

GX
THE GUARDIAN

VOLUME FOUR ISSUE ONE
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2007

**IS DISTANCE LEARNING
RIGHT FOR YOU?**

**SPECIAL FORCES
NEW HEIGHTS IN NEPAL**

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**CASEY
MEARS**

**THE NEW FACE OF
GUARD RACING**

**KICK OFF
THE NEW YEAR
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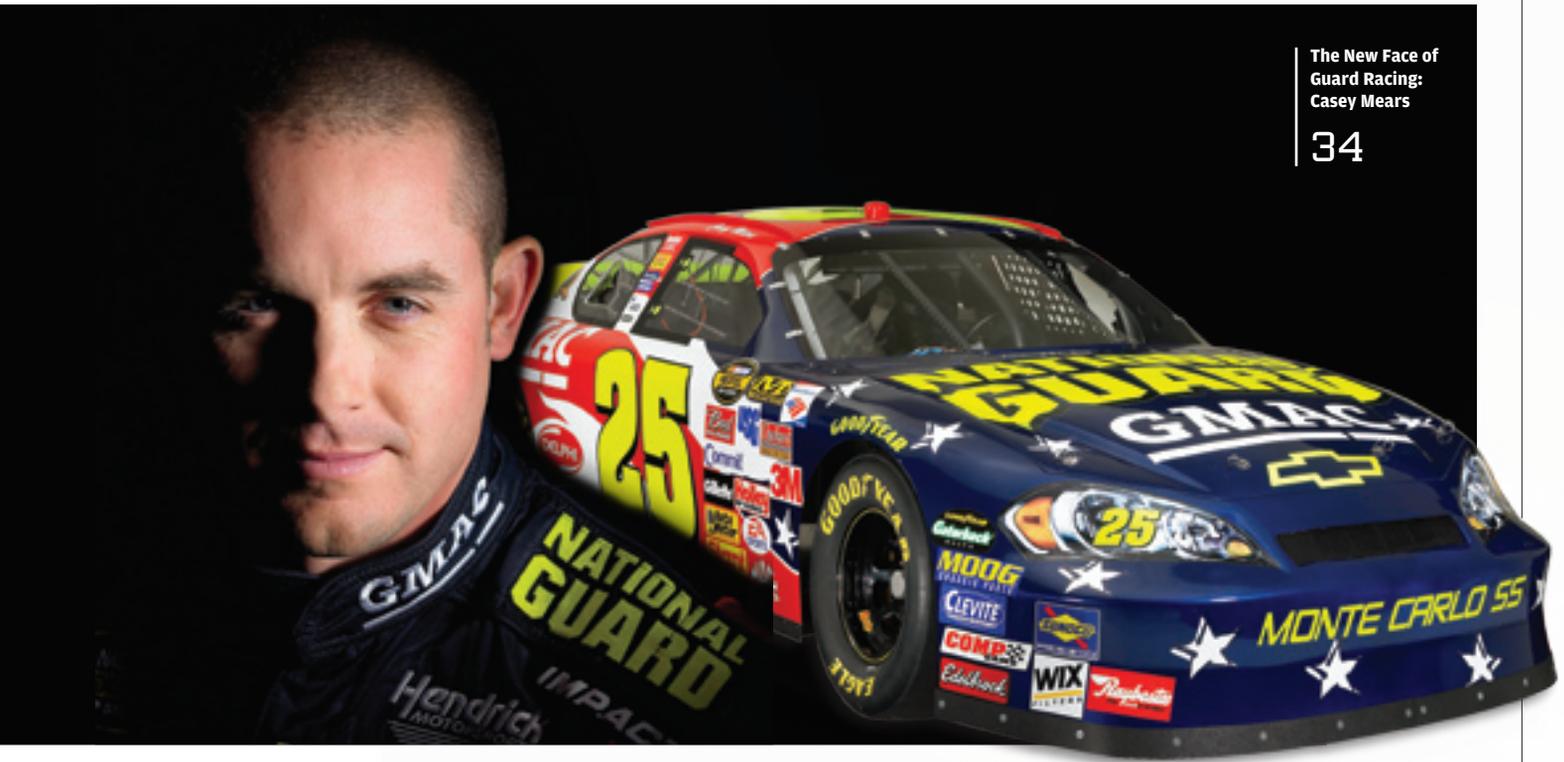
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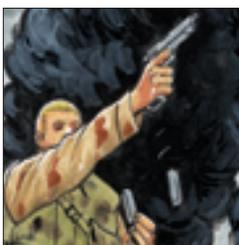
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Charlie Daniels has been entertaining audiences, including deployed Soldiers, for over half a century and he's still rockin' today. See how his unwavering support of our troops has earned him this month's GX Hero spotlight.

Letter from Leadership

Members of the Army National Guard put on the uniform of the United States when our country needs them most. In the war on terror, thousands of these civilians from all walks of life have been called away from their jobs and families and mobilized for duty. They are performing many difficult missions and taking great risks to advance peace and liberty around the world. Here at home, these brave men and women work to protect our borders, rebuild communities, and bring comfort, safety, and healing to individuals in the aftermath of natural disasters. The dedicated service of our National Guard is vital to the security of our country, and these patriots are an inspiration and source of pride for all Americans.

Our Nation is grateful for our military families who serve our country by giving their love and support to our troops. We ask for God's special blessing on those who have lost a loved one. We also are thankful for the many friends and neighbors who support our service members and their families. The efforts of these compassionate individuals reflect our country's commitment to our men and women in uniform and demonstrate the best of the American spirit.

Laura and I send our best wishes. May God bless you, may God bless our troops, and may God continue to bless America.



President George W. Bush



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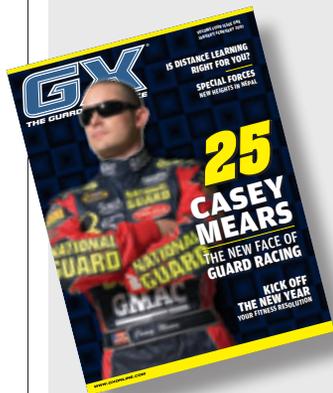
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Happy New Year

This issue kicks off our fourth year of GX and we couldn't have made it without you! We appreciate your dedicated readership and active engagement in our mission. The overwhelmingly positive response we have received has further encouraged us, strengthening our resolve to expand and improve our publication. We are tremendously proud to serve you—the Guard Soldier *and* the Guard family member—by sharing your story, preserving your legacy, and enhancing your Guard experience.

Your service and sacrifice is inspiring and educating the American public, especially our next generation of leaders. You are today's heroes, carrying the Guard's glorious 370-year heritage into 2007.

To properly lay the groundwork for another banner year, we asked the President of the United States of America George W. Bush to pen our premiere Letter from Leadership (p. 6). President Bush responded with a moving statement of support and gratitude, exclusively for GX.

This issue, we meet Casey Mears—the National Guard's new Guard Car Driver—sure to stir up excitement this season. Mears takes the wheel, replacing Greg Biffle, in the new #25 National Guard GMAC Chevy with Hendrick Motorsports. The big change brings the Guard Car to both the NASCAR® Nextel Cup series and the Busch Series. Flip to page 34 for full details on both the man and the machine.

Also, we check in with New Orleans to find the Guard still critically active in the city over a year after Katrina hit (p. 18). We rally support for the Dixie Thunder Run boys, setting to launch their support ride this spring (p. 22). And, because we love to shoot and make things explode as much as you, the Brothers West hit the Knob Creek Machine Gun Shoot in Westpoint, Kentucky (p. 74).

And this is just the beginning. We're looking to amp things up this year, folks, so hold on tight. Hit www.GXonline.com to grab your free subscription, if you haven't done so already. Trust us, you're not gonna want to miss an issue!

*Thank you,
The GX Team*

ON THE COVER

New #25 National Guard Car driver Casey Mears is set to take the driver's seat for the 2007 season.

PHOTO COURTESY OF ARNG

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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Rants and Raves

A PICTURE TO SHOW MY FRIENDS

The following is a poem submitted by deployed Soldier Hugh Martin from Macedonia, OH.

A ghostly caravan of camels appears in
the infinite sea of sand.
Kuwait reminded us of when we were boys,
Playing ball on the dirty, unkempt Little
League infields.
A white Toyota pickup slowly follows the
long, hazy caravan.
Some smiling, toothless Bedouin driving,
waves excitedly
At our green and khaki caravan of
Trucks, armor, weapons, Soldiers.

