together, you can accomplish so much more.”

KCAUSA is one of 127 Association of the U.S. Army (AUSA) chapters located in nine regions worldwide. **GX**

Want to chip in your support?

You can make a donation to:

**Association of the United States Army, Greater Kansas City Chapter  
Soldier and Family Support Fund  
PO Box 27250  
Overland Park, KS 66225-2750**

## VICTORY MAP >>>

wounds he received during combat operations in Iraq. SGT Taylor is a member of the 278th ACR and was deployed from November 2004 to October 2005. During a mission on June 17, 2005, SGT Taylor was the gunner on a Humvee when an IED struck his vehicle. His patrol held the ambush site until relieved by another

unit. SGT Taylor recovered from his wounds and finished his tour.

### Texas

Texas Military Forces honored the Choctaw “code talkers” of WWI during events on Camp Mabry Sept. 16. Lesser known than the Navaho code talkers in the Pacific theater of opera-

tions in WWII, the Choctaws pioneered the military’s use of a Native American language to baffle enemy code-breakers. LTG Charles G. Rodriguez, adjutant general of Texas, presented 18 Lone Star Medals of Valor to the families of the code talkers.

# GUARD ASSUMES COMMAND OF ACTIVE DUTY UNIT

Story and photo by SSG Joe Cashion, 108th PAD

COLUMBIA, SC—For the first time ever, Army National Guard (ARNG) officers assumed command of an Active Duty Advanced Individual Training unit in a ceremony that took place at Fort Jackson, SC on Aug. 29.

Taking command of the recently activated Echo Company, 369th Adjutant General Battalion, is 1LT Shannon Cummings.

Before taking this assignment, 1LT Cummings was the Bonus and Incentive Program Manager for the ARNG at the National Guard Bureau (NGB) in Arlington, VA. In this capacity, she was responsible for formulating the bonus policy, which brought a lot of the Soldiers she will command into the ARNG.

“With the training I’ve received during my career, I feel prepared and excited about taking over this mission,” said 1LT Cummings.

Due to the increasing number of Soldiers needing support in the adjutant general school, activating Echo Company was the solution. Enlisted numbers increased from 3,700 in fiscal year 2006 to a projected 6,800

in the upcoming fiscal year. Echo Company’s mission is to train Soliders in the 42A Human Resources MOS. Fort Jackson is the largest and most active initial entry training post in the U.S. Army.

Activating the company and selecting ARNG officers to fill the command roles was due in large part to the work of COL Tammy Miracle, the Senior Guard Advisor to the Commanding General, Fort Jackson. Her initiative and innovative thinking allowed the ARNG the opportunity to fill the vacancies.

1LT Cummings and executive officer 1LT Rob AuBuchon were then hand picked by NGB to command the unit. According to COL Rob Porter, Chief, Personnel Programs, Manpower and Resources Division NGB, both are more than ready to lead an Active Duty unit.

“We looked at the population of eligible company grade officers serving on Title 10 orders and chose the best and the brightest,” he said. “It wasn’t a done deal until they interviewed with and were selected by the 369th Command Group.”

1LT AuBuchon is a former drill sergeant



**HAND-PICKED** Taking command of Echo Company, 369th Adjutant General Battalion at Fort Jackson, SC, are National Guard officers 1LT Shannon Cummings, commander (left), and the executive officer, 1LT Rob AuBuchon (right).

and master recruiter. Like 1LT Cummings, he’s ready to take on the challenge of leading a company of 321 Active Duty Soldiers. “It’s a great opportunity to lead Soldiers,” 1LT AuBuchon said.

Most importantly, 1LTs Cummings and AuBuchon will have the full support of Active Duty leaders, according to LTC Richard Teolis, commander of the 369th Adjutant General Battalion. “These officers come on board highly trained and skilled, with a deep breadth of experience,” he said.

“I don’t consider them different from any other active duty Soldier. We’re all on one team, striving to accomplish one mission—taking care of Soldiers.” **GX**

# BUILDING BIKES TO BUILD CHARACTER

By Michelle Key, MOARNG PAO

KANSAS CITY, MO—Many Missouri National Guard Soldiers participate in community service, but SFC Nathaniel Alcorn brings the community service home. SFC Alcorn is the founder of KC KIDS, a program for young people to learn discipline and respect while having fun.

More than 17 years ago, he started KC KIDS (Keeping Christian Kids Involved in Services) as a way to keep his son out of trouble. Today, 25 students ages 6–17, including his grandsons, take part in the program, which is

focused on earning money to rebuild bicycles from used parts.

But it’s not just about the bikes. The students complete community service by cleaning up trash, mowing lawns and gathering food for needy families.

“The kids are learning to work for what they get. They are learning to become self-sufficient,” SFC Alcorn said.

The most anticipated event is a 5.5-mile bike trip to the National Guard Armory. The program is operated much like the Guard. The students learn drill and ceremony techniques

and have a rank system, including authentic MOARNG rank pins.

Members also are responsible for specific tasks in the program, such as medics, maintenance managers, cooks or financial planners.

When asked why he still runs the program, SFC Alcorn said he’s trying to keep the kids out of trouble.

“I have so many kids send me thank-you cards to this day, saying that they would be in jail or dead if it weren’t for me,” he said. “They’ve ended up in a bike club instead of a gang.” **GX**

## VICTORY MAP >>>



### AFGHANISTAN



33 00 N, 65 00 E (Southern Asia)  
Capital: Kabul  
Population: 31,899,923

On Aug. 18, Aviation Soldiers from Company E, 1st Battalion, 285th Aviation Regiment, AZARNG, were awarded the Basic Aviation Badge for their service as door gunners. SGT John Jones, SPC William Arnell, SPC Phillip Bencomo, SPC Jose Holguin, SPC Ronald Krish, SPC Michael Smith and SPC David White were recognized

for their training and execution of duties during aviation operations as door gunners with Company C, 2nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 82nd CAB.

# “BATTELMIND” HELPS SOLDIERS READJUST

By Jason West

Army National Guard Soldiers returning home from deployment face many challenges, particularly in reconnecting with their family and community. They need realistic redeployment training to understand what to expect and how to cope with life back home. Fortunately, Battlemind training programs, designed by the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research (WRAIR), are there to help.

The term “battlemind” describes a Soldier’s inner strength to face adversity, fear and hardship during combat with confidence and resolution. It’s the will to persevere and win. It describes how deployed Soldiers adapt to an environment where decisions have to be made quickly, targeted aggression is appropriate and emotional control is essential.

Many returning Soldiers report difficulties switching from these normal combat responses to appropriate responses at home. Although these challenges may seem similar to Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), they are usually normal coping experiences.

Battlemind training programs, available at [www.Battlemind.org](http://www.Battlemind.org), have been developed by the WRAIR for use by Soldiers and their families before and after deployment. One of these tools is a training program for use between three and six months after returning from a deployment. The 35-minute training seeks to educate Soldiers about readjustment challenges by framing symptoms in terms of combat strengths and describing how they may create problems once Soldiers return home. For example, tactical awareness, a prized asset in combat, may translate into hyper-vigilance at home.

Battlemind training is just one part of a larger initiative: the comprehensive Post Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA) and Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) programs. These mandatory assessments provide Soldiers an opportunity to

speak with licensed healthcare providers about any concerns they may have immediately after they return from deployment and once again 90 to 180 days after their return.

Response to the programs has been positive. “The personnel who ran the screening had great attitudes,” said SFC Thomas Hooker, 1073rd Maintenance Company, Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG). “You could

really tell they put the importance on the Soldiers’ well-being. There was no sense that they were hurrying to get you done and out of the way.”

SFC Daniel Whitmoyer, of the 1073rd Maintenance Company, MIARNG, gave advice for future training participants.

“Take your time to answer all questions honestly,” he said. “Don’t fly through the form to get it done. It’s there to help you.”

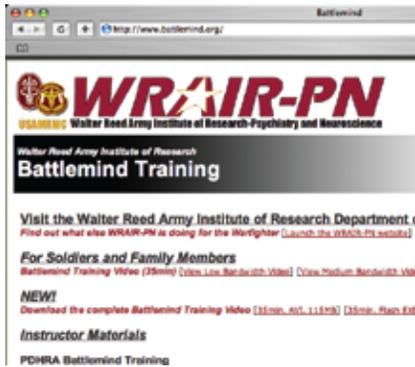
In addition to the Battlemind training programs, the PDHA and PDHRA, there are multiple other resources for Soldiers and families who may need support after returning from deployment.

Readjustment counseling is available through the Vet Center. Staff is available toll-free during normal business hours at (800) 905-4675 and (866) 496-8838, or by visiting [www.va.gov/rcs](http://www.va.gov/rcs).

Contact Military OneSource for free face-to-face counseling services for Soldiers and their families by calling (800) 342-9647 or visiting [www.MilitaryOneSource.com](http://www.MilitaryOneSource.com).

For children, the TV show “Sesame Street” has developed a multimedia kit to help families with young children cope with deployment. Families can download material at [www.SesameWorkshop.org/tlc](http://www.SesameWorkshop.org/tlc).

The Self-Assessment Screening for Mental Health, available 24/7 at [www.MilitaryMentalHealth.org](http://www.MilitaryMentalHealth.org), may help Soldiers take the first step toward getting help: acknowledging that there’s a problem. **GX**



# LTG BLUM: GUARD AT PEAK OF EXCELLENCE

Story and photo by SSG Jim Greenhill, NGB

BOSTON, MA—As the chief of the National Guard Bureau bragged about today's Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen to sports commentators at Fenway Park, a 91-year-old WWII Veteran sitting in the stands below the broadcasting booth made similar claims on behalf of today's Guard members.

During the fifth inning of the Aug. 17 Red Sox game against the Los Angeles Angels, LTG H Steven Blum told Gerry Remy and Don Orsillo of the New England Sports Network that 70 percent of Guard members have served at least one tour related to the Global War on Terror.

"We're in 40 countries," LTG Blum said. "We're providing about 50,000 troops overseas as you and I are talking and watching this ballgame; 6,000 on the Southwest border, and about 10,000 called out by their governors for forest fires, floods... [and] getting ready for hurricanes."

LTG Blum explained how being a Guard member requires balancing civilian vocations, schooling and family life with military commitments.

"This is the most experienced, combat-proven force that we've ever had," he concluded.

He was in Boston in part to visit with members of the 29th Infantry Division Association, which includes Soldiers from the National Guard, who have served as long ago as WWII and as recently as this year in Afghanistan and Iraq.

One of those Soldiers—Stanley Bernstein—was watching the ballgame below where LTG Blum was being interviewed.

Bernstein was a platoon sergeant when he landed on Omaha Beach on the French coast. His platoon came ashore in a different place than planned.

"We were supposed to oppose one German division," he said. "Instead, there were three divisions on maneuvers and they decimated our troops."

Twenty-three of his men died. For the next four years and seven months, Bernstein fought the Germans and their allies from France through Belgium and into Germany, where he was among Soldiers who entered the concentration camps.

About every two years until he was in his 80s and could no longer make the journey, Bernstein went back to the beach where his comrades fell, keeping a promise he had made to their memory.

He took his wife. "You couldn't have been here," she said. "How did you get on top of that mountain?"

He took each of his five children. "I wanted to show each child the horrors I went through serving our great country, and I wanted to tell them how proud I was doing this and wanted them to instill this in others."

He has been married for 60 years, has five children and 12 grandchildren, and retired as a successful businessman.

Yet when a uniformed Soldier sitting next to him reminded Bernstein how he and his colleagues are often called the "Greatest Generation," he replied: "Today's Soldiers, in my judgment—the sacrifices they are making are the most commendable thing I've ever seen. The last six years, you've been doing services that are so outstanding. The National Guard has done an outstanding job."

Bernstein said he fought to repay his adopted country—and still would.

"Having been a first generation American—my parents came from Europe—I felt I owed my country, because it [has] been so great to our family. Only in America can you come from poverty and make a decent living, sleep peacefully in a house every day, drive a car. For a minority, being Jewish, coming from nowhere, having no background, you were able to get an education, get a decent job. I'm grateful to our country. I would give my life for it."

Meanwhile, LTG Blum was upstairs talking with Remy and Orsillo.

"It bonds generations," he said of military service. "The quality of the Guard is better than it [has] ever been at any time in the history of the Guard." **GX**

**GROUP MEETING** At Fort Dix, NJ, LTG H Steven Blum meets with members of 1st Battalion, 158th Cavalry, of the MDARNG and other National Guard troops deploying overseas.



# CALLING ALL “GRILL SERGEANTS”

The Pentagon Channel is launching an exciting, new military lifestyle program called “The Grill Sergeants”—and we need your help!

This weekly cooking show will feature some of the military’s top chefs as they guide viewers through step-by-step preparation of your favorite regional dishes.

Stay tuned for “The Grill Sergeants” serving up meals . . . military-style. **GX**



Send your recipes, along with a video or photo of you and your dish, and you could be featured on the show.

[info@pentagonchannel.mil](mailto:info@pentagonchannel.mil)



Serving Those Who Serve

# KFOR9 RAMPS UP FOR KOSOVO DEPLOYMENT



Story and photos by CPT Darrin Haas

With operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom being the main focus of the news and on the minds of most Soldiers, other roles and important missions of the National Guard receive very little notice or attention. One such mission is the NATO-led peacekeeping operation in the small province of Kosovo. In March 1999, Kosovo commanded the nation's attention as NATO bombed Serbian ground forces. But today, most people would have a hard time finding it on a map even though U.S. forces have been there since June of 1999, maintaining security under a United Nations mandate.

Approximately 1,500 National Guard members organized under the 29th Infantry Division are presently serving in Kosovo as part of the U.S.-led Multi-National Task Force East, which is part of a much larger

international force called the Kosovo Force (KFOR). The 29th ID, currently headquartered at Camp Bondsteel and also referred to as KFOR8, has been arduously conducting peacekeeping operations and maintaining stability in Kosovo since December 2006, but relief is on the way.

In mid-July, more than 1,200 Soldiers from 22 states took Camp Atterbury, IN, by storm, eager and ready to train for KFOR9 and take their turn in the Balkans region. Commanded by the 35th ID of the Kansas National Guard, these Soldiers came ready to do their part. Mainly coming from Kansas, Minnesota, Tennessee, Missouri, Indiana, Mississippi, North Carolina and New Jersey, these Soldiers, among others, have already proved themselves up for the task. Many are combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as having served on previous KFOR rotations.

One Soldier serving in Task Force Guardian, SPC Michael Sutherland, has already served two yearlong tours in Iraq, and this will be his third tour since enlisting in the Tennessee Army National Guard in 2002. Volunteering to mobilize as soon as the mission was announced, he's very excited about getting the chance to deploy to the Balkans.

"I look forward to working on my first peacekeeping mission and getting to see a different part of the world," SPC Sutherland said. "While in Iraq, I really enjoyed working with the Iraqi police, and I now look forward to being a part of the NATO task force in Kosovo."

As a member of Task Force Guardian, the military police component of the rotation, SPC Sutherland will get the chance to work with numerous European nations, as well as the Serbian and Albanian populace. He has

already served in some of the most dangerous areas in Baghdad and built relations with coalition forces throughout the Middle East. He will bring some unique experiences into the theater. There are many Soldiers like SPC Sutherland on board throughout this KFOR rotation, and every one is ready to maintain peace and security in the region.

KFOR9 trained rigorously at Camp Atterbury throughout July and August before departing overseas to relieve KFOR8. It will be tough and demanding, but there's

no doubt that with Citizen-Soldiers like SPC Sutherland, this will be one the best KFOR rotations ever to leave the United States. **GX**

**40MM OF FUN (left)** A gunner and assistant gunner from Task Force Guardian pound targets with a MK-19 at the range at Camp Atterbury.

**TEAM TOUGH (below)** SSG Joseph Oglesby from Task Force Guardian leads his team through MOUT training at the Milan Training Center in Tennessee prior to mobilization.



**CPT Darrin Haas** is currently the Detention Facility Officer for Task Force Guardian and recently deployed with KFOR 9. He was a Navy Rescue Swimmer before being commissioned in the Tennessee Army National Guard. He deployed to Iraq from February 2003 to February 2004 as a military police platoon leader. Since returning home, he has commanded the 269th Military Police Company and participated in Operation Vigilant Sentry 2005 in Bulgaria, responded to Gulfport, MS, during Hurricane Katrina, conducted tornado relief operations in Gallatin, TN, and did two rotations for Operation Jump Start in Yuma, AZ.

# GUARD STANDS READY FOR DISASTERS



**BIG, YELLOW CONVOY** Contracted civilian commercial buses make their way to the designated staging area at various evacuation pick points located in the Rio Grande Valley in preparation for Hurricane Dean, Aug. 20.

Intro By SSG Heather G. Allen

GX regularly reports on the amazing job Guard Soldiers do when disaster calls. Recently, Texas Soldiers were activated in preparation for a possible hurricane. South Dakota and Indiana cleaned up towns after severe storms caused massive damage and Soldiers in Montana kept citizens safe from blazing fires.

When communities are in need, they look to the Guard members among them.

## TEXAS

By 1SG Lek Mateo and TSgt Gregory Ripps, TX NG

Strings of military vehicles and commercial buses snaked their way from all points of Texas toward the Rio Grande Valley to help with the possible evacuation of several coastal communities threatened by Hurricane Dean.