I hand Leidel my disposable Kodak camera.
Then I stand like a conqueror.
With the caravan in my background,
He photographs me.
I'll show this to my friends,
That's my plan.

Out here, this place is not Earth.
Maybe a distant planet.
Our convoy waits for orders to move and
The Bedouin passes us.
Camels cross between humvees,
The desert doesn't want us, we don't
want it.
The Bedouin still waves and we are just
his entertainment.
To us, he is a photograph opportunity, and
something to stare at,
Besides our equipment and the sand.

The Toyota rolls between the convoy and
the caravan slowly blends into the air
Disappearing.
And again,
With curious, homesick eyes and dusty,
tired hands,
We stand alone with our trucks,
Consumed by the silent sand.

WELCOME PRAISE

I think your magazine is great. It helps us to know what other Guard units are doing here and abroad. It's something Guardsmen and family members share.

Thanks again!!
Karen Yardman
Albuquerque, NM

THUMBS UP

I give this issue of *GX* a thumbs up! Keith at *GX* was kind enough to send us some copies of the latest mag, full of ND/SD stuff. Thanks for all you do, *GX*. Your magazine is AWESOME!!!!

2LT Dan Murphy
129th MPAD, NDARNG
Qatar

REAFFIRMATION

In the summer of 2003, my unit was stationed at LSA Anaconda outside Balad, Iraq and was working on establishing it as a base for future operations. As part of this project, we would go into Balad to purchase products from vendors on the economy. To do this, we would take a security element into town to protect a purchasing officer while he was doing business with the locals.

Each time, we would have many locals come up to us and try to converse with us on various topics. Of course, we would be as friendly as we could under the situation, but security was the mission and we had to maintain vigilance. One particular day, a group of young men were gathered around the security perimeter, three to four men deep. Out of nowhere, a young mother and her small daughter made their way through the crowd and walked right up to me. The men were staring at them in disbelief as the young daughter handed me a flower with a smile on her face and said something in Arabic. I looked at the little girl's mother and she said, in English as good as she could utter, "Thank you." In that instant, I realized that because of our presence there, she felt empowered to make her way through the crowd of men and speak to me. This is a powerful statement to the reason we should finish the mission!

Our presence and dedication can empower those in the population who want to live in a civilized society in peace.

Benjie Wells
Poplarville, MS

OVERSIGHT

I was very excited to see there would be an article concerning Native Americans in *GX* magazine. However, when I got it, I was dismayed to see no mention at all of the Alaska National Guard, who comprise fully one-half of all Native Americans in the



GX IN THE FIELD 2LT Dan Murphy of the North Dakota Army National Guard with fellow members of the 129th MPAD in Qatar, late November.

Guard. Big miss on the author's part. The 256 Federally-recognized tribes in Alaska, made up of Athabaskan, Inupiaq, Yupik, Aleut, Alutiiq, Tlingit, Haida, and Tsimshian warriors, contribute mightily to the country's defense. As of today, they are serving as Alaska Guardsmen in Iraq, Kuwait, and Afghanistan. As much as I like and admire Montana Guardsmen, I wish your article had been broader.

COL J. Marc Williams

COL Williams,

First, I want to thank you for taking the time to write us. We are always glad to receive feedback from our readers.

*Second, you are entirely correct, it was a significant oversight on our part not to have included coverage of the AKARNG. We regret the omission and certainly meant no disrespect to the brave men and women of the Alaskan Tribes. We were contacted recently by an Alaska PAO who has begun preparing an article for publication in *GX* to correct this oversight.*

BEAUTY OF YOUTH Three Iraqi girls pose for the camera in Ajeelia, Iraq Oct. 16, as they await the arrival of donated goods.



NJ CIVIL MILITARY OPS HELPING TO BUILD A SAFER IRAQ

By SPC Alexandra Hemmerly-Brown
210th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Courtesy of DVIDS, www.dvidshub.net



LSA ANACONDA, IRAQ—Not far from Anaconda, along a labyrinth of narrow, jutting dirt roads, mud houses, and flowing irrigation troughs, stands a small village that has long felt the presence of U.S. troops.

The town has been on the receiving end of humanitarian aid since the occupation of Anaconda by U.S. forces in 2003.

Members of C Troop, 5th Squadron, 117th Cavalry Regiment—a New Jersey Army

National Guard unit—visited the village October 16 as they often do, bringing donations of school supplies, clothing, and other much-needed supplies.

The unit makes visits to the local villages it is responsible for outside Anaconda as an attempt to form a trusting relationship with them, according to 1LT Michael G. Tarricone, force protection officer for the troop.

“The unit’s primary mission on Anaconda is to operate one of the entry-control points, but they also have combat logistical patrols and combat reconnaissance patrols,” 1LT Tarricone said. “These are patrols that go

outside the wire daily to ensure a military presence in the surrounding area, as well as gather any helpful information they can.”

The U.S. Army has a budget for supporting humanitarian aid in forms of education, healthcare, water treatment, and long-term employment for Iraqis, which it uses to make Iraq a better place for its citizens and tear down the walls of terrorism in the process.

“We are hoping to decrease the attacks on LSA Anaconda by presenting the softer side of the Army,” 1LT Tarricone said. “Indirectly, we are hoping to get them to trust us enough to tell us where our enemies are.”

(ABOVE AND RIGHT) SPC ALEXANDRA HEMMERLY-BROWN, 210TH MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

This is a long-term project that is not only bringing aid to Iraqis now, but also helping them set up a more stable country for the future. “Long-term, I’d like to see the towns become more self-sufficient,” added 1LT Tarricone.

On this particular trip to the village, C Troop brought boxes of donations from both an organization called Operation Iraqi Children (www.OperationIraqiChildren.org) and a unit member’s church in New Jersey.

“We’ve gotten a lot of support from New Jersey,” said PFC Theresa M. Marchese, a truck driver with D Company, Forward Support Company, 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry Reconnaissance, Surveillance, and Target Acquisition, 1/34th BCT Red Bulls.

PFC Marchese, one of the only female Soldiers who goes out on C Troop’s civil military operations, said she was asked to come to assist with the female villagers.

Previously, she said the women in the villages wouldn’t speak to male U.S. Soldiers, so there was no way to find out what supplies the women needed.

She said she now brings them women’s clothing, hygiene products, and baby supplies.

“This is my fourth time going out and I try to bring them things they need. So, when we need information from them, they will help us out,” PFC Marchese said.

The supplies from Operation Iraqi Children were taken to a local school, which houses about 500 children.

BABY DETAIL PFC Theresa M. Marchese, D-Co., Forward Support Co., 1-167 RSTA, holds an Iraqi child as supplies are handed out Oct. 16.



(TOP) COURTESY OF CAARNG PAO

A local official met with 1LT Tarricone to hand the supplies over to the school and to discuss future plans for the school’s needs.

A possible expansion of the crowded school was discussed, as was the donation of playground equipment from the States.

1LT Tarricone said these projects are reasonable requests, which will be presented for either approval or disapproval. The way a project would work is if approved, bids would go out to local Iraqi contractors to do the construction, creating more jobs.

The official was happy to have his request for a bigger school heard.

“We want to thank the American forces for helping us,” the official said. “A bigger school would be safer for the kids.”

The Soldiers were told that since the U.S.’s arrival in Iraq, the change has been positive in this village. 1LT Tarricone said that all projects and donations go through the local officials first, ensuring that the local government system stays intact.

“We bring donations and goodwill feelings from the American public to the Iraqi populace,” said 1LT Tarricone.

Although this trip was just one of many, it is another step towards an independent Iraq. C Troop continues to conduct visits to Anaconda’s surrounding villages to ensure relationships are built and friends—not enemies—are made. **GX**

For more on the incredible work that units in the Red Bulls are undertaking, turn to page 54, and look for our “Running with the Bulls” feature in each issue of GX through their homecoming!



CA SOLDIER SAVES FELLOW SOLDIER

By Norris Jones
Courtesy of The Grizzly, October 2006
CAARNG PAO

IRAQ—Four 60mm rounds blasted Forward Operating Base Loyalty south of Sadr City at 7:20 p.m. on July 29.

SFC David Garcia of the California Army National Guard says he and the staff took cover in their concrete bunker when they heard a young Soldier from the 101st screaming for help in a nearby parking lot.

“I surprised myself with what happened next,” SFC Garcia says. “It must have been the Army training, but the next thing I know, I’m racing for our first aid kit and then dashing across the street. I cut away the Soldier’s T-shirt and there was a huge chest wound from the shrapnel. I’ve never seen anything like that and I hope I never do again.”

“He was bleeding badly and had a lot of trouble breathing,” continued SFC Garcia. “I applied a trauma dressing, but it wasn’t working. I remembered they said in the Combat Life Saving Class to use anything to seal the wound. While others gathered to help, I ran across the street and got some duct tape and a plastic sheet protector. And when we put that on, he started doing a lot better.”

They loaded the wounded Soldier on a stretcher and rushed him to the Troop Medical Clinic.

SFC Garcia says the Soldier, apart from the chest wound, had to have reconstructive surgery on his liver, but is reportedly doing fine at Walter Reed Hospital. This is SFC Garcia’s second straight year being deployed. He was recalled to Kosovo last year.

He’s a member of the 578th Engineer Battalion out of Santa Fe Springs, CA. In his civilian career, he’s a foreman for ARB Inc., a world-wide pipeline construction company headquartered in Lake Forest, CA.

Regarding the episode, SFC Garcia says, “I surprised myself. I really did.” **GX**

TWO GUARD SILVER STARS AWARDED

Courtesy of NHARNG PAO and NCARNG PAO

Two Army National Guard heroes were awarded the great honor of the Silver Star medal during the month of October. SPC Richard Ghent, a New Hampshire Army National Guard Soldier who served with the Snow Stormers in Iraq, was presented the Silver Star during a ceremony Saturday, Oct. 14 at the Manchester Armory. SFC Chad M. Stephens of the North Carolina Army National Guard was awarded the Silver Star for actions in Iraq at the National Guard Armory in Jacksonville, Oct. 22.

SPC Ghent, 20, of Rochester was the first NH Guard Soldier to be awarded the Silver Star for combat operations in Iraq or Afghanistan.

SPC Ghent distinguished himself with exceptionally valorous conduct in the face of the enemy as a HMMWV (Humvee) gunner for Bravo Troop 1-104th Cavalry (1-172nd Armor), Camp Ramadi, Iraq on March 1, 2006. His heroism and bravery under enemy fire was directly responsible for preventing the annihilation of his crew and for breaking up a complex enemy attack against his position.

Fellow Snow Stormer SSG Jose Pequeno was severely wounded in the attack, and a Vermont Army National Guard Soldier, SPC Christopher Merchant, was killed.

The narrative for SPC Ghent's award reads in part: "... SPC Ghent was the first to notice the dismounted attack on the bridge and subsequently alerted the crew when he yelled, 'Grenade!' Before being able to traverse his machine gun to engage the insurgent assault force, SPC Ghent was ejected from the turret of his HMMWV by the blast force of the grenade hurled at his vehicle. This blast left him the only Soldier capable of continuing the fight, with the vehicle commander severely wounded and the driver killed instantly.

Initially dazed and having sustained wounds to his face, back and extremities, SPC Ghent quickly regained situational awareness,



PRIDE AND HONOR (above) SFC Chad M. Stephens at the National Guard Armory in Jacksonville, Oct. 22, where he received the Silver Star. (below) SPC Richard Ghent with his proud mother during the Silver Star ceremony in Concord, NH, Oct. 14.



recognized and sized-up the threat at hand. Demonstrating great courage and intrepidity of action, SPC Ghent drew his 9mm pistol, having been ejected from the vehicle without his M-4 carbine, and engaged the insurgent forces that had attacked his HMMWV. SPC Ghent charged the insurgents and drove them away from the Observation Post without any benefit of cover and concealment. SPC Ghent held his ground, expending nearly all his ammunition, until relieved by elements of his platoon, who had been patrolling MSR Mobile."

A Platoon Sergeant with Alpha Co., 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry, SFC Stephens earned the medal for his actions in Baqubah, Iraq, supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom on 24 June 2004.

SFC Stephens' citation describes his actions that day:

"During Combat operations against an armed enemy of the United States, SFC Stephens heroically and without regard for his personal safety, led his platoon in heavy combat with an enemy attempting to control the city.

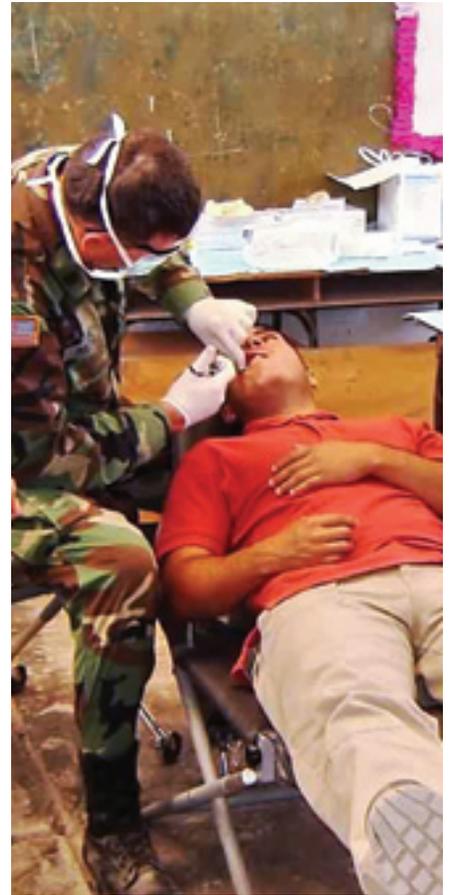
After fighting through two ambushes, he led his platoon to a casualty collection point to treat the wounded.

To evacuate the gunner of his wingman, SFC Stephens crossed 50 meters in open terrain while small arms [fire] impacted all around him as he ran. He mounted the turret and pulled his Soldier out of the hatch, then lowered him to the waiting medics as rounds impacted the vehicle, and other

Soldiers drove to safety. He returned to his vehicle under continuing fire, reorganized the platoon, and led the move to Forward Operating Base Gabe, fighting on as his Bradley was hit by a rocket propelled grenade and his gunner was severely wounded.

SFC Stephens' courage under fire is in keeping with the finest traditions of military service and reflects great credit upon himself, the 30th Brigade, and the United States Army National Guard." **GX**

MO GUARD MEDICS PROVIDE CARE IN PERU



By Alyson L. Stowe
 Courtesy of Missouri National Guard Public Affairs

JEFFERSON CITY, MO—Nearly 30 members of the Missouri National Guard’s Medical Command recently went on a 10-day mission to the communities Chiclayo and Tuman in the Lambayeque region of Peru. The unit’s main duty was to work with the Peruvian Ministry of Health to provide basic medical care for the lower income residents of this remote region.

“We were the first military unit to provide medical care in quite some time,” said unit commander LTC Eric Evans. “We operated under a group called New Horizons’ Task Force Puma.”

Project New Horizons is a group designed to improve joint training readiness of U.S. military units while making improvements to the infrastructure for the people of developing countries—in this case Peru. All branches of the U.S. military play a part in the project in various capacities including security, building construction or medical work.

According to LTC Evans, the unit set up two different clinics within the region and

operated for several days out of each. On average, the clinics saw over 1,000 patients. They provided exams in various areas including medical, dental and optometry.

“Most of the people seen were very poor and very sick. We also saw cases of very advanced cancer,” said LTC Evans.

1LT Beth Oppermann, a combat medic and registered nurse, said, “As part of the mission,

My Soldiers were amazing! They worked very hard and were extremely patient; the language barrier made it difficult, but they did a great job working together (with the Peruvians). – LTC Eric Evan

we would arrive at the facility (usually a school) by 7 a.m. to set up the classrooms that we used for the day. By the time we got there, there were already thousands of people standing in line to be seen.”

DIAGNOSIS (left) 2LT Matthew Templeton, of Independence, a registered nurse with the Missouri National Guard’s Medical Command, and SPC Mason Wallace, a medic from Columbia, listen to a Peruvian patient’s symptoms with the help of a translator.

OPEN WIDE (right) LTC Thomas Mathis, a dentist with the Missouri National Guard’s Medical Command, extracts teeth from a Peruvian patient.

“We provided basic check-ups for the people and distributed medicines such as acetaminophen, ibuprofen, amoxicillin, vitamins and those types of medicines. We saw a lot of parasitic-related sickness,” said 1LT Oppermann.