As a pre-eminent response to the enormous Category 5 hurricane, Gov. Rick Perry initiated the state's emergency plan to prepare for the evacuation of thousands of residents.

The Texas National Guard was activated Aug. 16 to help support the impending effort.

A task force brought together assets including aviators, medical personnel, communications, transportation and security joining local, state and federal responders.

The first 36 hours saw the mobilization of more than 4,700 TMF (Texas Military Forces) personnel and included 50 fixed- and rotary-winged aircrafts from the Guard that were pre-staged at several key locations throughout the state. Approximately 1,100 buses were ready to help with the evacuation of an estimated 42,000 residents.

COL John F. Nichols of the 149th Fighter Wing, and JTF Commander, said that mobilizing the resources needed for this type of mission was a daunting task, and the Guard performed excellently on short notice.

"It has been an outstanding effort by everyone involved with this endeavor," said COL Nichols.

Brent Branham, deputy city manager of McAllen, commended the volunteers for being ready to evacuate the citizens.

Branham acknowledged that it's best to be proactive in these situations and said it's tough for state officials to determine when a hurricane might strike, but knowing that volunteers were ready to respond was reassuring.

The hurricane did its damage in Mexico and didn't spawn tornadoes or heavy rains in south Texas as feared. Although the Guard was ready for relief efforts, the threat evaporated and troops redeployed. Even so, they had accomplished plenty.

Guard members manned bus evacuation hubs, set up refueling stations along the evacuation route, readied shelters and maintained the task force headquarters.

"This was a true joint operation," COL Nichols added. "We not only had the Texas Military Forces, but also a number of civilian agencies all working together."

TMF's response fully tested the elements of a state hurricane evacuation and response plan that had been developed since Hurricane Rita.

The event provided TMF with valuable real-world challenges, offering an opportunity

to correct or improve both hurricane response and other operations and procedures.

“We had good plans, but until we break them and practice, we don’t know,” said COL Nichols. “Although, luckily, it turned out to be an exercise, as far as we knew it was real.”

**SOUTH DAKOTA**

By MAJ Orson Ward, SDARNG PAO

Twenty-three Soldiers from the 109th Regional Support Group, and the 842nd Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, were activated for state active duty Aug. 21 to help support the Department of Public Safety, Office of Emergency Management in recovery operations after the governor declared Hermosa, SD, to be in a state of emergency.

Soldiers focused on removal of debris from the streets in the wake of several thunderstorms that pounded the town with heavy rainfall, flooding and damaging hail Aug. 17.

**MONTANA**

By MAJ Garth Scott, MTARNG PAO

Assuring public safety from the fires that have been ravaging Montana this summer often goes beyond the normal door-to-door

evacuations. It also includes informing the public of the latest risks in their area and unknowingly going into a fire area.

This year, the Montana National Guard has deployed approximately 500 Soldiers to assist in helping fire crews, local law enforcement and the highway patrol by setting up security posts in dangerous areas close to the fire perimeter. They also help with the door-to-door evacuations and even help the camps keep their parking organized. However, security is their main focus this year.

Security is often pulled in two 12-hour shifts with two to three Soldiers or Airmen at each checkpoint. Their duties include

keeping the public a safe distance from the fires, informing residents of the latest information from local law enforcement agencies

and keeping a daily check for who is entering and leaving the perimeter.

Most Soldiers and Airmen say the toughest part of their job is telling people they cannot return to their homes. “It’s not much fun being the bearer of bad news, but so far, most all of the people that we have had to deal with have been great. They have brought the service members food and warm drinks when they have been out all night on checkpoints,” said MAJ Garth Scott.

MG Randy Mosley, MTARNG adjutant general, has made many visits to Incident Commanders across Montana to discuss support and mediate between local offices and the Soldiers. He talks with them about their living conditions and how they were doing away from home and their civilian jobs, but most importantly he wants to ensure that the Guard Soldiers are doing everything possible to make their presence successful.

“It’s important to visit the Soldiers and the Airmen at the checkpoints and to see how things are going, and let them know that Montana appreciates what the National Guard is doing,” said MG Mosley.

**INDIANA**

By LTC Deedra Thombleson, INARNG PAO

Under the auspices of the Indiana Department of Homeland Security, the Indiana National Guard continued through August to provide assistance to local civilian authorities and emergency services agencies in northwest Indiana.

Indiana Soldiers, operating on state active duty orders already on site in northern Indiana counties, rendered aid to counties afflicted by severe storm and flooding.

These Soldiers employed various vehicles and equipment to assist in mobility and debris clearing and removal efforts in afflicted areas. Additionally, they provided assistance with personnel and equipment to fill, preposition and employ sandbags. **GX**

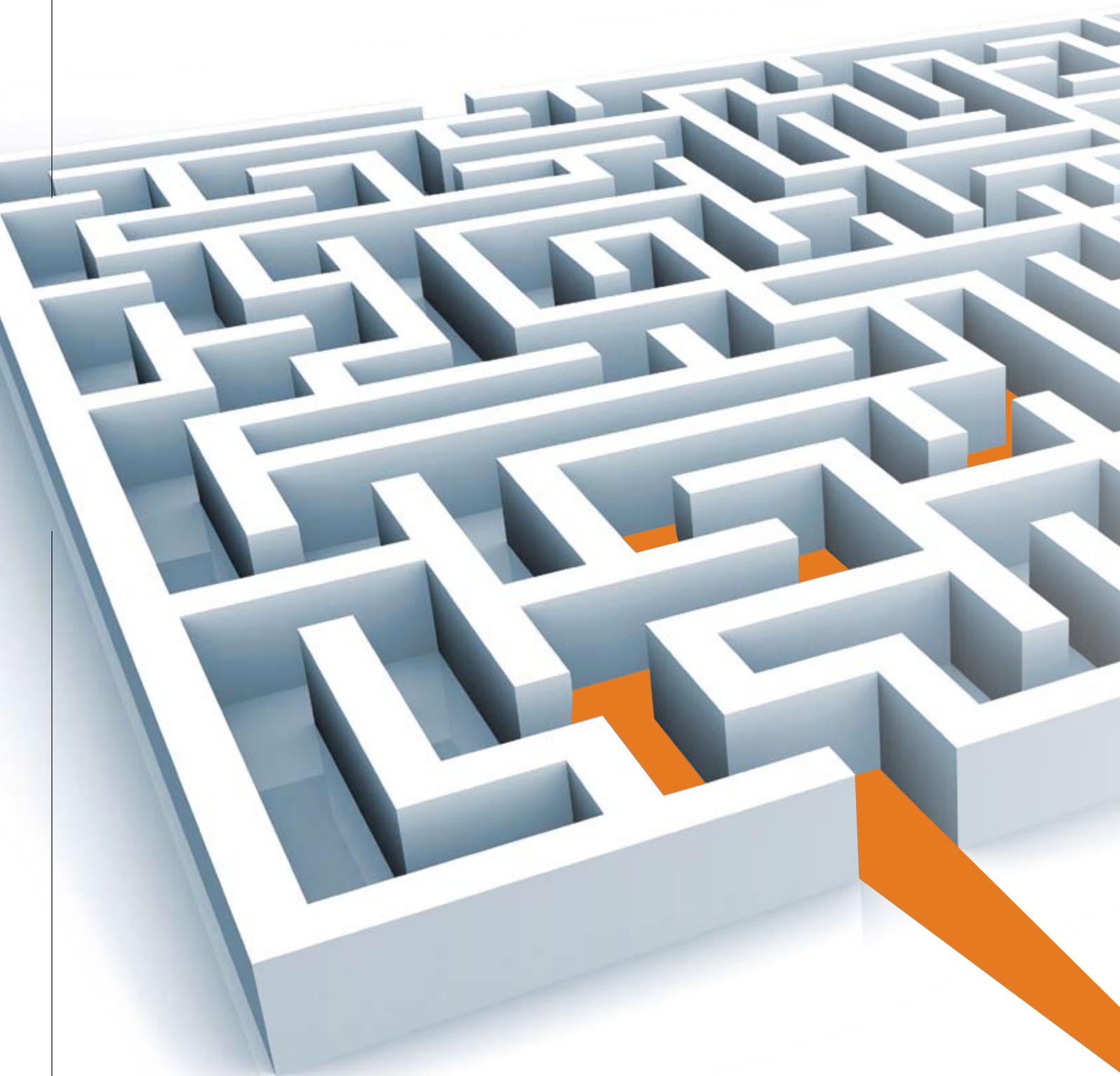
**It has been an outstanding effort by everyone involved with this endeavor.**

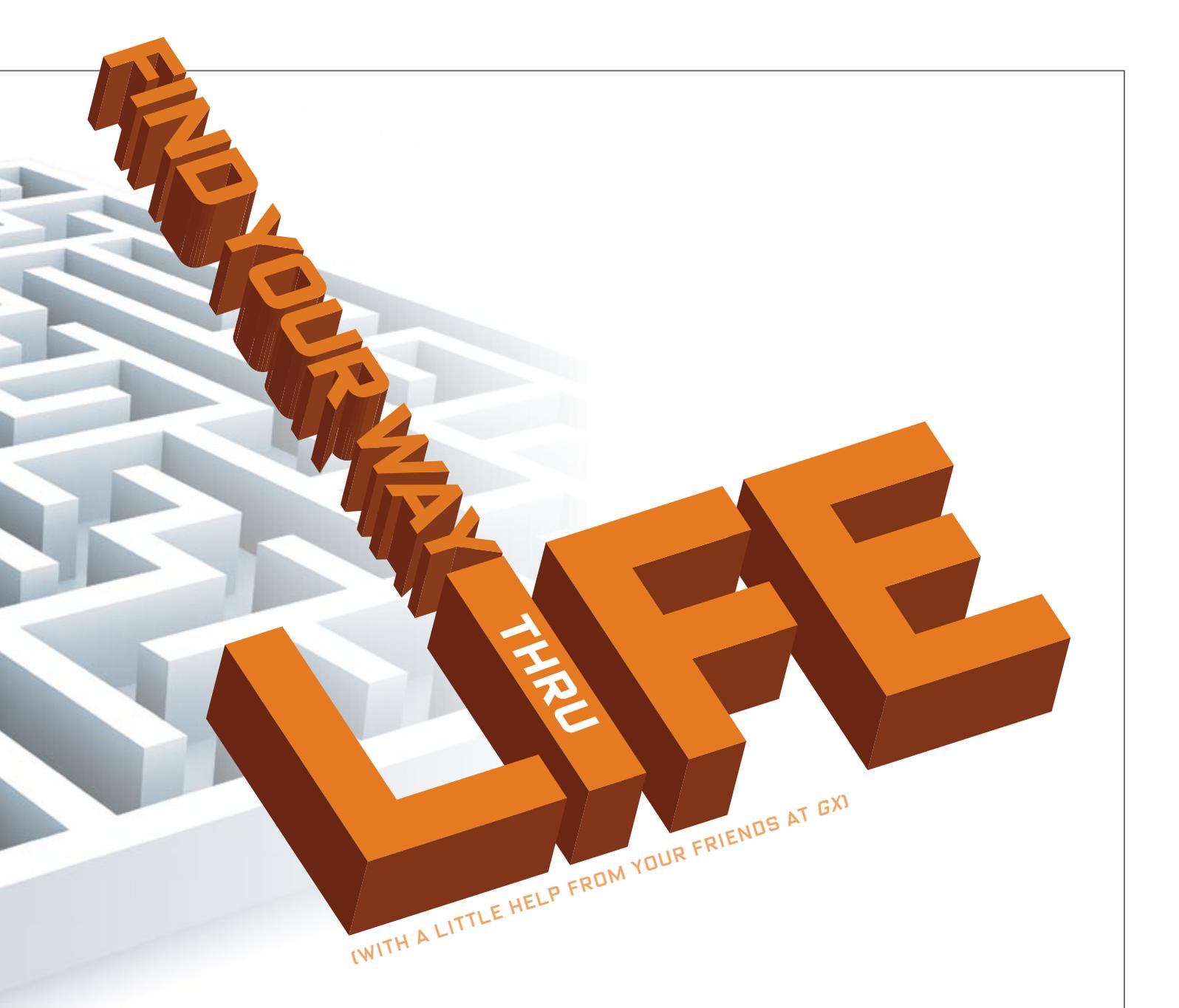
—COL John F. Nichols



**CLEARING IT OUT** SPC Corbin Peterson of the 842nd Engineer Company, SDARNG scoops up a debris pile for removal from the streets of Hermosa, SD, left over in the wake of severe thunderstorms, Aug. 17.

CPT ANTHONY DEISS





By Chris West, SSG Heather Allen and Vivian Hodges

As we wander through life we discover a number of items that should have been taught somewhere along the way but never were. Most of it is basic common-sense knowledge that could have easily been covered in our senior year in high school.

“Life 101” would have been a great class and may have saved us all a lot of grief and heartache over the years. Alas, no such class exists. We just have to hope we learned what we needed to know from our parents or somehow just picked it up along the way.

That is, until now. In an effort to correct this glaring error in the American educational system, we’ve assembled a short field manual with a collection of essential tips and tricks for making the most of your finances, benefits, legal matters, career and even your down time. This is by no means a comprehensive list, and if you have additional suggestions, send them to us at [editor@gxonline.com](mailto:editor@gxonline.com). >>>

➤➤ **Money, cash, dough, scratch, Benjamins**, the coin of the realm or filthy lucre . . . whatever you call it, you've gotta have it. As we've often heard, money doesn't buy happiness, but it does let you get a really big boat. Use the tips below to make the most of the money you have, and start working your way toward that boat.

#### **CREDIT AND YOUR CREDIT RATING**

Ahh, credit. It's so necessary and yet can be so risky. You've got to have good credit to buy a car, a house or get a school loan. But given the high interest rates that often go along with these transactions, it can be a dangerous proposition in which you end up paying off that debt for the rest of your life.

It's all a bit tricky, but a good credit rating is essential if you ever want to own your own home. Your credit rating is a score that ranges from 300–850. This is the score used to estimate the risk a company incurs by lending you money. Seven hundred or better means that banks are probably falling over themselves to loan you money. A lower score doesn't mean that you can't get a loan; it just means you may end up paying higher interest rates.

It's easy to track your credit rating. In most states you can get a free credit report every 12 months. To get your free report, just go to the Web sites listed below. Check the report carefully, and if there are any errors, work diligently with these companies to get your records cleared:

TransUnion [www.Transunion.com](http://www.Transunion.com)

Experian [www.Experian.com](http://www.Experian.com)

Equifax [www.Equifax.com](http://www.Equifax.com)

#### **CREDIT CARDS**

Be careful—credit cards are potentially harmful. When you look at the terms and interest rates charged by most credit cards, you end up paying a lot more than the initial balance in the long run.

Consider this: If you run up \$5,000 in debt on a credit card with an 18 percent interest rate and only pay \$125 per month, it will take you five and a half years to pay it off. The true cost of that loan including interest totals almost \$8,000. By using credit cards your debt increased approximately 62 percent. This is hardly a good strategy for achieving financial security.

Therefore, be cautious when using credit cards and pay off the full balance each month.

#### **BAD CREDIT AND HOW TO REPAIR IT**

That's all fine and good, you say, if only someone had mentioned that to me earlier. So, you've abused your credit cards, taken out multiple mortgages and missed several payments. Your credit rating is sinking fast and it's time to do something about it, but what?

First, you want to avoid companies who claim they can repair your credit rating for you. They really don't do anything you can't do yourself. The FTC provides an excellent tutorial at [www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/credit/repair.shtm](http://www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/credit/repair.shtm).

Additionally, our credit expert tells us that one of the best ways to fix bad credit is to obtain a mortgage and make payments in full, on time. In as little as two years, your credit score will improve dramatically.

#### **GETTING OUT FROM UNDER DEBT**

Of course, repairing your credit rating is just the first step. You still have to pay off loans, bills and miscellaneous debts. Simply put, there is only one way to go about this: discipline. You need to make a budget that lets you live within your means and start paying off your debts.

If you come up with a solid plan and stick to it, you'll be debt free in no time. One of the best places to learn about reducing debts is Dave Ramsey's Web site at [www.DaveRamsey.com](http://www.DaveRamsey.com). His methods may seem a bit draconian, but they get the job done. If you want to eliminate debt from your life, you couldn't ask for a better place to start.

#### **BUDGETING**

The greatest tool you have for reducing debt and gaining control of your financial life is a budget. Yes, they can be difficult to set up, but they work, provided you stick to your budget. Think of it this way: You wouldn't willingly go into combat without a plan of attack. That's all your budget is, your financial plan of attack. A good budget acts as a "force multiplier," allowing you to accomplish more with the limited resources at your disposal.

Again, Dave Ramsey provides excellent tools for developing a budget and financial plan at [www.MyTotalMoneyMakeover.com/Index.cfm](http://www.MyTotalMoneyMakeover.com/Index.cfm), but you can pretty easily set one up for yourself.

**The greatest tool you have for reducing debt and gaining control of your financial life is a budget.**

First, track your expenses. Keep a running tally of every penny you spend, regardless of how insignificant. This will give you a good idea of where your money goes each month.

Next, break those expenses up into categories such as housing and utilities, food, entertainment and savings. Look at which expenses you can cut and which ones you have to keep. Put together a spending plan based on this, and use any surplus to start paying down your debts. You may have to cut corners for a while, but you'll see results quickly. Financial freedom is within your reach.