LTC Evans said he and his unit worked hand-in-hand with Peruvian doctors and nurses at the clinics.

“My Soldiers were amazing! They worked very hard and were extremely patient; the language barrier made it difficult, but they did a great job working together (with the Peruvians),” said LTC Evans.

1LT Oppermann added, “Going to a third-world country and helping people is very rewarding. It’s nice to be part of an organization that helps other countries, as well as people right here.” **GX**

SHIELDING THE ORIENT: ORARNG AND JAPAN JOIN FORCES



By SSG Russell Bassett
115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Courtesy of ORARNG PAO

STALKING PREY SPC Jose Ramirez (center) and PVT Takumi Sugiura (foreground) use the high/low technique during close-quarters-combat training at Sekiyama Manuever Area, Japan, Oct. 18.

NIIGATA, JAPAN—As the world watches North Korea, which tested a nuclear weapon Oct. 9, members of the Oregon National Guards 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry are demonstrating the strong partnership between the United States and Japan.

Orient Shield 2006, an annual training exercise between the U.S. and Japanese armies began Oct. 16 with an opening ceremony at the Sekiyama Maneuver Area in Honshu, Japan.

“This exercise will be an opportunity to enhance Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force/U.S. Army combat readiness and demonstrate to Asia the alliance between our countries,” 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf. Commander LTC Edward Tanguy said during the ceremony. “By the end of the exercise, we all will achieve enduring bilateral relationships, good will and mutual understanding through tough training and cultural exchange.”

LTC Tanguy’s counterpart for the exercise, Japan’s 2nd Infantry Battalion, 1st Airborne Brigade commander LTC Shizuo Sekine also

focused on strengthening the relationship between the two countries in his speech to the approximately 240 Oregon and 350 Japanese Soldiers assembled for the opening ceremony.

“[W]e establish the occasion for both Japan and the U.S. to . . . conduct the training with close cooperation,” LTC Sekine said.

That evening, the Soldiers from both units worked on achieving mutual understanding at a party held in nearby Joetsu. The language difference was no barrier, as the Soldiers enjoyed Japanese food and drink together.

“There’s a feeling of unity between the two organizations, and that was seen at last night’s opening party,” said 2-162s operations NCO SFC Jerry Glesmann. “There is a respect

there. They are definitely very disciplined and extremely organized.”

The training began in earnest the next morning with helicopter and traffic control point operations.

The Oregon Soldiers have a great deal of experience conducting traffic checkpoints, as the operations were a regular part of the routine in 2004 when the unit was in Baghdad for Operation Iraqi Freedom II.

Several of the Japanese Soldiers bring experience as well, from tours in Iraq. Japan deployed about 600 Soldiers to Iraq in early 2004. The deployment marked a significant turning point in Japan’s history, as it was the first time since the end of World War II that Japan sent troops abroad except for a few minor UN peacekeeping missions.

“The TCP (traffic control point) ops we learned in Iraq, we’re teaching to the Japanese,” SFC Glesmann said. “They have a way of doing it as well, but we are showing them the ways that we did it Iraq.”

“You can train and train and train, but there is a perspective you learn in combat that you just can’t get if you don’t deploy,” LTC Tanguy added.

In Iraq, 2-162 was responsible for maintaining an area of operations in Baghdad, and was involved in fighting in Fallujah and Najaf. Members of the unit were also responsible for training the Iraqi army. The unit captured more than 100 insurgents and 300 weapons caches while in Iraq.

After the first day of training in Japan, LTC Tanguy was pleased with what he saw.

“It’s been great,” the commander said. “All the Soldiers are really engaged with their Japanese counterparts, more so than I thought at this point in the exercise.”

Up next for the Oregon Citizen-Soldiers are training on individual weapons and then cordon and search procedures.

During Saturday’s short break in the training, they will get to experience Japanese culture through tours and home visits with Japanese families.

“They’ll get a greater understanding of another culture and a greater appreciation of the diverse world

we live in, which will have an impact, I think, on their home communities,” LTC Tanguy concluded. “The people back home should know that their Soldiers are representing Oregon and the U.S. very well. They can be proud of them.” **GX**

By the end of the exercise, we all will achieve enduring bilateral relationships . . . through tough training and cultural exchange.”

—LTC Edward Tanguy, 2nd Bn., 162nd Inf.
Commander, ORARNG

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CNN AUCTIONS HUMMER

Courtesy of CNN

ATLANTA, GA—CNN announced this past fall that it will auction off “Warrior One,” the CNN Humvee that drove correspondents through the combat zones in 2005. The TLC network program “Overhauled” has restored the Humvee. All proceeds garnered from the auction will be passed on to Fisher House, an organization benefiting wounded service members by housing their families so they can stay close by their loved ones.

Dr. Sanjay Gupta, CNN’s Senior Medical Correspondent, offered his personal experience to GX to pay tribute to and offer insight into the medical heroism of our men and women serving in the War on Terror:

“I’m at Fort Sam Houston in Texas where military doctors take aggressive steps to save the lives of service men and women in the field. COL John Holcomb, a trauma surgeon and commanding officer, walks me through the medical advances.

The most exciting thing I hear during my visit is that they may have a way to extend the “Golden Hour.” Coined by military surgeons during the Vietnam War, this phrase describes that precious slice of time that starts the moment the seriously wounded arrive at triage. About half of military personnel who die from traumatic injuries do so within that first hour, so medical teams need to buy as much time as possible.

Today, I learn that the military is pumping an unprecedented amount of money into radical technologies—from suspended animation to re-growing body parts to stopping internal bleeding with new methods—to extend that life-saving period.

The atmosphere here, at this training center near Brooke Army Medical Center evokes one of my strongest memories of my time in Iraq.

It was in April of 2003. A 23-year-old Marine, Jesus Vidana, fell to the ground, his helmet and head wounded by a sniper’s bullet.

He was pronounced dead in the field. But, deep inside his chest, his heart was still faintly beating—so weakly that he didn’t even have a pulse.

Vidana was brought to a forward resuscita-



tive surgical suite or FRSS. It is a

tent in the desert, but it is the most sophisticated tent I had ever seen. It can be broken down and set up in one hour, yet it contains sterile instruments, anesthesia machines, an operating table, lab analysis equipment, an ultrasound machine, gowns, drapes and a ventilator.

It travels just behind the frontlines along with surgeons, anesthesiologists, nurses and hard-working health care workers. Collectively, they are known as ‘Devil Docs,’ and I had the privilege of being embedded with them.

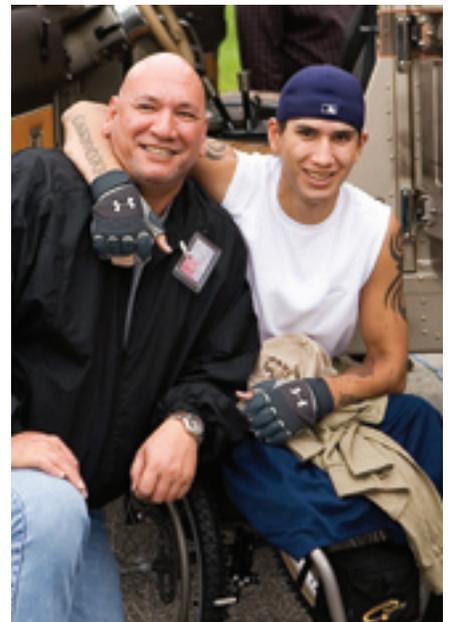
Vidana was about to benefit from one of the FRSS—one of the greatest medical advancements in medical and military history.

The ‘Golden Hour’ was the driving force behind this emergency medical suite, an idea bullishly pursued by Dr. H.R. Bohman.

‘In previous wars, it took too long to get the critically injured to medical care,’ Bohman told me. ‘It’s called the ‘golden hour’ and it is

the window of time to treat trauma.’

If you wait longer than that, death rates start to soar. The best way to improve the odds: Take a gamble and place some of the most precious commodities of a war, such as doctors and medical equipment right behind the frontlines. That way, as soon as someone is wounded, he or she gets medical care. Remarkably, sometimes the wait is just minutes before doctors are evaluating and



BATTLE TESTED (above) CNN’s Warrior One Humvee, which is set to be auctioned to benefit Fisher House, visited Brooke Army Medical Center in Texas on Oct. 26. (right) Patients at Brooke Army Medical Center were invited to check out the vehicle.

treating the wounded.

For Bohman, Vidana and countless military personnel, the gamble paid off. Compared to the Vietnam War, where most American deaths occurred before the wounded ever made it to a hospital, the number of deaths during the war in Iraq dropped dramatically. In short, care was being given more quickly, and it was making a difference.

Vidana was alive but dying in the middle of an FRSS just outside Baghdad when a team of heroic doctors and nurses descended on him. Quickly, a breathing tube was placed in him, and he was given back some of the precious blood that was lost in the sand.

As a neurosurgeon, I was asked to step back from my journalist's role to look at his wound. Soon, I was removing a bullet from his brain. Within an hour, Vidana had been treated, operated on and was recovering just outside the operating room.

In all the years I have worked in hospitals, I have never seen resources mobilized so quickly and health care workers move with such purpose. And remember, it was a tent in the middle of the desert by the dark of night in the most dangerous place on Earth.

Now, here in Texas and in other hospitals and research centers, military doctors are working to improve upon that both in the field and stateside. Recently, I had the opportunity to witness new technology designed to help our troops deal with PTSD or post-traumatic stress disorder.

Essentially, it's a video game much like an X-Box that helps Veterans overcome their fears by virtually revisiting it. Some Iraq Veterans, including some at the Naval Medical Center in San Diego, have already begun using it.

It is an intense experience, but one researchers think may be ground-breaking in treating the emotional wounds of war.

That's good news for our military personnel and their families because it means that more of our wounded can return home for treatment. And that has increased the need for services provided by an organization like the Fisher House, which provides 'comfort homes' for families of hospitalized military personnel."

*In 2003 during the war in Iraq, Dr. Gupta reported as an embedded correspondent with the U.S. Navy's medical unit, the "Devil Docs." He provided viewers with exclusive reports from points along the unit's travel to Baghdad and provided live coverage from a desert operating room of the first operation performed during the war. Dr. Gupta also performed brain surgery five times. **GX***

GA GUARD CELEBRATES BANNER RECRUITING YEAR

Courtesy of GAARNG PAO

GEORGIA—The Georgia Army National Guard garnered over 10,000 Soldiers in 2006 making it one of the top three states in the nation for recruiting in the past year, and placing Georgia into the Top-10 in terms of total Army National Guard size.

The state has recruited 2,768 new Soldiers in the past 12 months, almost 900 more than were recruited the previous year; and Georgia finished the 2006 fiscal year with a total of 10,076 Army National Guard members.

LTC Peter Vanamburgh, who commanded the state's Recruiting and Retention Battalion, said the increase pushed Georgia into the category of "large" National Guard states, which translates into more resources, including training funds and full-time manpower.

The recruiting success in 2006 far surpassed the National Guard Bureau's goal for Georgia of 9,350 total Soldiers. Even more remarkable, it exceeded the "stretch goal" of 10,000 set by the state's Army Guard leadership.

LTC Vanamburgh credits the successes in 2006 to the outstanding business processes

throughout the Georgia Army National Guard, as well as the hard work of the non-commissioned officers in the statewide recruiting force.

"We're also fortunate to be in the great state of Georgia, which is supportive of the military and a great recruiting environment," he added.

The Georgia Army National Guard has seen steady increases over the past six years. In 2001, its strength was 8,600.

Nationally, the Guard recruited more new Soldiers in fiscal year 2006 than at any time in the history of the all-volunteer force.

"This represents an increase of over 19,000 new Soldiers nationally from fiscal year 2005," said COL Richard Guzzetta, who served as Chief of ARNG Strength Maintenance Division during FY 2006. "Guard retention rates also remain at all-time highs at 119 percent.

"The Guard is just a rock-solid team that continues to prove its relevance to the defense of America," COL Guzzetta added. "Never has there been a time in our nation's history where the Guard has been so important to the future of our way of life." **GX**

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MILITARY KIDS READY FOR 2007

By Bonnie Powell
Courtesy of Defense Commissary Agency

FORT LEE, VA—Relief is in sight for military families as the Scholarships for Military Children program opens for 2007.

"Scholarships for Military Children is a wonderful military community program," said Patrick Nixon, DeCA director and chief executive officer. "Nearly 3,000 scholarships totaling over \$4 million have been awarded since the first awards were given in 2001."

The \$1,500 scholarships are available for children of military active-duty, retired and National Guard and Reserve service

members. Most of the funds are donated by manufacturers, brokers and suppliers selling groceries in commissaries; and every dollar donated to the program by industry or the general public goes to fund the scholarships. The program is administered by the Fisher House Foundation.

Applications for the \$1,500 scholarships are available at 264 commissaries worldwide, and can be downloaded at:

www.commissaries.com
www.militaryscholar.org
www.dodea.edu



LANG AND NOPD TACKLE CRIME IN THE BIG EASY

By 1LT Kevin Cowan, 241st MPAD

NEW ORLEANS—Although it has been almost a year and a half since Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and the Gulf Coast, the Big Easy still has a long road to recovery. Hundreds of thousands of residents are still displaced all over the country, flood plain data and rebuilding guidelines are still questionable, building supplies are short in supply and high in demand, and there is little housing for the workforce and even less for those wanting to move back home.

And then there's crime.

The New Orleans Police Department (NOPD), for various reasons, lost 25 percent of its force during and immediately after Hurricane Katrina. Unfortunately, there are few replacements. As the city's population has decreased, so has the city's ability to fully fund the budget. The budget for NOPD dropped by 22 percent from 2005 figures. About 96 percent of that budget goes to salaries, leaving four percent for supplies, equipment, maintenance and training. With essentially no budget for training new officers, the veterans are left to fill in the gaps to keep the city safe. Although there may be an approximately 40 percent decrease in population, officers still must patrol the same area, even if there is no one living there. This spreads the already thin NOPD even thinner.

New Orleans experienced a lull in crime following Hurricane Katrina, but about six months after, the city saw a spike in violent crime attributed to drug and gang-related activity. Five teenagers in an SUV were shot and killed in what has become the deadliest attack in the city in over 10 years. Additionally, as the population began to rise with both workers and residents, theft and burglary numbers increased as well. So, back in mid-June, New Orleans mayor Ray Nagin asked Louisiana Governor Kathleen Babineaux-Blanco to send the Louisiana National Guard back to New Orleans.

"The situation is urgent, and we will accelerate our plans to deploy law enforcement to the city," she said in a statement. "I will not tolerate criminal behavior . . . Criminals are not welcome in New Orleans or anywhere else in the state."

It was only back in February that Louisiana National Guard (LANG) Soldiers and Airmen came off emergency-duty orders from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. While on orders, LANG performed numerous duties and assisted and supported several agencies and

organizations throughout south Louisiana. LANG helped maintain continuity of government in many of the affected parishes, helped with communications and administration for several communities, governments and law enforcement agencies, and assisted the Louisiana Recovery Authority as liaisons in the recovery and rebuilding process. Now, they were being asked once again to come to the aid of this stricken city.

With direction from the governor, MG Bennett C. Landreaneau, Louisiana's Adjutant General, ordered 300 members back to State Active Duty to assist NOPD in curbing the outbreak of violent crime. These LANG members, both Soldiers and Airmen, comprise Joint Task Force Gator.

The plan, designed by NOPD and LANG, was to work districts in the areas of the city that were hardest hit and most heavily damaged from Katrina and the subsequent flood waters—areas like New Orleans East, Lakeview and the Ninth Ward. Areas that still seem like a wasteland, devastated and mostly deserted.

The mission is simple: support and assist the NOPD. As LANG provided additional

If the military pulls out, I don't see how we will be able to handle it. It would be crazy down here because of our lack of personnel.

—NOPD Officer Mary Colon, 5th District

manpower in these districts, NOPD re-assigned officers from those districts to the more populated areas where the more violent crimes were and are concentrated.

Many of the original 300 were part of the state's Special Reaction Team, Military Police, or law enforcement officers in their civilian careers. This helped to ease apprehensions within the NOPD about working with LANG on keeping the peace and maintaining order. In fact, there was a seamless transition when LANG rolled in to do its part in assisting NOPD.

Interoperability was the key to the seamless transition and integration of LANG into the NOPD concept of operations, which has made this mission a success.