One key tip for your budget is to be realistic. If you have to go see every new movie as soon as it is released, make sure you have a "movie" category in your budget.

#### **TAXES**

Don't forget to allow for Uncle Sam's cut when you are budgeting. If your taxes are taken out of your paycheck this shouldn't be a problem, but if you are self-employed, you'll want to be sure to take this expense into account.

#### **RETIREMENT AND EMERGENCY RESERVE**

Ideally, you should start a savings account with your very first paycheck. You may not be able to put much away at first, but get in the habit anyway, since it adds up pretty quickly. Your emergency reserve should provide you with three to six months of liquid cash to help you through any unexpected problems. After that reserve has been built up, take the rest and start investing in your retirement. For more advice on retirement planning, try Dave Ramsey's Web site again at [www.DaveRamsey.com/etc/InvestmentCenter/](http://www.DaveRamsey.com/etc/InvestmentCenter/).

#### **LEARN MORE**

Dave Ramsey has been providing sound financial advice for years and has an excellent Web site dedicated to teaching you money management. He even has a section specifically for military families. To learn more go to [www.DaveRamsey.com/fpu/Military](http://www.DaveRamsey.com/fpu/Military).



# ***YOUR FINANCES***

## For most of us, our primary concern is our family.

Making sure they are cared for is extremely important to every responsible adult, but have you really done everything you can to protect them? Check out these tips to see if you've missed anything.

### HEALTH INSURANCE

First and foremost, get a health insurance policy and keep it. Never let your health insurance lapse. If you do that, you open yourself up to any claims you make being denied because they are "pre-existing conditions." If you maintain continuous health insurance (even if you switch from company to company) you can avoid this pitfall. In times when money is tight, this may mean having to take out an inexpensive high-deductible policy without much in the way of benefits, but at least you'll still be covered for any major problems that arise. Given that serious medical procedures can run into hundreds of thousands of dollars, you don't want to get caught without protection.

Usually, the best and least expensive policies are available through your employer. Otherwise, you can shop for alternatives at Web sites such as [www.eHealthInsurance.com](http://www.eHealthInsurance.com).

### HEALTH INSURANCE FOR CHILDREN

Don't forget to insure your children as well. A mother's insurance policy should cover any costs related to prenatal care as well as the birth itself. However, once the child is delivered, he or she will need to be added to your policy. It's an easy process of simply contacting your insurance company, but just make sure they're covered.

### LIFE INSURANCE

In addition to your health insurance, you are going to want a life insurance policy on yourself and possibly on the rest of your family. Life insurance provides a helpful supplement to your family's income if something happens to you. At the very least, it can cover funeral expenses, which often run into thousands of dollars. Life insurance policies for other members of the household aren't a bad idea either. They may not need to be as high as the head of the household, but even a minimal policy can help in a worst-case scenario. To learn more about life insurance available to members of the military, check out [www.Insurance.va.gov/sglisite/sgli/sgli.htm](http://www.Insurance.va.gov/sglisite/sgli/sgli.htm).

### POWER OF ATTORNEY

A power of attorney is a legal instrument that delegates your legal authority to another person. These can be very broad or very limited. They can be durable (long term) or set up to cover a short or limited timespan (such as a deploy-

ment). They are invaluable tools in case you are disabled and cannot make your own property, financial or legal decisions.

### WILLS AND LIVING WILLS

Another tool you need to protect your family is a will. If the worst should happen, a will can ensure that your final wishes are carried out. Without a will, your estate will be placed in probate and its final disposition will be decided by the courts according to state laws. This process can be long and drawn out. By putting together a will, you can avoid this entire process and reduce the stress on your family. Keep in mind that you and your spouse need to be covered by the will.

A living will is another legal document that can save your family a lot of heartache if you become terminally ill. It spells out exactly what kind of medical care you do or don't want in the event that you are unable to communicate with your health care providers. By making your wishes known ahead of time, you can save your family from having to make a difficult choice for you.

**First and foremost, get a health insurance policy and keep it. Never let your health insurance lapse.**

# FAMILY MATTERS

**FREE LEGAL HELP**

When you're ready to make a will or power of attorney, you don't need to pay your lawyer; the Judge Advocate General's (JAG) office can do this for you at no cost. Go through your chain of command to set up an appointment with a lawyer to take care of these matters.



**In the middle of taking care of your family,** your finances, your Guard career and your civilian career, it's pretty easy to forget about taking care of yourself. We put ourselves under enormous strains and stresses, and all too often forgo self-care for other priorities. You have to remember life is a marathon, not a sprint. You need to keep yourself healthy, both mentally and physically, so you can keep taking care of your family for years to come. The following are a few methods for lowering your stress levels and improving your overall health.

#### **WORK OUT**

One of the best ways to handle stress is PT. Feeling wound up? Conquer five miles at a good jog and see if you don't feel better. Lifting weights, football, yoga, running, swimming and hiking—whatever your chosen method of exercise—all help burn stress and anxiety. In addition, you'll be in better shape, have more energy and be healthier—just a few less things to worry about. Don't know the best way to get started? No problem, just flip to SGT Ken's™ "START Fitness" section in this magazine.

#### **SOMETHING A LITTLE MORE PASSIVE**

It's not always practical to drop down for 20 pushups in the middle of a stressful day. For some reason, doing crunches in your cubicle may seem a little strange, so it doesn't hurt to have a few alternate methods for controlling stress. Here are two of the best methods for bringing your stress levels down. The first is easy and can be done anywhere: deep breathing. This is a core component of most relaxation techniques starting with "take a deep breath" all the way to Zen meditation. An easy way to start is to close your eyes and take a deep breath,

filling your lungs all the way. Breathe out, emptying your lungs as much as possible and repeat until calm. Count your breaths in order to keep your mind focused. If you lose count, start over. It works like a charm.

The second technique can also be done anywhere and works very well on relaxing tight muscle groups. Tense a muscle group as hard as you can and hold it for a few seconds. Then relax that same group. Breathe and try to relax it further. Move to the next group and repeat.

#### **EATING WELL AND SLEEPING WELL**

We won't belabor this point since you've all heard it a million times. Well, let's make it a million and one. Eating well (without overeating) directly affects your health, your mood and your ability to focus on the mission at hand. You know the rules—easy on the sugar and red meat, lots of fruits and veggies, and liters and liters of water. Give your body and mind the fuel it needs and you'll be performing at the top of your game. By the same token, your body needs, on average, eight hours of sleep a night. Yes, I can hear you all laughing—eight hours of sleep on deployment is pretty much unheard of. Regardless, whenever you can, your body and mind need this time to rejuvenate.

#### **VACATIONS**

Our favorite way to get rid of stress is to take a little vacation and get away from it all. Whether it's a weekend camping trip in the hills or a month-long trip around the world, nothing recharges your batteries like some time away. Military members have an additional advantage over civilians in this category. By utilizing the Armed Forces Vacation Club, [www.AfvClub.com/](http://www.AfvClub.com/), Soldiers and their families can go to some of the hottest vacation destinations in the world for pennies on the dollar. It's a fantastic benefit that will make your whole family smile.

# **STRESS RELIEF**



## Many Soldiers don't take advantage of their

military benefits because they don't know about them. You've earned these benefits with hard work, blood, sweat and tears, so don't you think you should take advantage of them? Here are a few of the top Guard benefits you may not be familiar with.

### VA HOME LOANS

Did you know when it's time for you to buy a home you can use a VA home loan? You can use it to buy a home or residential condominium, build a home, repair or improve a home, or a host of other options.

In 2004, the Veteran's Benefit Act made significant changes to the Veterans Home Loan Guaranty Program. The changes included an increase of the maximum loan amount to \$359,650 and expanding the eligibility for Specially Adapted Housing Grants. It also reinstated the Adjustable Rate Mortgage Program and expanded the eligibility for waiving the VA Funding Fee.

You can go to [www.Military.com/Finance/HomeBuying](http://www.Military.com/Finance/HomeBuying) for more information on the VA loan and your eligibility.

### SPACE A TRAVEL

Space Available Flight, also known as Space A or a military hop, is a unique privilege provided to most service members, retirees and their families. Eligible passengers can fill unused seats on Department of Defense-owned or controlled aircrafts once all the duty passengers and cargo have been accommodated.

If you have the time and flexibility, Space A travel offers incredible discounts. To learn more about this inexpensive way to fly, visit [www.Military.com/Travel/TravelPrivileges](http://www.Military.com/Travel/TravelPrivileges).

### THE PX

Most Post Exchanges (PX), which are similar to department stores, are free of local sales or VAT taxes, and offer you and your family a less expensive version of shopping at a mall. Also on military installations are commissaries, which are the same as a supermarket. The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) says that a family of four can save \$2,700 a year by shopping at the commissary.

### R AND R

Guard Soldiers are entitled to use the military's regional recreation facilities, which usually include a gym with the latest equipment, baseball field, basketball and tennis courts, swimming pool and library—all at no cost to you—any time. Golf courses, bowling allies and movie theaters may also be available at discount rates.

In addition to Army facilities, the Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force and Coast Guard will also permit you use of their facilities. If you live near one of these bases, you are free to use the above-mentioned facilities. Don't forget your military I.D., and call ahead to see what facilities they have to offer.

### TRICARE

Some members of the National Guard who are issued delayed-effective-date active duty orders for more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation are eligible for early TRICARE medical and dental benefits beginning on either the date their orders were issued or 90 days before they report to active duty, whichever comes later.

To be eligible for this benefit, Soldiers and family members must be registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting

System (DEERS). The Service personnel office is responsible for determining eligibility. Eligible Soldiers will be notified of their medical and dental benefits when their delayed-effective-date active duty orders are issued.

Members may verify their eligibility for TRICARE through [www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/esgr/PrivacyAction.do](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/esgr/PrivacyAction.do). For assistance with TRICARE visit [www.Tricare.mil](http://www.Tricare.mil).

### ESGR

The mission of Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is to build and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserve.

This organization helps Soldiers gain employer support and maintain job security while they're away serving their country, whether at drill, annual training or during a deployment.

## You've earned these benefits with hard work, blood, sweat and tears, so don't you think you should take advantage of them?

ESGR was established to promote cooperation and understanding between Guard members, Reservists and their employers, and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee's military commitment. The program eliminates worry about jobs and helps Soldiers maintain focus on their missions. To learn more about ESGR and your rights at your job, visit [www.esgr.org](http://www.esgr.org). **GX**



# ***MAXIMIZING YOUR BENEFITS***



# THE BUGLER



**A STRENGTH MAINTENANCE FEATURE:  
BECAUSE EVERY SOLDIER IS RESPONSIBLE  
FOR THE STRENGTH OF THE GUARD**

## HOOAH! >>>

*Hooah*, published six times annually, is a custom magazine for high school juniors and seniors sponsored by the Army National Guard. The 64-page magazine featuring the tag line "Your life . . . no limits" features Guard-specific resource information and content appropriate for the target audience. It includes editorial supportive of the Guard recruiting mission as well as responsible entertainment and information for young adults making college and lifestyle decisions.

To send press releases and for publicity inquiries,  
email: [hooah@iostudio.com](mailto:hooah@iostudio.com)



## MAKING A DIFFERENCE, A MILLION TIMES

California teen launches campaign to thank the troops

By Christian Anderson  
Photography by David Stutzman

**For many students,** freshman year of high school means adjusting to the nuances of school, classes and cliques. But for one Orange, Calif., freshman, her first year meant making national headlines and meeting with President George W. Bush.

What started as a small idea turned into a national phenomenon. Shauna Fleming wanted to give back to U.S. soldiers, and with a little hard work, she made it happen.

**The inspiration:** The idea came to her in wake of 9/11. Flags were flying, yellow ribbons adorned buildings, and patriotism had reached an all-time high. Shauna felt a sense of pride at being an

American. Only months after the tragic events, she noticed how people had already begun to forget. The country seemed to be putting the soldiers and patriotism on the "back burner" again. So she acted on her idea: she wanted to send thank-you letters to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, so they knew people at home were supporting them.

**The mission:** In March 2006, Shauna set her goal of collecting

1 million letters for the soldiers fighting in wars overseas. She saw a need for gratitude because other groups were just sending "cookies and care packages."

**The impact:** Shauna's effort hit the national level when Fox News did a segment on her remarkable undertaking, which was followed by an Associated Press article.

**"[A MILLION THANKS] IS SOMETHING DIFFERENT BECAUSE IT SENDS A MORALE BOOST, AND THAT'S SOMETHING THAT FEW, IF ANY, PROGRAMS SEND."**

—Shauna Fleming, on her campaign to collect more than 1 million thank-you letters to soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan



rock climbing  
photography by Andrew K. Tompkins

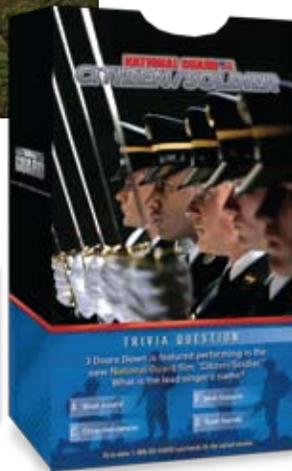
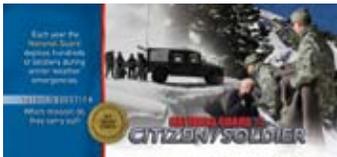
Do you have what it takes to climb up the other side of a rock? Adventure photographer Andrew Tompkins captured this study of scaling as a participant on the granite of Mt. Laramie, located in the Colorado National Forest. Mt. Laramie is made from igneous rock high



## CITIZEN/SOLDIER MOVIE AND 3 DOORS DOWN

This November and December, the Guard will premiere its new movie, "Citizen/Soldier," filmed at Camp Roberts near Paso Robles, CA, and featuring the new song by 3 Doors Down, also called "Citizen/Soldier." The three-minute feature will depict the Guard's history, heroes and missions.

Scratch-off tickets trivia tickets for Hooah! Points will be given away at the box office, before the show starts, movie-goers will enjoy fun trivia about the Guard on the big screen and on popcorn bags. The first 50,000 people to visit the ARNG Web site will get a free download of the new 3 Doors Down song.



# NATIONAL GUARD CITIZEN/SOLDIER



### "Citizen/Soldier"

By 3 Doors Down

Beyond the boundary of your city's light  
Stand the heroes waiting for your cries  
So many times you did not bring this on yourself  
When that moment finally comes, I'll be there to help

#### CHORUS

And on that day when you need your brothers  
And sisters to care, I'll be right here  
Citizen-Soldiers, holding the light  
For the ones that we guide  
From the dark of despair  
Standing on Guard for the ones that we shelter  
We'll always be ready, 'cause we will always be there

For when the people are crying in the streets  
When they're starving for a meal to eat  
Or when they simply need a place to make their beds  
Right here underneath my wing, you can rest your head

#### CHORUS

And on that day when you need your brothers  
And sisters to care, I'll be right here  
Citizen-Soldiers, holding the light  
For the ones that we guide  
From the dark of despair  
Standing on Guard for the ones that we shelter  
We'll always be ready, 'cause we will always be there

Pray that you'll never need me, but rest assured, I will  
not let you down  
I walk beside you, but you may not see me  
The strongest among you may not wear a crown.

#### CHORUS

On that day when you need your brothers  
And sisters to care, I'll be right here.  
On that day when you don't have the strength for the  
Burden you bear, I'll be right here  
Citizen-Soldiers, holding the light  
For the ones that we guide  
From the dark of despair  
Standing on Guard for the ones that we shelter  
We'll always be ready, 'cause we will always be there



### HEIGHT / WEIGHT SMOM >>>

Starting Oct. 1, 2007, Soldiers attending Resident Institutional Training Courses must meet the height and weight standards detailed in Army Regulation 600-9. If a Soldier does not meet these standards, they will not be enrolled. This policy affects all courses instructed at the Strength Maintenance Training Center, with the exception of 79T Advanced NCO Course.

Soldiers attending the 79T Conversion Course must meet the physical fitness standards of Field Manual 21-20 and Army Regulation 350-1. Soldiers will take a physical fitness test within 72 hours of their arrival.

If a Soldier fails the first test, they will have an opportunity to retest in seven to 14 days. Failing the second test will result in the Soldier being sent home.



### STAY GUARD RECRUIT SURVEY >>>

This is designed to help you support new recruits from day one. The Recruit Survey is administered to recruits nearing the completion of their third week of BCT. With questions on topics such as recruits' physical and mental readiness, and their recruiter and administrative preparation, the survey gauges recruits' thoughts on their experiences prior to and during BCT or One Station Unit Training. The findings will be used to refine RSPs and other recruitment and training programs.

### STAY GUARD RSP BATTLE HANDOFF SURVEY

As a follow-up to the Recruit Survey, the Battle Handoff Survey is administered to Soldiers who have recently completed AIT or One Station Unit Training. It includes questions about the Soldiers' experiences between enlistment and shipping out, their time in BCT and AIT, and their participation in their state's RSP.

The findings will be used to refine RSPs and other recruitment and training. The RSP S.E.A.R. curriculum addresses the root causes of training pipeline attrition—including lack of physical readiness, administrative quality control issues and fear of the unknown—before Warriors ship.