"Any concerns (by NOPD, elected officials, LANG) were negated after the first week we were here," says CPT John Lloyd, Operations Officer for JTF Gator. "The interoperability between the National Guard and NOPD is like we are one and the same. We have synchronized intent and planning on both sides. We talk on their frequencies and attend their district briefings. We're here to help."

NOPD seems to agree.

"The Louisiana National Guard has made things easier. They provide us with back-up when needed and are able to answer a lot of our calls when we can't be there," says NOPD Officer Mary Colon from the 5th District. "If the military pulls out, I don't see how we will be able to handle it," she adds. "It would be crazy down here because of our lack of personnel."

Although this operation has gone smoothly, there have been challenges.

"I think the most challenging part is making sure they (Guard members) are trained," says SGT Dustin Delaney, a Military Policeman from Alexandria, LA.

Although LANG members may be law enforcement officers on the civilian side, they go through a specialized training course on law enforcement tips, techniques and procedures to ensure everyone is trained to standard.

"We want them to be safe and prepared when they go out on the streets. You never know what's going to happen out there," SGT Delaney said.

According to figures released by NOPD, mostly what is happening in the districts patrolled by LANG is theft and burglary. Since there are few people living in these areas, no one is keeping watch 24 hours a day. Because of the high demand for building

supplies across the Gulf Coast and the rest of the country, criminals steal supplies from job sites and remove copper plumbing and electrical wiring even after they have been installed. Additionally, personal belongings are being stolen from vehicles and homes.

But LANG is making some headway. Figures misleadingly show an increase in some types of crime in these districts. This is attributed to the fact that more arrests are being made since the Guard has been here. These crimes were still being committed; only there had been no one to report them or to make the arrests. Since late June, the Louisiana National Guard has assisted in almost 300 arrests per month. The majority of these arrests stem directly from citizen cooperation.

SGT Delaney adds, "When we first got here, the people didn't trust us, but now they approach us with information about criminal

activity. They will even wave us down on the side of the road."

It took a lot of work to bring about this change in attitude. In the first five months, LANG made more than 121,000 citizen contacts. Each contact was a face-to-face meeting at either a residence or business informing the public that they were here to help. That personal interaction eased fears of the citizens and gave them the opportunity to dissuade crime in their neighborhoods.

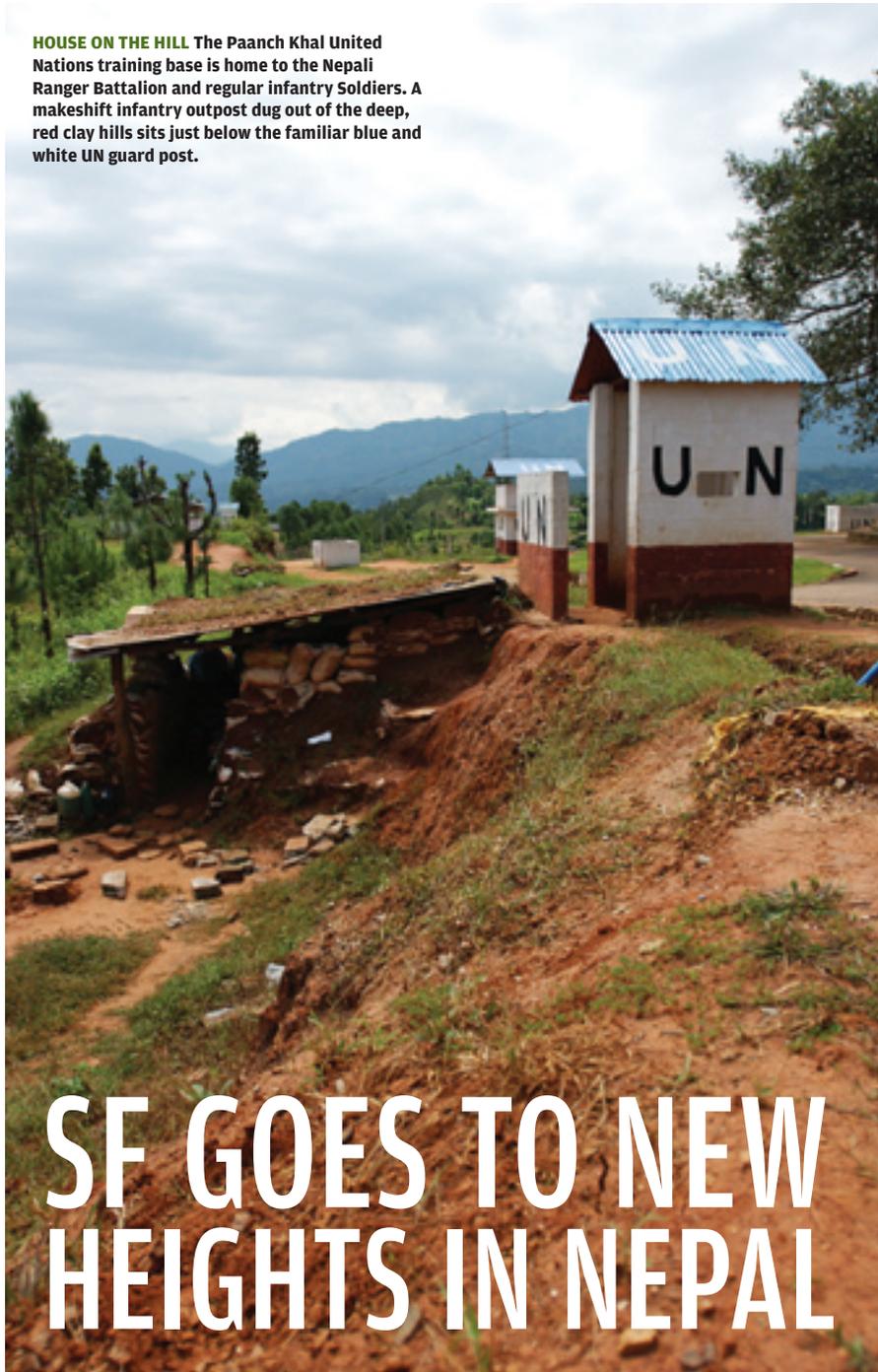
"People come up to us and say 'Thanks for your service,' and sometimes I don't know what to say because I'm just doing my job," says PV2 Justin Strong from Urania, LA. "I'm amazed by the way people treat us—with respect."

The Louisiana National Guard was originally slated to stay in New Orleans until December, but is committed to be here until the mission is deemed complete. **GX**



BUSTED Over a year after Katrina devastated New Orleans, the Louisiana Guard is still actively aiding local law enforcement to catch criminals like this.

HOUSE ON THE HILL The Paanch Kahl United Nations training base is home to the Nepali Ranger Battalion and regular infantry Soldiers. A makeshift infantry outpost dug out of the deep, red clay hills sits just below the familiar blue and white UN guard post.



SF GOES TO NEW HEIGHTS IN NEPAL

By SFC Steve Segin
Det 1/128th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Courtesy of COARNG PAO

PAANCH KAHL, NEPAL—A Special Forces sergeant walks through the dimly lit classroom and climbs up on the stage. He takes a moment to look over the crowd of Soldiers sitting on the floor. He shouts “WHO ARE YOU?” The Soldiers reply “RANGERS.” He shouts again with the ferocity of a drill sergeant, “WHO ARE YOU?!” Again the reply; “RANGERS!” The sergeant smiles slightly and

shouts at the top of his lungs, “HOOAH!” The Soldiers respond in kind.

This is a scene familiar to most Soldiers, but the familiarity ends there. These Rangers are not American, but members of the Nepali Army. In September, Soldiers from Company B, 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne) had the opportunity to participate in a Joint Combined Exchange for Training (JCET) exercise, known as Operation Balance Nail 2006 in The Kingdom of Nepal.

JCET exercises are conducted around the world by Special Forces (SF) Soldiers from

active duty and the Army National Guard.

“These types of missions are the bread and butter of Special Forces,” said MAJ Douglas Paul, commander of Co. B.

JCET’s are primarily small-scale missions where an ODA (Operational Detachment Alpha), commonly called an A-Team, travels to a host nation and works with indigenous forces. The A-Team can provide training on various military subjects like first aid, leadership and communications. Operations like Balance Nail 2006 not only benefit the host nation, but also allow the A-Team to train and work in a foreign environment.