The S.E.A.R. multimedia classroom presentations immerse Warriors in Army structure, discipline, accountability, values, advanced physical fitness and administrative issues—everything they need to succeed at IADT—as they learn Warrior skills and undergo intensive physical fitness training.

For more information, visit: [www.StayGuard.com](http://www.StayGuard.com)



### DRILL SERGEANT AUGMENTATION PROGRAM

The ARNG is seeking qualified NCOs to attend the Active Component Drill Sergeant Course at Fort Jackson, SC, with all associated funding provided by the Army. Currently, there are more than 200 volunteers and 50 drill sergeant candidates in the process of completing their packets. The future drill sergeants will incur a two-summer commitment (90 to 130 days on active status) to serve as a BCT drill sergeant at one of the Army's five Army Training Centers posts: Fort Benning, GA; Fort Jackson, SC; Fort Leonard Wood, MO; Fort Sill, OK; Fort Knox, KY.

Information is available at:  
[www.ARNGBattleHandoff.com](http://www.ARNGBattleHandoff.com)



**RSP MASTER CADRE COURSE DEVELOPMENT**

There is a Critical Task Site Selection Board to identify the tasks that are inherent to the operation and administration of a successful RSP. These tasks will be used to develop an accredited "Master Cadre Course" that will become a resident course to prepare COs/NCOs for RSP leadership and cadre duties. Graduates of this course can be awarded a special skill identifier that denotes them as force multipliers within their state's efforts to reduce training pipeline losses, and improve readiness and qualification rate.

**S.E.A.R. CADRE DEVELOPMENT MODULES**

The RSP Cadre Development Modules are designed to support leaders as they establish, maintain and sustain an effective RSP Program. It is responsible for providing valuable insight into the selection and qualification process, developing quality cadre. It also provides guidance for training, and ensures they are mentally prepared, administratively correct and physically fit to meet the demanding challenges of IET.

To learn more, visit:  
[www.VirtualArmory.com/Retention/rsp/sear.aspx](http://www.VirtualArmory.com/Retention/rsp/sear.aspx)



◀◀ **VULCAN RSP DATABASE DISTANCE EDUCATION**

The Vulcan RSP Database is a Web-based tool that tracks recruit training and pre-ship critical tasks. It provides visibility on the status of preparation and provides alerts to leadership when recruits are at risk of becoming a pre-ship training pipeline loss or lack critical IADT skill training.

Recruits are tracked from enlistment through ship date to their permanent unit. Basic and advanced training is now available for the Vulcan using an innovative Web-based interactive process. This training can be conducted with minimal setup and can be tailored to the needs and experience level of the attendees.

States can coordinate for training with the NGB-ASM RSP branch at:  
[NGRCSA-ASM-Attrition@ngb.army.mil](mailto:NGRCSA-ASM-Attrition@ngb.army.mil)

**VIRTUAL INTERACTIVE PERFORMANCE (VIP) ▶▶**

Virtual Interactive Performance, otherwise known as VIP, complements SMTC learning, encourages the NCOIC coaching and motivates RRNCOs to put learning into action with the results being organizational peak performance. VIP is a Web-based system designed to encourage direct management interaction, not replace it. It is a new process of bridging institutional knowledge with operational knowledge because the execution centers on the NCOIC/RRNCO coaching situation at their duty location. The program will work on three levels simultaneously.





# Ace Your Next Exam

By Johanna Altland, Grantham University

Have you been studying for weeks or cramming all night long for an important exam, and you just don't feel prepared? No matter how much (or little) time you invest in studying, test-taking is stressful.

Don't study more than you have to or pack it all into a few short hours. Follow the advice below, and you just might do better than you thought on your next test.

## BEFORE THE BIG DAY

**Review** A week before your exam, begin reviewing your chapters and notes. On a sheet of paper, write down the key terms and points in each chapter, along with a brief summary of what you learned in it.

**Create Flashcards** There's a reason we did this in grade school. Flashcards help with memorization and retention.

**Complete Sample Practice Tests** If your textbook includes sample practice tests, take time to complete them. This will not only help you review, but your professor might pull questions from them or ask similar questions.

**Understand the Material** As you review your notes, don't be afraid to ask your professor for help if you want or need clarification on important concepts.

**Stay Healthy** Eating right and getting enough sleep before the big day will help you stay focused and reduce your anxiety.

## IT'S TEST TIME

**Arrive Early** Get there ahead of time so you can relax and organize your thoughts. While your classmates are scrambling to their desks, use this time to review your key points and chapter summaries.

**Read Carefully** Be sure to read all instructions before starting your test. You might want to jump right in, but don't lose points because you were careless and didn't follow the instructions.

**Answer the Easiest Questions First** If you come to a question you don't know the answer to, move on. There might be a question later in the test that will jog your memory. When you finish the questions you know, circle back to the ones you didn't.

**Review Each Question** When you finish your test, make sure you've answered all questions. When you review your test, only change an answer if you misunderstood the question. Often, your first choice is the correct one.

Now that you know how to prepare for the big day and what to do, let's talk about some simple tricks . . . I mean tips.

**Multiple Choice Questions** If two answers are similar, except for one or two words, choose one of those answers.

If you have to complete the sentence, remove the answers that don't form a grammatically correct sentence.

If the answers cover a wide range of numbers, select one in the middle.

Eliminate the choices you know are incorrect and choose your answer from the remaining ones.

**True-False Questions** Statements using the words *sometimes*, *seldom*, *rarely* and *most* tend to be true.

Answers with absolutes, such as *always* or *never*, are often false.

Cross out confusing double negatives. For example, “Mr. Jones was not incompetent” really means, “Mr. Jones was competent.”

**Essay Questions** To gain confidence, answer the easiest questions first.

Before writing down your answer, create an outline. If you don't have time to complete your answer, your professor may give you points for the outline.

Include part of the question in your answer.

When answering, use the strongest argument first to get your professor's attention.

While these tips may come in handy if you're stuck on a question, remember that they aren't foolproof. After all, nothing can replace good old-fashioned studying.

**DON'T CRASH AND BURN**

Have you ever awakened for work or school and felt physically and mentally ill at the thought of the coming day? Did you just want to crawl back under the covers? You may have been suffering from burnout.

According to the Merriam-Webster's Medical Dictionary, burnout is “exhaustion of physical or emotional strength usually as a result of prolonged stress or frustration.” We will discuss the symptoms of burnout, along with the ways you can prevent or recover from it.

Those of us who take on new commitments and are willing to go the extra mile to get the job done are most susceptible to burnout. Juggling work, family and school is challenging on most days, but when you are heading toward burnout, it can simply be too overwhelming. One way to avoid crashing and burning is to recognize the symptoms:

**Lack of Energy** Do you find yourself more and more exhausted each morning? Does the thought of getting out of bed make you sick to your stomach? Burnout can cause severe exhaustion, even if you are getting a healthy amount of sleep each night.

**Unable to Focus** Are you having a difficult time meeting project deadlines? Do you find yourself struggling to complete your course-work because you just aren't interested anymore? It's difficult to concentrate and move forward with your work if you're no longer motivated to complete the project.

**Emotionally and Physically Worn Out** Are you losing your temper at home or at work? Are you spending every night tossing and turning because you can't sleep? Burnout can cause depression, migraine headaches, an upset stomach and anxiety. It can also lower your body's immunity, so you become more likely to catch a cold or the flu.

**Decreased Attendance** Are you calling in sick to work or skipping class because you just can't deal with it anymore? Lack of caring and commitment is common when you are at the end of your rope, which results in more missed work days and classes.

Now that you can identify the symptoms, let's discuss some ways to prevent or overcome burnout.

**Take Care of Yourself First** If you have too much on your plate and are feeling run down, chances are good that you're headed toward

burnout. Be sure to get enough rest, eat healthy, well-balanced meals, exercise and de-stress.

**Slow Down** This is a very important step that can be challenging for some. After all, who wants to slow down when there is so much to do? When you become overwhelmed, remove yourself from the situation and take a walk, meditate or simply shut your door for a few minutes and listen to soothing music. You'll be surprised at how quickly this can calm you down and get your thoughts in order so you can start fresh.

**Say No** Recognize your limits. You aren't a superhero and can't possibly make everyone happy. Saying no to friends, family and even your employer can be difficult, but sometimes it needs to be done.

**Delegate** Yes, for those of us who struggle with control, it is important to entrust those around us to take some responsibility. This may not be easy, but everything doesn't have to be done your way. Not only will you free up time, but you will also teach yourself a valuable lesson: It's OK to rely on others.

**Use Time Wisely** During the course of your day, you may have tasks that can be combined to save time. If you have grocery shopping to do, dry cleaning to drop off and you need to stop by the local library to pick up some books, do it all in one trip. Repeated trips and tasks are time consuming and can wear you down.

**Take a Break** When you're feeling overwhelmed and begin experiencing the symptoms of burnout, take a day or an afternoon off. Your work can wait until the next day. Don't answer work- or school-related emails, don't take work-related calls, just relax and spend the day doing what you want. Catch up on your sleep, watch a movie or get a massage; do whatever relaxes you. You'll be amazed at how refreshed you'll feel the next day.

Burnout can happen to anyone. The best preventive medicine is to not become overwhelmed and stressed out. For some, this is unavoidable, so the best thing to do is recognize the symptoms and take action when you think a burnout is near. **GX**



# Distance is No Deterrent to Family Readiness Group Volunteers

[Need byline]

Support from a Family Readiness Group volunteer is only a phone call away.

For example, the Oklahoma and Vermont Family Readiness Groups recently worked together to ensure that the family of a returning Soldier had a reintegration briefing prior to his return. The family was grateful for the National Guard's network of volunteers, who were able to prepare the family for their Soldier's return.

Wisconsin had units deployed with Soldiers from eight other states when its Family Readiness Group decided to include the families of these Soldiers in their activities. A fiancée that lives in Alabama is the newsletter editor and a mom in Kentucky is a section caller on their phone tree.

"It is a wonderful experience to be able to reach out across state lines," said Martha Viduski, the Wisconsin Family Readiness assistant. "We feel that if we can include them on pertinent information about the unit, make them feel like a part of us and then make sure that they are receiving support from their own state, their deployment will go much better.

"And when those Soldiers come home, it is always a pleasure to meet them. If their families can't be there, we have signs for them and a phone waiting."

There are 55 Family Readiness Groups, one in each state and the four territories, plus a new office at the largest military hospital overseas.

CW3 Liza Alford is the Family Readiness officer at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) in Germany. She provides support to our wounded Warriors by:

- ◆ Contacting their families if needed or requested, providing telephone cards and contacting and involving the state's family directors or NGB personnel if problems arise with a patient or their family
- ◆ Meeting families at the airport to alleviate their anxiety
- ◆ Coordinating lodging for families
- ◆ Providing a hospital orientation for families
- ◆ Scheduling briefings with social services and a chaplain prior to the family's first visit with their wounded Warrior
- ◆ Distributing information packets, which include a guide to medical acronyms and the National Guard Bureau Family Program brochure
- ◆ Familiarizing the family with the commissary, post exchange or other facilities in the area
- ◆ Providing transportation for visits with their wounded Warrior in civilian hospitals and scheduling regular medical updates from LRMC medical officers
- ◆ Describing the discharge and invitational travel order process with inpatients
- ◆ Coordinating return travel via civilian airlines or as a non-medical attendant on medical evacuation flights

The National Guard Family Program is not only comprised of Family Readiness Groups, but also supported by more than 300 family assistance representatives, 3,000 volunteers, youth programs and national and civic organizations that provide a wide range of support to our National Guard members and their families. **GX**

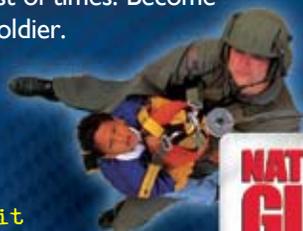




## THE REASONS FOR A STRONG NATIONAL GUARD ARE GETTING MORE POWERFUL.

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# National Guard “ChalleNGes” Young Adults

Story and photo by SSG Heather Allen

Teenagers face many pressures and harmful situations in their lives, and some consequently make poor decisions. Many drop out of high school as a result of these choices, but with the help of the National Guard, it doesn't have to ruin the rest of their lives.

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program began in 1993, in 10 states, as a way to reclaim and educate high school dropouts. The program, free of charge to participants, strives to produce graduates with the values, skills, education and self-discipline necessary to succeed as adults.

ChalleNGe is a co-educational 17-month program for teens ages 16 to 18 who left high school without their degree. Members, called cadets, must be drug-free and in favor with the law.

The ChalleNGe model focuses on eight core components that improve life skills and facilitate holistic growth. They are: leadership, teamwork, responsible citizenship, community service, life skills, physical fitness, health and hygiene, job abilities and academic excellence.

The program consists of a five-and-a-half month “quasi-military” residential phase, followed by a 12-month post-residential phase. During the first phase, cadets can earn their GED.

There are 34 ChalleNGe programs in 29 states and Puerto Rico. Visit the Web site, <http://ngycp.org>, to find a program near you or to recommend teens for the organization. If your state doesn't have a program, contact your state legislator and ask to implement one.

Also on the site are testimonials of cadets who've graduated from the program. One member said, “The character I gained while at the camp has propelled me to enjoy the benefits of a higher education and deal with the adversities that life brings.”

If you read the many other success stories, you get a glimpse of young people taking control of their lives, turning potentially bad situations around and becoming productive members of their communities.

Some cadets have gone on to West Point and other colleges. Some have become dental hygienists and nursing assistants. Others have joined the Armed Forces.

SGT Zachary M. Pilcher, an Alaska ChalleNGe graduate, went on to join the U.S. Marine Corps and was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (Gold Star in Lieu of Second Award with Combat Distinguishing Device) by the Secretary of the Department of the Navy.

Testimonials on the site tell of children who were out of control before entering the program, but returned changed for the better.

One mother who had a daughter in the program said, “I could not believe I was talking to the same child I sent there six weeks ago. I cried for at least an hour after I ended the phone call with my child, just out of sheer happiness and pride. You will never know the priceless gift this program has given my child and my family.”

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program turns at-risk teens lives around one step at a time. **GX**



## Battling Diet-Busters

By Judith S. Harris, CHES, BSN, MA  
Courtesy of Decade of Health



Obesity is all over the news these days. But maintaining a healthy diet and getting enough exercise isn't easy when we're always on the go. Fast food is a constant temptation.

Try these tips for a healthier, leaner lifestyle.

### FAST FOOD = FAT FOOD?

Fast, on-the-go type meals can contain huge amounts of hidden fat, sugar and salt. Typical excuses for grabbing on-the-fly food include not liking to cook or clean up after cooking, not having time and feeling like cooking isn't worth the effort. You can still eat well and not spend your life in the kitchen. All it takes is a little knowledge about how to choose and eat fast foods.

Fast food doesn't have to be fat food. A fast food diet can be healthy if you exercise moderation. The following suggested guidelines can help you make healthy choices containing fewer fast food calories and more nutrients.

**Burgers & Such** Select small-size plain burgers and sandwiches, and use moderate amounts of condiments that you add yourself. Nix the cheese and bacon enhancements, and add more lettuce, tomato and onion. Avoid fried foods such as fish, french fries and onion rings.

**Other Main Courses** Avoid restructured poultry and meat, as in chicken nuggets, some roast beef and deli meats. Order tacos or taco salads on a plain, soft tortilla. Skip croissant and biscuit sandwiches—croissants and biscuits are very high in fat.

Choose fresh vegetables and fruits at the salad bar, and avoid the sweet salads and pudding. Eat raw veggies and green salads with low-fat dressing. Read salad dressing labels, and try using oil and vinegar or a squeeze of lemon instead.

Select sandwiches with tomatoes, lettuce and onion. Ask for whole grain or multi-grain buns and bread. Enjoy baked potatoes and the skins, but go easy on toppings such as bacon and cheese. Choose foods that include beans, such as small burritos, chili and salad bar toppings.

**Drinks** Choose low-fat and low-sugar beverages. Opt for tea, water with lemon, lime or a little fruit juice for flavor, or low fat milk (less than 2 percent). Some diet sodas contain sodium.

Skip coffee whiteners—the regular ones have lots of fat, and the low-fat ones replace fat with sugar.

**Condiments & Spices** Sugar is hidden in ketchup, pickle relish, jelly, honey, barbecue and other sauces, so load up on healthier taste enhancers like lettuce, tomatoes, onion and peppers.

**Sodium** Breakfast meats are high in sodium unless otherwise labeled. Try to limit sausage, ham and bacon. Hash browns are high in fat and salt, and are often salted more before being served. Apply salt sparingly to all food, and use salt substitutes or herbs and spices to enhance flavor. Processed cheese and cheese products are sodium-laden. Opt for a small piece of hard cheese as a snack.

**Desserts** Yogurt desserts with toppings may contain fruit and look like a healthy choice, but they also contain lots of sugar. Skip sugary desserts and opt for a fresh fruit treat.

**Important Tip: Choose small portions—never supersize!**

### **MORE WAYS TO COMBAT DIET-BUSTERS**

Identify your stress triggers and note if any of them cause you to eat when you're not hungry. Work on dealing with them another way.

When you get a craving, get up and move—walk, climb stairs, stretch—for just a few minutes. Most cravings and hunger pangs only last 10 minutes. Keep a record of how many times a day you successfully get past them.

Avoid drive-through windows and eating in the car or in front of the TV.

Keep a food diary for a week. Write down everything that goes in your mouth, even diet drinks and sugarless gum. At the end of the week, pick out 500 calories from each day that you could have done without and eliminate them from your intake the next week. Do this for the first week of every month and track how many calories get permanently eliminated from your daily intake.

Make it a habit to take at least 20 minutes to consume every meal and snack. That's the length of time it takes your stomach to send the "I'm full" message to your brain.

If you do change to a healthy eating lifestyle, do it for yourself. Doing it for someone else provides too much opportunity for resentment ("If they really cared about me, they would love me the way I am") and scapegoating ("You should have stopped me from getting that second dish of ice cream"). Only you can affect your behavior.

Once you've made the commitment, recruiting supporters is a smart idea. Maybe a co-worker would agree to put the candy dish on his desk out of sight or to bring in healthy snacks instead. Perhaps a spouse or roommate would take a healthy cooking class with you, or a neighbor might enjoy a daily walk. Positive support for change is very different from pressure to make a change.

It's critical for long-term health that all of us learn to master diet-busters. Healthy eating and physical activity are our most important weapons. **EX**



For more information, visit:

**DecadeOfHealth.com**

# Are You Leaving Your Future to Chance?

## Life (Insurance) After the Military

Courtesy of USAA

Planning to leave the military? It's a good idea to start shopping for life insurance at least two months before your anticipated separation date.

Your Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) policy won't cover you once you leave the military. Since it can take up to six weeks to get an individual life insurance policy, don't cancel your SGLI until your new policy has been issued and the first premium paid. Here are some questions to answer as you determine if and how to replace SGLI:

### DO YOU NEED IT?

This is the easy part. If you're not responsible for anyone, then you probably don't need life insurance. For example, if you're a single, recent college graduate with no debt, kids or financial obligations. But that's not most of us. If you're married, have children or take care of aging parents, you more than likely need life insurance.

### HOW MUCH DO YOU NEED?

There's no magic formula, but you can start by figuring out what you want life insurance to do for you or your loved ones. Do you simply want a policy to cover your funeral, debts and unpaid medical bills? Or, are you worried about providing enough college money for your children or retirement savings for your spouse if you suddenly pass away? Some experts say you should buy a policy that's seven to 10 times the amount of your income. But that's not the answer for everyone—a lot depends on your specific situation. You need to ask yourself some key questions to decide what fits your budget and your circumstances. Online calculators, available at [www.usaa.com](http://www.usaa.com) or the Department of Veterans Affairs ([www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)), can help you calculate the right amount of insurance. In addition, you can talk to an insurance agent or financial adviser.

### HOW LONG DO YOU NEED IT?

Consider the kind of insurance you want: term or permanent life insurance. Buying term insurance is like renting a house, said Carolyn Gorman, executive of the Insurance Information Institute. "It's renting the insurance because it only lasts for a certain term—10 years, 20 years or whatever you choose," she said. On the contrary, permanent insurance generally has a higher premium initially than term and is designed to last for a lifetime. The policy also builds cash value you can borrow against, or withdraw if you no longer need life insurance.

### WHAT KIND DO YOU NEED?

Once you decide between term and permanent life insurance, you have one more step: choose your plan. Both types of life insurance have several options. Make sure you research the information, consult with a financial adviser and choose carefully. But whatever you do, don't delay. The cost of insurance increases with age.



**Coverage for you** One option is to convert your SGLI to a five-year renewable term policy with Veterans' Group Life Insurance (VGLI), which will provide up to \$400,000 in coverage. If you're in poor health or use tobacco, this can be a good value. However, if you're healthy, you might find a more affordable option with a commercial life insurance company.

**Coverage for your spouse** Even if your spouse doesn't earn an income, he or she is an important part of your family's financial security. Think of it this way: What would it cost to replace the childcare, meal preparation and other household tasks your spouse performs? These expenses could be offset by a life insurance policy should your spouse die unexpectedly.

**Coverage for your kids** You receive free coverage for your children under SGLI. To replace this coverage, you may be able to add a child rider to your new policy. These riders cover your children, usually up to age 25, and normally can be converted into permanent policies when your children become adults. **GX**

Need help figuring out how much life insurance you need? Call USAA at: **(800) 531-8518**

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**Not sure exactly what the Title 10 Program is or just want to know more?**

We are compiling a list of the most frequently asked questions, getting answers from the people who know and will publish them in an upcoming issue of *GX*. Send your questions to:

**T10@GXonline.com**



**EASY RIDER** A motorcyclist rides through the streets of San Marcos, Guatemala, as the day begins. San Marcos was the headquarters for the Missouri National Guard during their New Horizons 2007 mission.

# A Long Strange Trip

Missouri National Guard  
and New Horizons 2007, Guatemala

Story and photos by Chris West

Our convoy of civilian vehicles rolled to a stop on a thin, snaky, two-lane road outside of Guatemala City. Ahead of us stretched a line of trucks, cars, and in great proliferation, the colorfully painted buses that served as the main form of public transportation in Guatemala.

People were milling around on the side of the road as vendors selling snacks and drinks worked the line of stopped cars. Traffic is so consistently bad in the area that an entire business sector had developed around it. Welcome to Guatemala.

The sergeant who was driving explained the road would be closed due to construction for anywhere from 15 minutes to an hour. We were free to wander around, but everyone needed to stay pretty close to the vehicles since the “Blue Falcon 500” would kick off shortly. Seeing our puzzled expressions, he explained the joke.

He hesitated. “A Blue Falcon is...,” he began to explain, searching for a polite way to put it.

“Army slang for someone who is willing to sacrifice others in order to advance their own interests. That’s what’s about to happen when they open the road ahead of us—a road race with no rules. It’s hard to explain. You’ll see.”

I hate it when Soldiers say that. Sure, it almost always means I’m going to get a good story, but it usually also means several hours of extreme discomfort and abject terror for me. What had I gotten myself into?

Then, without warning, people started making mad dashes for their cars up and down the line.

“This is it! Mount up! Go, Go!” the sergeant yelled.

Everyone ran like they were under fire—diving into cars, gunning the engines and springing into action. As if someone had dropped the starting flag, every vehicle in the line leapt forward as fast as it could. The two-lane road was suddenly running three and four wide as buses and tiny pickups jockeyed for position. Little old ladies cut off school buses, school buses edged logging trucks over onto the curb and maniacs on mopeds zipped in and out of the whole mess. These guys put NASCAR to shame.

They were trading paint, cutting each other off, and hanging out windows and open doors, yelling at each other and their drivers. Keep in mind that this was all happening on narrow roads with constant switchbacks and sheer cliffs.

It was every man for himself. It was utter chaos. It was terrifying and once you realized it was all happening at only 15 mph, it was glorious.

This went on in fits and spurts for the rest of the drive. We’d go a little ways, stop for a bit, and start the mad race all over again.

Seven hours later, we arrived at a Guatemalan Army base in San

Marcos, a small country town where the operation was based. I was completely wrung out. It was like getting off a seven-hour-long roller coaster ride. I would have kissed the ground, but since I had somehow managed to avoid screaming like a little child during the trip, I didn’t want to blow my whole “manly” image.

Why, you must be asking yourself, would you make that journey? All for a good cause, I assure you. I was on my way to cover the story of the Missouri National Guard’s deployment to Guatemala as part of Operation New Horizons 2007, and this sort of thing is all part of the job.

At least that’s what my publisher keeps telling me.

New Horizons is a little known, but very cool series of humanitarian exercises carried out by U.S. Southern Command each year in various Caribbean and Latin American nations. In 2007 alone, New

Horizons will conduct operations in Nicaragua, Belize, Guatemala, Panama and Bolivia.

These exercises are designed to improve the quality of life in some of the poorest and most remote regions of these countries. The construction of schools, medical clinics and water wells, along with a variety of other humanitarian missions, will provide direct aid to the people while also providing our troops with a unique training opportunity.

While I was in San Marcos, I got the chance to inspect and photograph three of the construction projects the Missouri Guard was working on—two medical clinics and a new school.

I was shown around the medical clinic site at San Jose Cabon by SSG Rawlings, the site foreman. He explained to me that the locals had been extremely supportive of this project, regularly coming by to visit, drop off food or simply watch the progress of their new clinic. The Guatemalans positively beamed as they walked past and surveyed the progress.

SSG Rawlings explained why this was such a big help for the locals.

“Right now, the nearest medical facility is San Pablo, which is problematic for the poor, elderly or anyone who has trouble getting around. It’s an hour-and-a-half walk, and most of the people don’t have the money for buses or taxis. And even if they did—you’ve seen the roads—it’s dangerous for anybody who’s not quick on their feet. This clinic is going to help a lot of people.”

SSG Rawlings was obviously proud of the progress his team had made, and he happily showed me around the site. “When we are all done, this clinic will have two exam rooms, a lab, waiting room, patient room, a bathroom and shower. Everything they need,” he said.

The structure was made out of a building system that locks together, almost like Legos, and is then filled with concrete. It goes up



**SIMPLE LIVING** The new school being built by the Missouri Guard sits below this hillside house and garden. At times it seemed as if every piece of land that wasn’t an actual cliff was being used for farming or building.

quickly, doesn't require highly skilled workers, and when complete will withstand all but the worst earthquakes, which are a serious concern in this tectonically unstable region.

Throughout this process, our Soldiers are working side by side with Guatemalan military forces. The Guatemalans provide engineers to help with construction, armed troops to provide security, bases to operate from and escorts to act as translators and guides. The operation was, in every way, a cooperative effort with the Guatemalan government.

On the way back from an inspection on my second day in country, I had an interesting conversation with 2LT Sandbothe, the officer in charge of the construction sites, and his top sergeant, 1SG Mayer. They explained to me that while New Horizons is a great humanitarian mission that helps people and improves relations with the host nation, it serves another purpose as well.

"New Horizons is a big help for the troops", 2LT Sandbothe explained. "It gives us practical experience deploying to a foreign country. You've seen how challenging it can be just getting around, so these kind of real-world problems make for really great training."

1SG Mayer picked up the story. "Think about it. [The Soldiers] are working through translators in a non-English speaking country. They have to deal with a completely different culture, a different climate, environmental hazards, Spartan living conditions and on top of it all they have to coordinate everything they do with the Guatemalans. These are the same problems they would face in Iraq!"

After a few days in this amazing country watching the dedicated Soldiers—American and Guatemalan—working together in order to help out complete strangers, I was left with a very good feeling about the mission. It is a great job for the Guard, providing them with unique real-world training and at the same time helping promote regional stability by providing humanitarian aid to citizens of the host country.

I wanted to stay longer and observe these troops in action, but my schedule was tight. I rolled out at oh-dark-thirty to hook up with the convoy back to Guatemala City. I asked the sergeant who would be driving if the traffic were as bad going back. He grinned and slowly drawled, "You'll see." **GX**



**BREAKING A SWEAT** Soldiers of the MOARNG work to put the roof onto a new medical clinic outside San Marcos. They are assisted at every step by the Guatemalan military, who provide engineers, guides and force protection.



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# Going “Over There”

## The Transformation of the National Guard for WWI



By Jason Hall  
 Director of the National Guard Educational Foundation (2003-2007)

*Over there, over there,  
 Send the word, send the word over there  
 That the Yanks are coming, the Yanks are coming  
 The drum's rum-tumming everywhere  
 So prepare, say a prayer,  
 Send the word, send the word to beware  
 We'll be over, we're coming over  
 And we won't come back till it's over, over there*  
 —Excerpt from the song “Over There” by George M. Cohan

Before going “over there” to France to fight in WWI, each state’s militia first went through a one-year period in which the militia of the old transformed into the modern day National Guard. The year leading up to the United States’ entry into WWI would see many changes and improvements for the National Guard, firmly establishing it as America’s primary reserve force.

At the creation of the U.S. Constitution in 1787, the president did not have the power to mobilize each state’s militia units. This changed in 1916, when two acts of Congress set in motion the modern-day National Guard. The first action was the Militia Act of 1903, which officially named the National Guard as the primary organized reserve force of the United States. The second was the National Defense Act of 1916, which dismissed the idea of an expandable Army and instead firmly established the traditional concept of the National Guard as the

“keystone of the United States defense forces.” It established the policy of merging the regular Army, Army Reserves and National Guard into the Army of the United States in time of war. This law marks the first time that the term “National Guard” was mandated to be used for what had been previously referred to as the “Militia.”

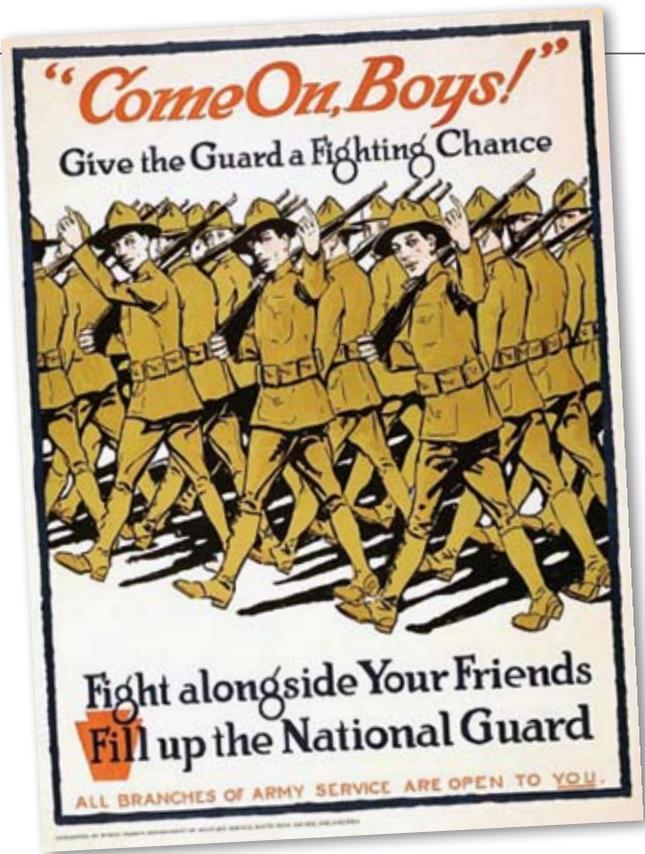
One of the more important facets of this act was the authority given to the president to mobilize the National Guard in time of war or national emergency. In addition, the act also changed the number of yearly drills from 24 to 48, and annual training time from five to 15 days, as well as authorizing drill pay for the first time.

### THE GUARD JOINS THE U.S. ARMY IN WWI

Germany declared war against Russia on Aug. 1, 1914, and against France two days later. When Germany violated Belgium’s neutrality by advancing through it to strike against Paris, the British Empire jumped into the war. In just a little more than a month, Europe went from peace to full-scale war.

At the outbreak of war, the United States initially pursued a policy of isolationism and claimed neutrality. In 1915, a German U-boat sank a British luxury ocean liner, the Lusitania, with 128 Americans onboard, the American government realized their nonpartisan role would soon change.

With the new National Defense Act of 1916 in place, President Woodrow Wilson waited only 15 days to use his new powers to mobilize the National Guard for a national emergency. Mexican rebels had attacked the U.S. Army garrison in New Mexico. Shortly thereafter, the president ordered a mobilization of the entire National Guard,



more than 150,000 members, to meet this threat. This emergency gave President Wilson an excuse to mobilize the Guard and prepare them for America's eventual entry into WWI. All available Army troops were rushed to the Mexican border, along with the Arizona, New Mexico and Texas National Guards.

Following the discovery and publication of the Zimmermann Note, a coded telegram sent to Mexico from Germany with a proposal to form a military alliance, and the sinking of seven American merchant ships, President Wilson called for a declaration of war against Germany. The news of America's entry into the war was welcomed by the exhausted British, French and other Allied Forces stymied in the trenches of Europe.

President Wilson mobilized the Guard on July 15, 1917, for its first duty overseas. However, this mobilization was fraught with problems, confusion and in some cases, utter chaos. National Guard training plans had to be completely altered when the news arrived that there would be structure reorganization. GEN John J. Pershing, commander of the American Expeditionary Force, decided the old three-regiment "triangle" division was inadequate to provide proper strength required for trench warfare. The new larger "square" division consisted of four infantry regiments that were organized into two brigades. Each square division also included an engineer regiment, two artillery regiments and a signal battalion, along with supply and medical units.

**THE DIVISIONS ARE BORN**

Confusion and resentment reigned as proud, old Guard regiments were transformed from infantry units into support troops. The change the National Guard Soldiers resented the most was the mandatory redesignation and renumbering of all Guard units. The Army dictated that regular Army divisions would be numbered one to 25 and National Guard divisions would have the numbers 26 to 75, though only 26-41 were used during WWI. In addition, a new regimental numbering system replaced all existing state and local unit identifications. State designations that had existed since the American Revolution were replaced with an impersonal numbering system. Regiments would be numbered sequentially from 100 to 300, designations used to this day.

To counter the loss of state designation, several units adopted nicknames and slogans. The members of the 26th Division adopted the nickname "Yankee" division, while members of Ohio's 37th Division began calling themselves the "Buckeye" Division. The 30th Division, which pulled its troops from Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina, decided to honor President Andrew Jackson by calling themselves the "Old Hickory" Division. Other divisions also adopted state-significant nicknames and slogans to preserve unit pride.