“JCET’s support our wartime mission because when we deploy, we work closely with local forces and act as force multipliers by providing training and expertise in a variety of military skills,” MAJ Paul said.

Unlike an active duty JCET, which can last several months, the National Guard SF Soldiers had only one month to conduct their mission. For this JCET, the Rangers requested training on Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT), first-aid, and troop-leading procedures.

“Since the team had limited time, it was decided to conduct ‘train the trainer’ sessions, training up a core group of Soldiers who can take the skills they learn here and train the rest of the Army,” said the Co. B Sergeant Major.

The exercise was held at the Paanch Kahl United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Training Center, located approximately 50 miles east of Katmandu. Painted in the colors of the UN, the white block buildings with blue metal roofs stand out against the emerald green hillsides, bright-red clay ground and distant towering Himalayan Mountains. This center is primarily used as a training base for Nepalese units preparing for UN peacekeeping missions, but was used by the Rangers and SF Soldiers because of assets not available at the Rangers’ home base in Katmandu.

“This facility is perfect for our mission,” said MSG Jeff Hambric, an ODA Team Sergeant with Co. B and senior Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of the JCET. “It’s not only beautiful, but it has the classrooms, barracks and space needed to train 180 Soldiers.”

Despite The Kingdom of Nepal’s small geographic size, the Nepali Army numbers around 100,000 Soldiers, with the Rangers making up a small portion of the force.

“The Ranger Battalion is only four years old. They are slowly establishing themselves as a fighting force,” said MSG Hambric.

With less than 500 Soldiers, the Rangers are using the U.S. Ranger Battalions as a model for what they want their battalions to look like. Like the U.S. Rangers, the Nepali

Rangers do not accept any Soldier who applies. Soldiers in the Ranger Battalion are hand picked and undergo a selection process that evaluates the candidate's physical fitness and military knowledge.

With no experience in MOUT, the Rangers used every available moment to learn from the SF Soldiers.

"These guys are soaking up the training like a sponge," said an SF Master Sergeant.

In order to ensure the Soldiers get the training they need, the team is utilizing a combination of classroom and hands-on training. Since the majority of the Rangers do not speak English, a translator is needed for every session. During one class, another SF sergeant stands on the stage along with CPT Saujanya Rana, the Commander of Ranger Co. D and graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger School. CPT Rana provides the translation to the class during this instructional block. The crowded room goes quiet as the sergeant addresses them.

"Speed can be security, but never compromise security for speed," CPT Rana translates. After the class, CPT Rana relates the importance of the training to the battalion.

"Up to this point," shared CPT Rana, "the experience we have had been in rural areas and away from the towns and cities, so this is important and much needed training for us."

After the class, the Rangers break into their platoons and practice what they have learned the past week.

"When we get done with the last block of instruction today, we will prepare for a Situational Training Exercise (STX) that will put into motion the skills that they have been learning here," said an SF engineer sergeant, who has been charged with leading the STX.

As the Rangers head off to practice and prepare for the STX, a small group of Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and radio operators stay behind for some instruction in field expedient antennas.

Two SF communications' sergeants with the team huddle over a collection of wire, wood and tape.

"When you finish this 'jungle antenna,' you will not only be able to receive a signal, but also transmit even further than with the fixed antenna you are using now," says one of the sergeants.

The Rangers follow the steps and soon create antennas of their own. With rope, cable and antenna in hand, the Rangers go outside to test their new antennas.

"Throw your rope up in the tree and pull the antenna up," says one of the sergeants. Instead of throwing it, they instead climb the tree and hang the rope over a limb.

"Well, that was different," said a sergeant, smiling at the proud group and their new antenna. "Now, let's see if it works."

The Rangers quickly hook up the antenna, and to their surprise, they can reach their base in Katmandu with ease.

Another method taught to the Rangers was to put a nail into a tree and use the tree as an antenna. With a look of doubt on their faces, a small group of Rangers watch as a sergeant hammers a nail into a 20-foot pine tree.

"Now with this nail, you should be able to use the tree as an antenna for 24 hours," explained the sergeants. The wire was hooked to the nail and the radio switched on. Immediately, the Rangers were able to talk

and receive traffic from their base. The look of shock and surprise on their faces could easily be seen by all.

Friday morning brings not only the end of the training week and a much-needed break, but a chance for the Rangers to practice what they have learned

during day one of a three-day STX.

"The Rangers will be conducting a cordon and search operation," shared the SF master sergeant, as he put the finishing touches on the scenario created for the day's exercise. The STX will evaluate the Rangers' troop-leading procedures, mission planning, and implementations. The scenario involves the cordon and search of four buildings, which are being held by insurgents.

In addition to how they secure and search the buildings, the Rangers will also be evaluated on their convoy route, casualty collection and overall communication.

As the Nepalese Soldiers recruited to play the role of "insurgents" peer out of the windows of the barracks building, which has been designated a "hotel," the Rangers swiftly take up positions around the building. Radios are crackling with commands as a dozen Rangers quickly place ladders against the wall and start moving toward the second floor. As the troops pour in the second floor windows, a platoon of Rangers on the ground

floor is quickly entering the front and rear of the building. Inside an SF sergeant yells to the advancing Rangers, "GO GET 'EM!"

Using the movement and command and control techniques taught by the A-Team, the Rangers quickly subdue the "insurgents" and clear the building. Outside, SF Soldiers are watching how the platoons are processing the prisoners and treating their wounded. The Medics on the team are anxious to see the Rangers in action.

"We were able to teach them some advanced combat lifesaving, but this is the first opportunity they've had to practice it," said an SF medic with the team. "We're going to watch pretty closely what they're doing and only offer help if they get stuck," he added.

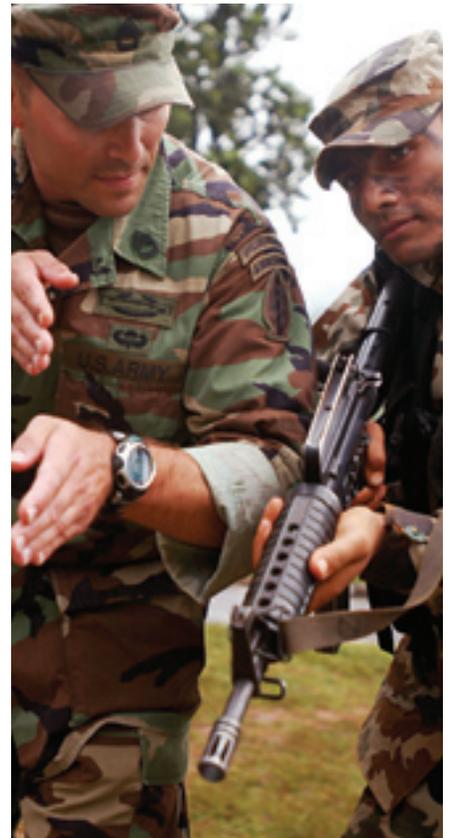
As the Rangers complete the STX, a look of pride and relief comes across their faces.

After a brief rest, the Soldiers and Rangers returned to the training area and completed day two and three of the STX. After a closing ceremony and goodbye to their new friends, the A-Team returned home.

"As a National Guard Soldier, after the mission is over, I'll go back to my everyday life," says MSG Hambric. "But, I want to keep contact with these guys and hope that if I see anything on the news that it says these guys kicked butt. Then, I'll feel like I got paid." **GX**

I want to keep contact with these guys and hope that if I see anything on the news that it says these guys kicked butt. Then, I'll feel like I got paid.

—SF Master Sergeant



TRAIN UP A Special Forces (SF) Sgt. from Co. B, 5th Bn 19th SF Group discuss weapons handling procedures for urban operations training with a Nepali Ranger.

5 MINUTES WITH AARON TIPPIN

By Keith Kawasaki

NASHVILLE, TN—We had the honor to snag a few minutes with country music star Aaron Tippin while he made the press rounds at the Country Music Association Awards in October. A true gentleman, Tippin didn't mind us popping up on the spot, and happily granted us a few questions.

When did you begin touring in support of our Soldiers?

I started going over in 1990 with Bob Hope. In fact, I think that was the last time he went downrange. It was really a thrill working with that guy. It really led to my friendship with the military. We've been to Afghanistan, Pakistan, Kurdistan, Qatar, Iraq, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia.

So, what drives you to keep going back?