The first Soldiers to arrive in France were the U.S. Army's new 1st Division and the Guard's 26th "Yankee" Division, consisting of units from all six New England states. Once in France, the division conducted its training under the helpful tutelage of the other Allied Forces. The entry of the United States into WWI ensured the Allies would win, but it would come from the courage and sacrifice of countless American Soldiers, with almost half coming from the National Guard.

The 2nd Connecticut Infantry, which conducted patrols along the Mexican border after the attack by the Mexican rebels, was mustered out of federal service in November 1916, only to be mobilized again in 1917. The unit was redesignated as the 102nd Infantry and assigned as part of the now-famous 26th "Yankee" Division, fighting in six WWI campaigns. Today the 102nd Infantry continues its proud record of more than 300 years of service to Connecticut and the nation.

Unfortunately, some of the National Guard's individual units were split up once they arrived in Europe and were sent to support other regular Army divisions. One such division was the 41st Infantry Division, also known as the "Sunset Division," formed from Oregon and other northwestern state units. After arriving in France, the division was designated as a replacement division and did not go into combat as a unit. The majority of its Soldiers went to the 1st, 2nd, 32nd and 42nd Divisions, where they saw action at Aisne-Marne, Meuse-Argonne, Chateau Thierry and other areas.

GEN Pershing made the decision to allow African-American combat units to be used by the French. One of these African-American units was the only National Guard unit to arrive in France with their old state designation, the 15th New York Infantry Regiment. These black National Guard members became the 369th Infantry Regiment. Due to their tenacious fighting and bravery, they became known as the "Harlem Hell Fighters" and "the regiment that never lost a man captured, a trench or a foot of ground." Today's 369th Transportation Battalion of the New York Army National Guard carries on their legacy.

By the end of WWI, more than 400,000 Guard members had served. In total, 43 American divisions were sent to France, with 18 of them, roughly 40 percent, being Guard divisions. These divisions suffered a total of 103,721 killed or wounded, approximately 43 percent of all American casualties suffered during the war. **GX**

**CALL TO ARMS (above)** A poster from WWI encourages people to join the National Guard.

**369TH INFANTRY (right)** The "Harlem Hell Fighters," one of several African-American Guard units, was known to never lose "a man captured, a trench or a foot of ground."



COURTESY OF JASON HALL

# Techniques from a Guard Position

By SFC Donnie Moseley  
NM NG, CATC

I hope you had a chance to practice the positions from last month. I'm sure you figured out both can be very uncomfortable. Fighting is all about comfort if you think about it. The more uncomfortable I can make someone, the less they want to fight. Chokes are also the way to go. If you can't breathe, your plans really don't matter.

This is going to be my last article, due to deployment

constraints. I've had a really good time getting a chance to connect with all my National Guard brothers and sisters who read this article. Hopefully, I've helped Soldiers learn skills that may save them in a bad situation. I also hope I've done my part in instilling the Warrior spirit.

I said once that we could literally go on for a year about any position, whether it's a side control, mount, knee mount, rear mount or stand-up striking portion of things. But I chose to cover just a small amount of

a few things. One, so you could play with them and see what you come up with on your own. And two, to make you want to seek more training and keep learning. I believe how you fight is an extension of your personality and a test of your intelligence. I also believe fighters or Soldiers will be as good as they are trained.

This month we are going to go over a couple of techniques from a guard position (Omaplata, Arm Bar and Triangle Choke). Fundamentally speaking, it's



a good idea to have a closed guard before attempting to go on. It's like anything—if the foundation is weak, the whole structure is going to have problems. Let's train!

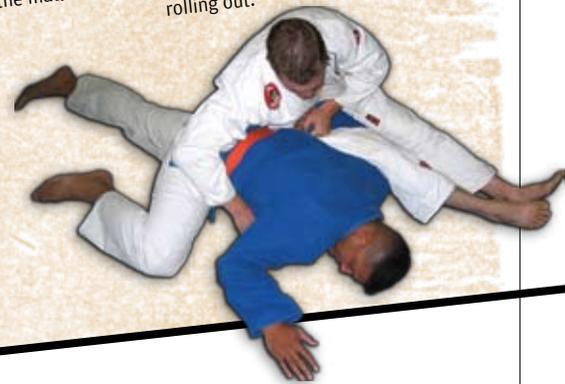
**STEP 1** In my guard, I'm going to cross grab my opponent's sleeve with a pistol grip, and mirror side grab his pant leg.



**STEP 2** I'm going to open my guard, pushing against his lateral muscle and torso flat to the mat.



**STEP 3** I'm immediately going to secure his hip to prevent him from rolling out.



**STEP 5** If he stops my free leg, I can deal with it the following ways: I can strip the arm and throw my leg over his head, pinching my knees and elevating my hip for the arm bar or I can thread my leg under his arm to the inside.



**STEP 4** Next, I'm going to move my hips out a little, securing under his far-side shoulder and lifting my hips up diagonally for the tap.



**STEP 6** Finally, I am going to grab my shin, turning my angle for the triangle choke.



That's it. That should be plenty to practice for a week or two. Thanks to all who have helped our program over the years: Rorion Gracie and the Gracie Academy, all at the Fort Benning school house (especially SFC Dave Barron), SFC Eric Pence and Pence Martial Arts, and lastly, Alberto Crane and my BJJ Gracie-Barra brothers. It has been a pleasure to do this article. Train Hard! **GX**

COURTESY OF SFC DONNIE MOSELEY



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# National Guard Team Running Strong

Story and photo courtesy of Hendrick Motorsports

Mears charged from a 19th-starting position to an eighth-place finish in the Busch Series race at Watkins Glen International on Aug. 12, 2007. The top-10 finish was the National Guard team's 12th top 10 of the season.

"I think we probably could've gotten into a sixth-place, maybe even a top-five finish, if I could have carried more momentum into the esses," Mears said. "Pit strategy really helped us today and I have to thank the National Guard team for that. It was another solid top 10 for us."

Mears and the No. 25 National Guard/GMAC Chevrolet team turned in a solid performance in Sunday's road-course event at Watkins Glen (NY) International, earning a 15th-place finish in one of the wilder races of the 2007 NASCAR NEXTEL Cup season.

Following the 90-lap event, Mears gained three spots in the points standings and currently sits 16th.

"We had a good car today, and I think a top-10 finish was within our reach," Mears said after the race. "Unfortunately, we lost some track position after getting spun and then the cautions at the end of the race didn't play into our pitting strategy—we needed more green-flag racing to see it pay off.

"Overall, though, it was a good day for the No. 25 National Guard/GMAC Chevrolet team, and we were able to make some gains in the points."

After waiting out the rain for two days, Mears and the No. 25 National Guard/GMAC Chevrolet team earned an 11th-place finish on Tuesday in the weather-postponed NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series race at Michigan International Speedway on August 21.

It was Mears' fourth top-15 result in the past five Cup Series races.

"It was a long wait with the rain, but I think everyone was happy to finally get the race in," Mears said. "Our No. 25 National Guard/GMAC Chevrolet was good overall, but a bad set of tires during one run and some possible problems in the transmission cost us during the middle of the race.

"Luckily, we were able to get a handle on things and make a late-race push."

Mears earned a 22nd-place finish at Bristol Motor Speedway on August 25.

Mears qualified 30th for the 500-lap race, which proved to be a difficult one for the No. 25 team.

"Our goal was a top-15 finish at Bristol and I'm disappointed because I know we had a car capable of finishing that well," Mears said after the race. "The car was too loose early on, and we lost a lap that ended up being really hard to get back.

"And when the power steering went out with about 100 laps to go, it became more about just hanging on and bringing a decent finish home."

After the race, Mears remained 16th in the NASCAR NEXTEL Cup points standings and will next compete on Sept. 2 at California Speedway. **GX**



# World Wrestling Entertainment and Colonial Center Tag-Team to Help Guard Soldiers

Story and Photos by MAJ Scott Bell, SC National Guard Historian

World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) and the University of South Carolina Colonial Center tag-teamed in Columbia at the WWE SmackDown to thank South Carolina Soldiers and their families for their service, and collect donations to send to the nearly 2,000 South Carolina Army National Guard (SCARNG) members serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Known for their tremendous support of troops serving overseas, including numerous trips by the wrestlers to Iraq and Afghanistan to perform, the WWE provided free tickets to Guard members and their families.

"It's the least we can do for these troops and their families, who sacrifice so much for us," said "Nature Boy" Ric Flair, a 16-time world champion wrestler with WWE.

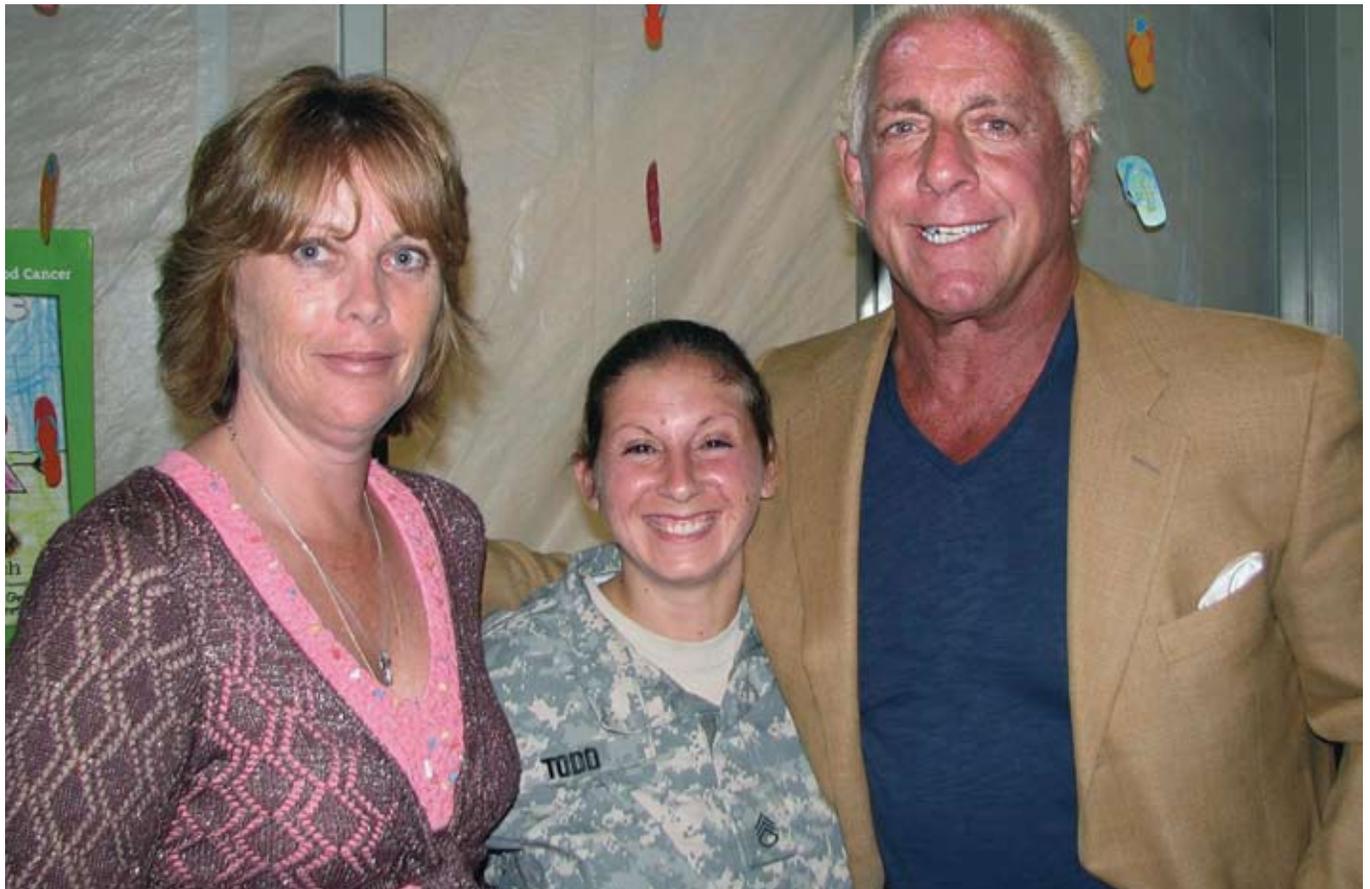
"These Soldiers and their families hold a special place in our hearts. We're honored to help them out as often as we can," said Kim Curnutt, the marketing manager for the Colonial Center.

In addition to receiving free tickets to the WWE SmackDown, the SCARNG also received hundreds of care package donations in Colonial Center collection bins from those attending the event. The Guard's Family Readiness Group plans to send the items to Soldiers serving overseas.

"The WWE and the Colonial Center have just been great. Our Soldiers and their families can't thank them enough for their generosity," said Mona Johnson, 111th Signal Battalion Family Readiness Group coordinator. **GX**

**FLAIR FOR FUNDRAISING** Ric Flair (right) of the WWE thanks Sherry Marsh (left), the SCARNG's Family Readiness assistant, and SSG Sabrina Todd for their service to our nation and troops serving overseas.

**It's the least we can do for these troops and their families, who sacrifice so much for us.**—Ric Flair





**MUSH!** MSG Rodney Whaley drives his team to the finish line.

# Tennessee Soldier Enters 2008 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race

Needs Byline

The Army National Guard announces its sponsorship of MSG Rodney Whaley of Franklin, TN, in his bid to run the 2008 Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. He is the first Tennessean ever to have entered the 1,159-mile race, self-proclaimed as “The World’s Last Great Race.” He will be utilizing the skills he has developed in the Guard the past 24 years.

“The Iditarod is the ultimate experience and my life-long dream,” MSG Whaley said. “Thanks to the National Guard, it will become a reality.”

MSG Whaley grew up in Alaska racing in junior sled dog races, and has always remained passionate about the sport. In recent years, he raced in several sled dog races in British Columbia, Washington and Michigan.

MSG Whaley will begin training his team in October at Alcan Kennels in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Training will continue until January, when he will complete his qualifying races. “The qualifying races are crucial,” he said. “If I don’t qualify, I don’t run the Iditarod.” To qualify, a musher must complete two sanctioned qualifying races that total 500 miles, one of which is 300 miles. He plans

to enter the Seney 300 (Michigan), the Beargrease Sled Dog Marathon (Minnesota) and the UP 200 (Michigan).

“When the qualifiers are completed, we head to Alaska,” he remarked. Plans are to head to the state in mid-February. The Iditarod starts the first weekend of March and runs approximately two weeks.

MSG Whaley owns a small kennel with four sled dogs at his home in Franklin, where he resides with his wife, Vicki. When the weather turns cool, he runs his team with a “dogsled-on-wheels” around his neighborhood, in preparation for the 16-dog Iditarod team.

MSG Whaley is a member of the International Sled Dog Racing Association and Mush with PRIDE, a sled dog care organization. He’s also a certified high school football official, having officiated for 25 years. **GX**

For more information about MSG Whaley, contact him directly at:

**(615) 591-7244 or (615) 477-7993**  
**[rodney.whaley@us.army.mil](mailto:rodney.whaley@us.army.mil)**



**GROUP EXERCISE** SSG Ken Weichert leads RSP White Phase at Camp Parks through tubing exercises.

# OPERATION TEAM START™

**Part 2 of 2**  
**With or Without Weights, Here We Come!**  
 By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert,

**RECEIVED**

I want to thank you for your articles in GX magazine! I believe the biggest obstacle to effective Physical Training is a lack of variety. Your articles are providing the National Guard a remedy to that dilemma.

I have incorporated several of your workouts and referenced your articles in GX to those in our unit's remedial Physical Training program. Our unit has since lifted flagging action on four out of seven for the Army Weight Control Program and six out of 11 for Army Physical Fitness Test failures. In other words, Soldiers are losing weight and getting more fit because of your fitness program!

I recently witnessed an entire unit conducting Physical Training at Camp Ripley using some of your push-up improvement techniques that were just recently published in GX.

Your article is the first article I look for in each issue. Keep up the good work!

ISG Dave Gill  
 HHD 147TH Regiment (RTI), 0HARNG



JONATHAN MILLER / ILLUSTRATION BY SEAMAS GALLAGHER, NICOLE SYLVESTER

ISG Gill,

Hello. Thank you for taking the time to let us know that our training is being well utilized! It is a pleasure to help Soldiers obtain a higher level of fitness. We agree that boredom is a big reason why people don't enjoy their workouts and ultimately stop working out altogether. Many people do the same workout routine week after week. Imagine if we ate the same way we work out. We would be eating the same thing for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day! We would be starving for variety.

Our goal with the START Fitness™ program is to keep workout routines safe, functional, fresh and invigorating. Our live program in San Francisco consists of two indoor workout days, two running days and one day that is half indoors and half outdoors. Our instructors understand that variety in exercise routines keeps it fresh for the recruits. Variety is the main reason why we have recruits that have been in our program for over 10 years.

This month we would like to challenge you to try our program where you live. If weather does not permit, try your cardiovascular training indoors on a treadmill, elliptical trainer or stepper. We also suggest that you dedicate one person at your armory to become the Unit Personal Trainer (UPT)™. This month, your UPT™ can utilize our Team START™ training guide to train your Soldiers. If necessary, have your UPT™ contact us for further guidance.

Good luck and please keep us informed about your progress! HOOAH!

Best Regards,  
 SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

## WEEKS 5-8: OPERATION TEAM START™

**NOTE:** Internet access required for parts of this series. Go to [www.GXonline.com](http://www.GXonline.com), click on Past Issues, START eFITNESS, and go to issues mentioned below.

### MONDAY

START Fitness™ article, GX 4.3 (pp. 68-70)  
Operation Slim Gym™, Part 1 of 2  
“The Shoulder Shredder”

### TUESDAY

START Fitness™ article, GX 4.7 (p. 74)  
Operation Pushing for Points™, Part 2 of 2  
“Interval Running Day #2”

### WEDNESDAY

START Fitness™ article, GX 4.5 (pp. 74-75)  
Operation Summit Whitney™

### THURSDAY

START Fitness™ article, GX 4.7 (p. 74)  
Operation Pushing for Points™, Part 2 of 2  
“Long Distance Running Day #2”

### FRIDAY

#### WARM-UP PHASE

1. 5-10 minutes running in place or 50 side-straddle-hops (jumping jacks)
2. **Rotation Exercises** (2 minutes)
3. **Stretching** (5-7 minutes)  
It is advised that you repeat steps 1-3 prior to step 4 in order to be properly warmed up.
4. **High Steps** (2 minutes)  
Jogging in place with your hands at least above your shoulders and your knees as high as your hips.



#### CORE CONCENTRATION PHASE

##### 5. Dying Cockroach Drill

- **Basic:** 1-15 reps
- **Intermediate:** 15-30 reps
- **Advanced:** 30-60 reps
- **Very Advanced:** Perform more than 30 reps with a medicine ball or a set of dumbbells in your hands, legs elevated with no bend in your knees, feet flexed and lined up over your hips, arms straight and hands lined up over your head. As you rise up, the medicine ball should block your view of the sky or ceiling.

##### 6. Flutter Kicks

- **Basic:** 10-20 seconds
- **Intermediate:** 21-40 seconds
- **Advanced:** 41-60 seconds

**NOTE:** Remember that the lower your legs are positioned, the more back muscles you engage for this exercise. Keep your back flat against the floor with your arms supporting the sides of your body. If you experience discomfort in your lower back, raise your legs higher.

##### 7. Crunches on the Ground, or Stability Ball Crunches

- **Basic:** 1-15 reps
- **Intermediate:** 15-30 reps
- **Advanced:** 30-60 reps

##### 8. Prone Back Bends

- **Basic:** 1-6 reps
- **Intermediate:** 7-12 reps
- **Advanced:** 13-24 reps
- **Very Advanced:** Slowly perform 10-20 reps with a medicine ball or a dumbbell in your hands, legs elevated and back slightly bent, and upper body elevated. Exhale on the bend, inhale when lowering toward the ground.



**HOOAH!**

Let us hear from you.  
[askthetrainer@startfitness.com](mailto:askthetrainer@startfitness.com)

**MUSCLE TARGET PHASE**

**9. Bench Dips**

- **Basic:** 1-10 reps
- **Intermediate:** 11-20 reps
- **Advanced:** 21-30 reps
- **Very Advanced:** Slowly perform 10-20 reps between two parallel bars.

**10. Normal Push-ups or Stability Ball Push-ups**

**Normal Push-ups**

- **Basic:** 20-30 seconds
- **Intermediate:** 31-60 seconds
- **Advanced:** 61-90 seconds

**Stability Ball Push-ups**

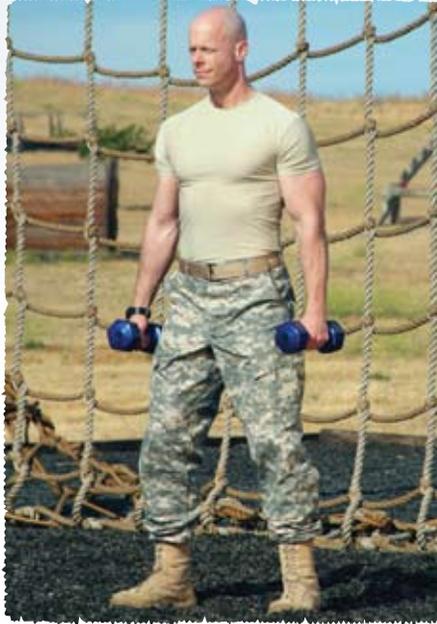
**Start Position:** Balance your body with your feet on the ground and your hands on a stability ball while keeping your back in a straight line. Look forward and keep your feet together or up to 12 inches apart.

**Action:** While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, slowly drop your body straight down by bending both elbows. Slowly return to the start position and continue.

- **Advanced:** 4-12 repetitions
- **Extreme:** Perform more than 12 repetitions without compromising your form

**11. Hammer Grip Front Raises**

- **Bulk Up:** 4-6 reps with high resistance or weight
- **Sculpt Down:** 15-20 reps with light to moderate resistance or weight



**NOTE:** Keep your back straight and your feet shoulder-width apart with a slight bend in your knees. We suggest that you use light weights in order to maintain form. Exhale when raising your arms, inhale when lowering toward the ground.

**NOTE:** Keep your back straight and your feet shoulder-width apart with a slight bend in your knees. We suggest that you use light weights in order to maintain form. Exhale when raising your arms, inhale when lowering toward the ground.

**12. High Lateral Raises**

- **Bulk Up:** 4-6 reps with high resistance or weight
- **Sculpt Down:** 15-20 reps with light to moderate resistance or weight

**13. Pull-ups**

**Start Position:** Place your hands on a pull-up bar, arms shoulder-width apart and palms facing away from your body.

**Action:** Pull your body upward until your nose reaches the bar. Return to the start position and repeat the steps.

**NOTE:** If you can't perform a complete pull-up, simply hang on the bar for 45 seconds with your arms extended.

- **Basic:** 1-2 reps or hang on the bar for 45-60 seconds
- **Intermediate:** 3-6 reps
- **Advanced:** 7-12 reps



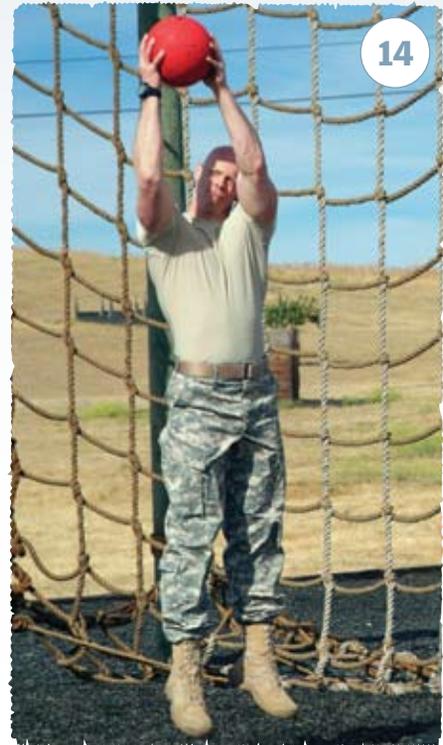
**SUMMIT PHASE**

**14. Basketball Drills**

**Start Position:** Stand with feet 12 inches apart, holding a medicine ball or a dumbbell in your hands waist-high.

**Action:** Step to the side and slightly forward with your left leg, and lower your body to 90 degrees with the forward knee. Don't step out too far or allow your forward knee to cross your toe. Push off with the far foot and return to the starting position. Leap straight into the air with the medicine ball or dumbbell slightly in front and above your shoulders (much like performing a basketball jump shot). Continue with same leg until you've reached the required amount of reps, and then perform the exercise with your right leg.

- **Basic:** 20-30 seconds
- **Intermediate:** 31-60 seconds
- **Advanced:** 61-90 seconds
- **Extreme:** 31-40 reps



### 15. 8-10 Minutes Aerobics

(treadmill, elliptical machines, running or cycle)

“HOOAH! Now do it, again!”

- **Basic:** 1 full set = approximately 30 minutes\*
- **Intermediate:** 2 full sets = approximately 60 minutes\*
- **Advanced:** 3 full sets = approximately 90 minutes\*

\* Depending on initial warm-up time, reps per set and rest periods. The Warm-up and Cool-down phases are performed only once. Intermediate and advanced participants may choose to perform the Core Concentration, Muscle Target, and Summit Phases two or more times.

### COOL-DOWN PHASE

#### 16. Rotation Exercises (2 minutes)

#### 17. Stretches (5-10 minutes)

### SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

- Light stretching and plenty of rest.
- Repeat Weekly Fitness Plan three additional times in order to complete the month.

**REMARKS:** Ken Weichert, aka SGT Ken™, is intentionally pictured in some of the pictures in the Army Combat Uniform (ACU) without the ACU jacket while demonstrating exercises for Operation Team START™. SSG Weichert's uniform is not meant to be in accordance with Army Regulation 670-1, Wear and Appearance of Army Uniforms and Insignia, dated 3 February 2005.

START Fitness™ is a group exercise and hiking business based in San Francisco where Soldiers and civilians can experience the thrill of military-style drills performed in cadence or with music. START Fitness™ now trains and certifies Basic, Senior and Master Instructors.

## START eFITNESS™ NOW ONLINE!

SGT Ken™ and Stephanie are now providing quick and simple health and fitness tips at [Gxonline.com](http://Gxonline.com)! As this section develops, you'll be able to view short fitness videos, download workouts and more.

**Go to:** [Gxonline.com/Fitness](http://Gxonline.com/Fitness)



SSG Ken Weichert, six-time Soldier of the Year and Veteran of both Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, began the START Fitness™ program in 1997. Now partnered with his wife Stephanie, strategic director of START Fitness™ and a certified personal trainer, the Weicherts are conquering the fitness industry.

**SPECIAL REMARKS:** We encourage you to send your questions or requests for additional information to [askthetrainer@STARTfitness.com](mailto:askthetrainer@STARTfitness.com). You can experience our workouts at home with our OPERATION LIVING FIT™ DVD series available on sale at [www.STARTfitness.com](http://www.STARTfitness.com) or <http://www.AmericanSoldier.com/skwo01.html>.

**WARNING:** Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or short of breath.

STRATEGIC ARMY TRAINING (START), LLC ASSUMES NO ASSOCIATION WITH THE U.S. ARMY OR THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. © 1998 START™. All Rights Reserved.



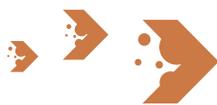
# 25 IDEAS FOR A HIGH-SPEED CHRISTMAS

Holiday Gift Guide 2007

Welcome to the 2007 Gift Guide! We have compiled the best products from our past years reviews along with a mess of other good stuff that we have encountered along the way. This year, rather than directing you to a particular retail outlet for all our products, we will simply be listing the best price we could find. If you can find a better price, good for you, please don't feel required to mail us and taunt us about our substandard shopping practices. If, on the other hand, you can't match the price we list, you might want to check with Google's product searching service, U.S. Cavalry or Brigade Quartermasters. ●●●

#### For more information:

Google's products searching service  
[www.google.com/products](http://www.google.com/products)  
 U.S. Cavalry  
[www.uscav.com](http://www.uscav.com)  
 Brigade Quartermasters  
[www.brigadeqgm.com](http://www.brigadeqgm.com)



#### OLYMPUS STYLUS 750

The Stylus 750 is an outstanding snapshot camera. It's small enough to easily tuck in your pocket (so you'll actually take it with you and use it) and waterproof so you don't have to be worried about taking it wherever you go. The 5X zoom image stabilization and on-screen guide for difficult lighting make this camera perfect for novices. \$250



#### PETZL TACTICA PLUS HEADLAMP (4-LED)

Small, low-weight and bright, this is an excellent way to provide yourself hands-free light while you work. With three brightness levels and a flip filter to transition from white to red light, this headlight meets all your needs. \$46.



#### NEW BALANCE N5 MAX

If you're serious about fitness and training but need a heart-rate monitor that's reasonably priced and easy to use, the N5 is just the thing. With the included chest strap you can easily monitor your calories burned, resting heart rate, max HR, average HR for a workout and store 30 runs worth of exercise data. \$90





**BOKER SUBCOM F BELT CUTTER/KNIFE**

If you would rather carry your belt-cutter with you, the Boker Subcom F is an excellent option. Compact and weighing only 2.5 ounces, this knife can be clipped to a belt or vest for easy access. \$30



**CRKT ZILLA-TOOLL**

Simple, straightforward and comfortable in your hand, the Zilla-Tool offers full-duty pliers, wire cutters, knife and screwdrivers. Fits comfortably in a cargo pocket or clips easily to your gear. \$30



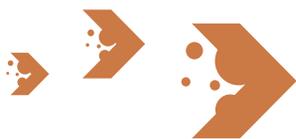
**CRKT GUPPIE KNIFE TOOL**

The Guppie is unquestionably the coolest all-in-one pocket tool we've ever seen. It has a knife, a crescent wrench, four screwdriver bits, an LED light and (bless their hearts) a bottle opener. The whole thing is comfortable to use and its nifty (non-load bearing) carabiner design lets you clip it on practically anywhere. \$20



**VICTORINOX SWISS MEMORY 1 GB**

Even geeks need pocketknives. While your office-dweller might not need a saw blade or a pair of pliers, how about a blade, ink pen, LED light and a 1-GB USB memory stick with a classic Swiss Army Knife look? The geek-chic factor is high on this one . . . and yes, that's a good thing. \$78



**BUCK 730 XTRACT MULTITOOL**

In this multifunctional tool, needle-nose pliers, flat and Phillips screwdrivers, blade and bottle opener can all be easily deployed, used and restowed with only one hand. \$500



**ENTERTAIN YOUR SOLDIER**

**DVD'S:**

**BLACKHAWK DOWN**

Incredibly chaotic and intensely violent, this movie recreates the heroism and unfailing spirit of a group of US Special Forces Soldiers who found themselves in a worst-case scenario 16-hour urban battle.



**WE WERE SOLDIERS**

Unlike most Vietnam movies, this work depicts the Soldiers of the era as the proud, if inexperienced, warriors they were. At the same time, a human face is given to the grieving families on the home front.

**BAND OF BROTHERS**

This HBO series does an outstanding job of telling the true story of the Soldiers of Easy Company and their journey through WWII. (Graphically violent at points.)

**SAVING PRIVATE RYAN**

Overwhelmingly intense at points, Tom Hanks' performance anchors an excellent cast in this WWII classic.

**CHARLIE DANIELS BAND LIVE FROM IRAQ (DVD/CD)**

Few artists are more hardcore in their dedication to our nation's troops than Charlie Daniels. These discs showcase the artist's talent and stunning vitality.

**BOOKS:**

**GATES OF FIRE**

by Steven Pressfield

This classic telling of King Leonidas and the 300 Spartans at Thermopylae, is required reading at many Military schools. It captures perfectly the intense dedication and sacrifice not only of Soldiers but of the families they leave behind to serve.



PHOTO CREDIT COURTESY OF PRODUCT MANUFACTURERS



**UK GEAR PT-03SC**

This high-performance running shoe was developed in association with the British Army Physical Training Corps, so you know it's tough. The light, breathable mesh upper kept our feet cool and comfortable through the most rigorous of workouts, and the anti-microbial treatment even managed to overcome the Younger Brother's foot funk (for the first few months anyway). \$86



**SUUNTO CLIPPER**

Ever heard the expression, "He could get lost in a paper bag?" Meet the Elder Brother. Fortunately, this affliction can be remedied (or at least dramatically improved) with the handy Suunto Clipper. It hangs doggedly onto almost any watchband and will help even the most directionally challenged of folks find their way home. \$10



**COLEMAN FOLD N GO™ PROpane INSTASTART™ STOVE**

This is not your parents' old green suitcase-sized Coleman that was a camping staple for years. Now there's a light, compact, two-burner stove available that you don't need a Sherpa to haul for you. \$75

*Photo courtesy of The Coleman Company, Inc.*



**COLEMAN PACK-AWAY LANTERN**

A final item for your light-weight camping plans: The Coleman Pack-Away Lantern collapses to a little over 16 cubic inches and, with batteries, weighs only 8 ounces. Its high-efficiency LED puts out a remarkable 95 lumens for five hours on its high setting or can make a set of batteries last for 12 hours on low. \$30 deployed, used and re-stowed with only one hand, which makes the whole tool about as easy to use as possible. \$50

*Photo courtesy of The Coleman Company, Inc.*



**DAY ASSAULT PACKS**

As part of our hiking expedition back in GX 4.7, we put several Day Assault Packs through their paces. Depending on your specific needs, they all provide good value for the money. The Spec-Ops T.H.E. Pack (\$150) and the Kelty Raven (\$250) are still in use here at GX. Recently, however, a new Blackhawk pack came in, the X-1 R.A.P.T.O.R. Pack (\$170). It's every bit as good as the Blackhawk Barrage and well worthy of consideration. Spec-Ops T.H.E. Pack: \$150; Kelty Raven: \$250; Black Hawk X-1 R.A.P.T.O.R. Pack: \$170.



**GERBER CORNEA**

If you like the styling and functionality of a tactical light, but want more than one hour of battery life and don't need to burn out someone's retinas, the Cornea may be right for you. With a stout aluminum body and tail-cap switch, this LED flashlight offers long-lasting, brighter-than-average illumination. \$25



**LIFEHAMMER ESCAPE TOOL**

When you absolutely, positively have to get the @##\$% out of a car right NOW, accept no substitutes. Place one of these within easy reach of your driver's seat and should the need arise, your seatbelt and the window between you and safety will disappear. \$15



**SHIELDSAK RF-SHIELDING PASSPORT POUCH**

This convenient carry pouch's fabric prevents the remote use of radio frequency electromagnetic fields from reading the information encoded on your passport or credit cards. Perfect for the paranoid. \$30



**SKYDEX ACH RETRO HELMET KIT**

Lighter and more durable than traditional foam, these replacement helmet pads will keep you drier and cooler. The moisture-wicking outer layer and non-moisture retaining interior also inhibit odor-causing bacteria and make them easy to clean. \$80



**KELTY DUO BIN**

Headed to a picnic or any other excuse to sit outside and enjoy a meal? Ditch your old cooler and pick up a Duo Bin. With one bin for dry goods, one to act as a waterproof cooler and two external pockets, you can tote plenty of food for everyone. The "OK, now that's just cool" addition: The two bins separate to reveal a handy table. \$70



**ONCE THERE WAS A WAR**

by John Steinbeck

This re-release is a compilation of Steinbeck's daily postings sharing a ground-level view of the experiences of WWII Soldiers.

**THE DEVIL'S SANDBOX**

by John R. Bruning

Although graphic and unsettling at points, this book does an outstanding job of conveying the true experience of so many National Guard Soldiers in Iraq.

**THE AFGHAN CAMPAIGN**

by Steven Pressfield

Telling the story of Alexander the Great's invasion of Afghanistan from a foot Soldier's point of view, this novel gives a strong sense of the history of war in the region.

**CDs**

**WHITE CHRISTMAS**



by Martina McBride

Big-time patriot and country music powerhouse Martina McBride is re-releasing her hit Christmas album with several new additions: "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Winter Wonderland," "Jingle Bells" and her Dean Martin duet, "Baby It's Cold Outside."

**DEUCES**

by the Charlie Daniels Band

The reigning king of Southern Rock and military support Charlie Daniels and his band continue to prove their might with their latest release of duets with top dogs of country music, including Brad Paisley, Montgomery Gentry, Travis Tritt, Gretchen Wilson, Brooks & Dunn and many more.

**"A SOLDIER'S PRAYER"**

by Collin Raye

The proceeds from sales of this powerful single by true military supporter Collin Raye will be donated to the Wounded Warrior project. (Also available on Raye's new album "Selected Hits.")

**THIS IS IT** by Jack Ingram

Jack Ingram is racing up the charts with his latest release, "This Is It." The native-Texan delivers great American music from the gut. Our favorite cut is "Measure of a Man." Just real good, real livin' music for cruisin' around in your Jeep . . . or Humvee. Jackingram.net



**MOUNTAIN HARDWEAR - ULTRALAMINA 32**

Somehow they just keep making good stuff better. This high-end, super-light (1-lb., 15-oz.) bag uses welded seams to cut down on cold spots. The “Now they’re just showing off feature”: dual-entry zippers that allow you to stick your arms out of the bag to read or cook without losing stored heat. \$160



**KELTY LIGHT YEAR 3D 25 WOMEN'SV**

Light and downright cozy, the Light Year compresses to a remarkably small size for easy packing. Tailored to fit a woman's frame more comfortably, this bag finds a good balance between weight and price. \$110



**TACTICAL GRILLING APRON**

Constructed of 1000D Cordura with urethane coating, the TGA features five rows of MOLLE attachments Velcro for standard ACU patches. \$40



**KELTY TETON 2**

Offering 31 square feet of floor space at a paltry 4 pounds, 10 ounces, and excellent ventilation, the Teton is another great backpacking tent. While not suited for winter camping, its solid construction does ensure excellent weather protection. \$100be easily deployed, used and re-stowed with only one hand, which makes the whole tool about as easy to use as possible. \$50



**STEAK BRANDING IRONS**

One-upmanship is a sport unto itself. Combine two of your greatest passions: grilling out and one-upping other college football fans. Anyone can have a cookout, but who else will serve steaks branded with their college logo? \$30



**KELTY CRESTONE 1**

If you're hauling it all on your back and need maximum shelter for minimum weight, the Crestone 1 is an ideal solution. Easy and quick to set up, the load of this tent also won't strain your wallet. \$70



**MAXPEDITION MPB**

You can never have too many pockets. With 22 separate compartments, removable stiff panels and organized strips everywhere, it makes an excellent laptop case, range bag or general carry-all. \$100

## Holiday Mailing Deadlines (for overseas military)

<sup>1</sup> EMMS is available to selected military post offices. Check with your local Post Office to determine if this service is available to your APO/FPO of address.

<sup>2</sup> PAL is a service that provides air transportation for parcels on a space-available basis. It is available for Parcel Post items not exceeding 30 pounds in weight or 60 inches in length and girth combined. The applicable PAL fee must be paid in addition to the regular surface rate of postage for each addressed piece sent by PAL service.

<sup>3</sup> Parcels paid at Parcel Post postage rates are first transported domestically by surface and then to overseas destinations by air on a space-available basis. The maximum weight and size limits are 15 pounds and 60 inches in length and girth combined.

Military Mail Addressed to:	Express Mail <sup>®</sup> Military Service (EMMS) <sup>1</sup>	First-Class Mail <sup>®</sup> Letters/Cards	Priority Mail <sup>®</sup>	Parcel Airift <sup>®</sup> Mail (PAL) <sup>2</sup>	Space Available Mail (SAM) <sup>3</sup>	Parcel Post <sup>®</sup>
APO/FPO AE ZIPs 090-092	DEC 19	DEC 11	DEC 11	DEC 4	NOV 27	NOV 13
APO/FPO AE ZIP 093	N/A	DEC 4	DEC 4	DEC 2	NOV 27	NOV 13
APO/FPO AE ZIPs 094-098	DEC 19	DEC 11	DEC 11	DEC 4	NOV 27	NOV 13
APO/FPO AA ZIP 340	DEC 19	DEC 11	DEC 11	DEC 4	NOV 27	NOV 13
APO/FPO AP ZIPs 962-966	DEC 19	DEC 11	DEC 11	DEC 4	NOV 27	NOV 13

For full details, visit [www.usps.com](http://www.usps.com)

# GIVE US YOUR OPINION AND WIN AN IPOD!

So, you've spent the year reading our reviews and now we want to hear from you. Did we get something wrong in a review? Is there something we forgot to review? Most importantly of all, do you have a review of your own you'd like to see published in GX magazine? Send your feedback, thoughts, and reviews of cool gear to [BrothersWest@GXonline.com](mailto:BrothersWest@GXonline.com) (all submissions must be emailed by November 1). We will randomly select a winner from the published letters to receive a shiny new Ipod Classic and two others will win an Ipod Shuffle!



# GX Hero: Shauna Fleming

By SSG Heather G. Allen and Christian Anderson

When we first created the GX Hero feature, Shauna Fleming was exactly who we had in mind. In a way, this young woman has become an icon for military support. All because of a simple idea backed with a world of heart, Fleming has positively affected the lives of over four million service members.

For many students, freshman year of high school means adjusting to the nuances of school, classes and cliques. But for a freshman at Lutheran High School, Orange, CA, her first year meant making national headlines and meeting with our nation's president, George W. Bush.

What started as her simple idea turned into a national phenomenon. Fleming wanted to give back to U.S. service members, and with a little hard work, she made it happen.

In wake of 9/11, flags were flying, yellow ribbons adorned buildings and unity among Americans was at an all-time high. She felt a renewed sense of pride in being an American.

Only a few months after the tragic events, Fleming noticed how people had already begun to forget and revert to inattentive ways. It seemed as if the Soldiers and Patriotism were put on the backburner

again. She had an idea. She wanted to give thank-you letters to troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, so they knew there were people at home supporting them.

In March 2004, Fleming decided to start collecting one million letters, hence the name of her cause A Million Thanks, for the service members fighting for overseas. She saw a need for simple gratitude because other groups were often sending "cookies and care packages," sometimes without the words of encouragement and thanks.

"This is something different because it sends a morale boost and that's something that few, if any, programs send, yet it's something that's really needed," Fleming told GX in a recent interview.

She approached her principal about the idea and he agreed to let her head the letter-writing campaign with friends and fellow students at school. In the beginning, she wondered if she could really collect a million letters, since she was initially basing her support solely from her school and community.

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**REACHING OUT** Shauna Fleming surrounded by just a small portion of the letters that will go to our troops in Iraq and Afghanistan.



(ALL PHOTOS) COURTESY OF SHAUNA FLEMING

But her doubts were short-lived—the response was through the roof.

Her efforts hit the national level when Fox News did a segment on her remarkable undertaking, which was followed by an Associated Press article. Thereafter, her project gained the nation's admiration and support, and letters began to pour in from all over the U.S. In fact, she received such a large response, she had to enlist her family and boyfriend to help her with reading and sorting the letters.

By November 2004, Fleming was in the Oval Office presenting her millionth letter to President Bush in a private ceremony. She remembers him telling her that the troops loved the letters and she was inspired to keep rolling. Following the White House visit, she made several trips to the Pentagon, including a presentation of the 2.6 millionth letter to SGM William Joseph Gainey, senior enlisted advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The letter is currently hanging on a wall inside the Pentagon.

In April 2007, Fleming got a call that General Motors wanted to set up collection boxes during the month of May at all their 3,600 locations. To help get the word out about this initiative, Fleming was featured in three Buick, Pontiac and GMC commercials throughout the month. General Motors helped A Million Thanks collect one million thank-you letters and paid for their distribution overseas.

When you read Fleming's blog ([amillionthanks.vox.com](http://amillionthanks.vox.com)), you realize that this young woman, who has done so much, is still a normal teen going through everything a girl her age goes through. In May, when she was busy with her commercials and the travel that went along with them and her speaking engagements, she also had prom and her high school graduation to think about.

Although she didn't have very much time to prepare for prom, she said she had a blast. Fleming, her boyfriend and five other couples arrived in a Hummer, spent the night dancing and had a caricature artist draw them, coincidentally, as heroes.

Although she says the recognition is nice, Fleming gets her sense of accomplishment from the service members themselves. "The most fulfilling part is getting emails, letters and phone calls from troops thanking me," she said. "If I can make one of them smile, then to me it is all worth it."

One Soldier she and her family had been in contact with throughout his deployment even invited her to his "Welcome Home Party" at Fort Hood, TX. "[His party] was memorable for me, since my family and I had been talking to him for nearly a year while he was overseas," she said. "That was one of the coolest things—just to be able to be with that family to welcome him home."

Fleming hasn't stopped with A Million Thanks. She's continuing her efforts for Soldiers with a new project, Wounded Soldiers Wish Foundation, which will raise money to buy items for Soldiers wounded in the War on Terror. Many Soldiers return home with high medical costs or new debts due to injuries from war, and Fleming wants to help them transition back to civilian life.

As of now, she has collected over four million thank-you letters from 50 states and nine foreign countries. Even though she has surpassed her



original goal of one million four times, she shows no sign of slowing down, and proves that one person really can make a difference.

Fleming often receives emails from other teens starting similar programs at their schools. In the back of her book, "A Million Thanks," she details how others can go about creating other programs. Her main advice to them is if they have an idea to go with it. "You never know how big it can get," she writes.

Fleming has started film school in the Public Relations and Advertising Program at Chapman University. Even though she knows college will keep her busier than high school, she plans to keep A Million Thanks going for a long time. **GX**



A Million Thanks is a member of the Department of Defense's America Supports You program. You can help Fleming and the Soldiers by visiting her Web site at:

**[AMillionThanks.org](http://AMillionThanks.org)**

The Wounded Soldiers Foundation is waiting on approval from the IRS to kick off and asks that civilians and service members alike send their name, address and phone number indicating if they would like to make a donation or help with the fundraising effort to:

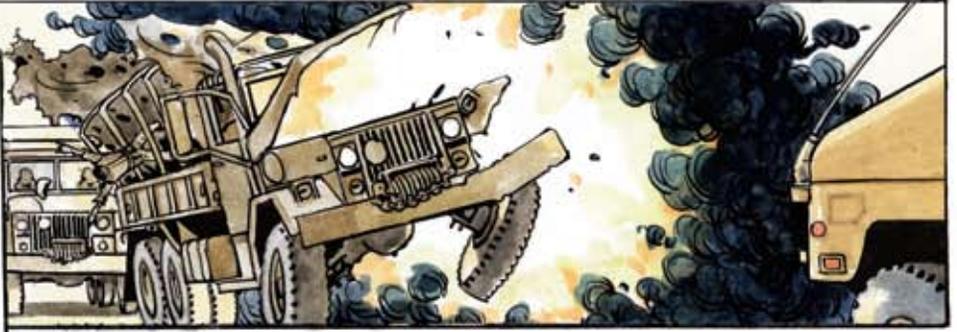
**[aMillionThanks@aol.com](mailto:aMillionThanks@aol.com)**

**This is something different because it sends a morale boost and that's something that few, if any, programs send, yet it's something that's really needed.**—Shauna Fleming

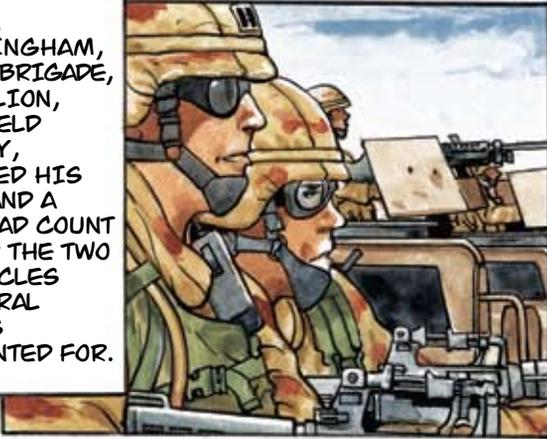
# TRADITION OF EXCELLENCE

NOVEMBER 14, 2004,  
NORTH OF TAJI, IRAQ.

A PATROL CONSISTING OF U.S. ARMY AND IRAQI NATIONAL GUARD (ING) SOLDIERS WERE ATTACKED BY A SIZABLE INSURGENT FORCE RESULTING IN THE DISABLING OF TWO IRAQI VEHICLES BY IEDS AND CAUSING SEVERAL CASUALTIES. THE REMAINING SIX AMERICAN HUMVEES WITH TWO ING VEHICLES EVACUATED THE KILL ZONE TO RALLY 200 METERS AWAY.



CPT JOHN VANLANDINGHAM, 39TH INF. BRIGADE, 1ST BATTALION, 206TH FIELD ARTILLERY, REGROUPED HIS PEOPLE, AND A QUICK HEAD COUNT REVEALED THE TWO ING VEHICLES AND SEVERAL TROOPERS UNACCOUNTED FOR.



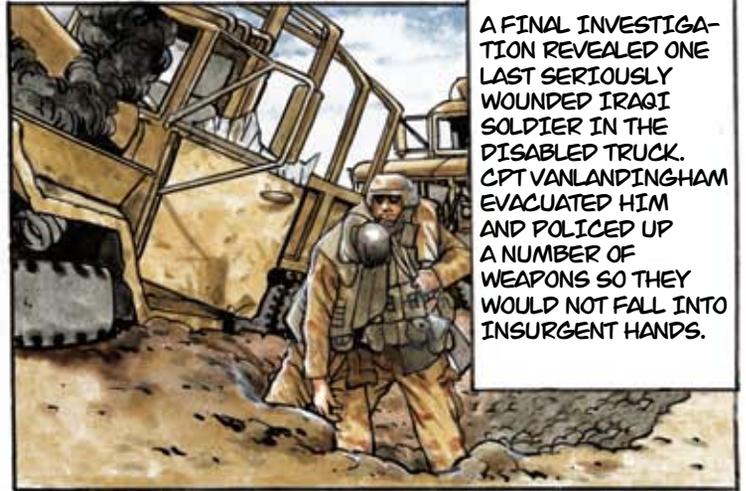
RETURNING TO THE KILL ZONE, CPT VANLANDINGHAM FOUND SEVERAL WOUNDED IRAQIS WHO HAD TAKEN COVER IN A DITCH A SHORT DISTANCE FROM THEIR DESTROYED VEHICLE.



UNDER HEAVY ENEMY FIRE, CPT VANLANDINGHAM PERSONALLY EVACUATED A WOUNDED IRAQI NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIER, THEN RETURNED REPEATEDLY TO THE FRAY FOR OTHER SOLDIERS WITH LITTLE REGARD FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL SAFETY.



A FINAL INVESTIGATION REVEALED ONE LAST SERIOUSLY WOUNDED IRAQI SOLDIER IN THE DISABLED TRUCK. CPT VANLANDINGHAM EVACUATED HIM AND POLICED UP A NUMBER OF WEAPONS SO THEY WOULD NOT FALL INTO INSURGENT HANDS.



THE BESIEGED COLUMN, WITH EVERYONE ACCOUNTED FOR, WAS THEN ABLE TO BREAK CONTACT WITH THE ENEMY AND EVACUATE THE WOUNDED TO CAMP TAJI FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT.



FOR HIS SERVICE AND COURAGE UNDER FIRE, CPT VANLANDINGHAM RECEIVED THE SILVER STAR.