I grew up during the Vietnam War, and I saw Veterans come back to an ill welcome. You know, that never

set well with me. And during the Gulf War, when that started, I kinda swore to myself that I wasn't going to let anyone return from war and not be honored the way he or she should be. I kinda made it my quest.

I just really enjoy the fact that I get to take the message of what the core Americans really feel about the efforts of our troops. And try to remind the troops that everything they see in the media ain't exacty (laughs) the bold-faced truth. I think that's my greatest reward, when I get to tell them, 'Man, every night when I'm finishing my show and I get ready to do *Stars and Stripes*, the crowd goes ballistic.' That's people who think just like me and think about what you guys and gals are doing, and how much we appreciate it—and we believe and know this is for our Freedom.

Have you supported any efforts stateside?

I'm with an organization called the ASYMCA, which helps out junior enlisted folks' families while they're deployed. Paralyzed Veterans of America, I'm also associated with them. When I go to Washington, I try to make the trip to Walter Reed and hang out with the wounded and tell them how much we appreciate them.

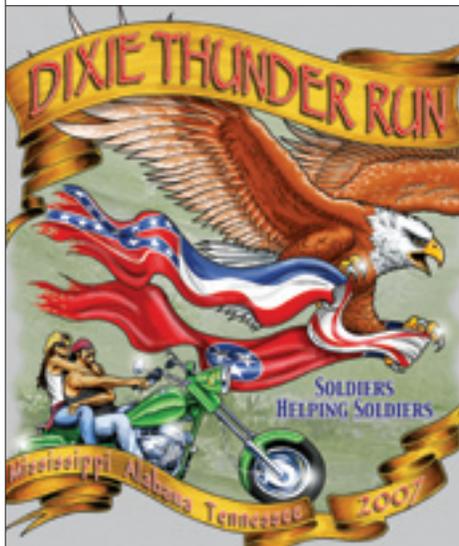
Do you think you'll be going over again?

We'll be there Thanksgiving.



November 18th through 27th, Tippin traveled to Afghanistan to entertain deployed Soldiers. "Those are the real workin' men and women, and if I can repay even an ounce of what they are doing for me, my family, and my country by taking their minds off of the day-to-day risks . . . well, I can't think of a better thing to do with my time," said Tippin in a press release.

Courtesy of Webster & Associates Public Relations and www.AaronTippin.com



Courtesy of Dixie Thunder Run

DIXIE THUNDER RUN GEARS UP FOR '07

and many new volunteers are declaring their support for the Run.

This year's rally will be held May 19th–20th and is going to be a tri-state event involving Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee. Three military organizations will receive the proceeds. This leaves the door open for more Soldiers/families to apply for these funds.

Benefiting organizations for the 2nd Annual Dixie Thunder Run are: Mississippi Military Family Relief Fund, Alabama National Guard Foundation, Inc., Enlisted Association of The National Guard of Tennessee. **GX**

For more information, visit www.dixiethunderrun.org

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ **FAQ** ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

When is this thing?

May 19th and 20th

Where do we meet?

BancorpSouth Center in Tupelo, MS

How much does it cost? Not a thing! There is NO registration fee for this ride. T-shirts and caps will be available for \$20.00 each beginning at 7:00 am.

What time does it start?

The Highway Patrol-escorted ride begins at 9:00 a.m.

What's the plan? First day's ride will take us to Foster Harley-Davidson, where they will host us for the day. The next day's ride will leave Foster's parking lot at 9:00 a.m. for our ride to Bumpus Harley-Davidson for a full day's activities there. Vendors, music, and more will be at both locations.

Do I have to be a Soldier to participate? Nope!

This ride is open to the public. All proceeds will go to the three state organizations helping Soldiers and their families.

TUPELO, MS—Well, folks, it's almost here already. We're gearing up for the 2nd Annual Dixie Thunder Run, our benefit ride to honor and support our Soldiers and their families. It seems like we just got through with last year's ride! We have been so busy getting ready for next year that the time has really flown by.

We are predicting a much larger event this year. We have gained a tremendous amount of support over the past few months

CPT TIM IRVIN; COURTESY OF DIXIE THUNDER RUN

AT TIMES LIKE THIS IT'S GOOD TO KNOW THERE'S A STRONG NATIONAL GUARD IN YOUR COMMUNITY.



Natural disasters do more than make headlines. They affect the lives of millions of Americans every year. And so does the National Guard. Whether it's a wildfire, tornado, hurricane or earthquake, the Guard is there. Always has been. And with the support of dedicated Americans, the Guard will always be the force America's communities count on.

Can your community count on you to keep the Guard strong? Visit our web site today or call us. We'll give you lots of reasons why you should become a Citizen-Soldier.

Learn more about the National Guard. Visit us at www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com • 1-800-GO-GUARD



JOIN THE NATIONAL GUARD
The National Guard offers college and career training benefits. Go online to find out more.

SERVICE OVERSEAS 'NOT IN VAIN,' SAYS FL GOV



By SSG Thomas Kielbasa, FLARNG
Courtesy of FLARNG PAO

VALOROUS Gov. Jeb Bush and Adjutant General of Florida MG Douglas Burnett prepare to attach a Valorous Unit Award to the guidon of the 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, during the Miami "Salute to Florida Heroes," Dec. 1.

MIAMI, FL—The men and women who served overseas in recent military operations should remember their service was important, and most Americans support that belief, according to Florida Governor Jeb Bush.

The Governor spoke to more than 700 members of the Florida Army National Guard and their families during the "Salute to Florida Heroes" in Miami on Dec. 1, and stressed that no one's service—whether in Iraq, Afghanistan, or Kosovo—was ever without merit.

"Don't ever think your service to your country is in vain," Gov. Bush said during the morning event at Miami Metro Zoo. "Don't ever think it has been wasted. The

great majority of Americans—whether they are on the left or the right, whether they are Republicans or Democrats—understand your service has value."

The great majority of Americans—whether they are Republicans or Democrats—understand that your service has value.

—FL Gov. Jeb Bush

Gov. Bush—who in December was serving his last full-month as commander-in-chief of the Florida National Guard and will be succeeded by Governor-elect Charlie Crist—added that most Floridians express their appreciation to troops returning from overseas duty.

"Never lose sight of that, because what you have done and what you continue to do

protects our freedom and assures that the next generation of Floridians and Americans will be able to pursue their dreams as they see fit," he added.

The event—co-sponsored by Miami-Dade County and the Miami

Metro Zoo—was the second of three official "welcome home" events for Florida military members who served recently in the Global War on Terrorism. Soldiers from

the Florida National Guard honored during the event included men and women from the 53rd Infantry Brigade, the 50th Area Support Group, and the 164th Air Defense Artillery Brigade.

"It is appropriate for the State of Florida officially to welcome home those that have served overseas over the last years and to thank them and their families for a job well done," the Governor said to the crowd of Soldiers and families. "I am so proud to be the commander-in-chief of the Florida National Guard."

He also thanked the more than 6,000 members of the Florida National Guard that responded to the hurricanes in 2004 and 2005: "One of the most remarkable things about that experience we all shared throughout this state was that we could count on the Florida National Guard to be 'boots on the ground'—the first people there—to provide safety; and they sent a strong, powerful signal that all would be well."

In 2004 and 2005, the Florida National Guard responded to eight major hurricanes, including the devastating Hurricane Katrina in Mississippi and Louisiana.

During the "Salute to Florida Heroes" ceremony Gov. Bush and Adjutant General of Florida MG Douglas Burnett presented a prestigious Valorous Unit Award to the Miami-based 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, for their service in Iraq in 2003. The award is presented to units of the U.S. Armed Forces for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy of the U.S. More than 500 Soldiers from the unit served in Iraq, providing security and military support in the infamous "Sunni Triangle."

Currently approximately 1,000 members of the Florida National Guard are operationally deployed in the Global War on Terrorism, and since September 2001, approximately 9,000 Soldiers and Airmen have federally deployed in that ongoing endeavor. **GX**

PHOTO OP Florida Gov. Jeb Bush stops for a photo with Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, at Miami's "Salute to Florida Heroes."



12-YEAR-OLD BECOMES HONORARY GUARD COLONEL

By LT Jay Ostrich, Public Affairs Specialist
 Courtesy of PAARNG

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, PA—As the dark brim of a drill sergeant’s hat peered menacingly around the corner, the recruit’s shoulders stiffened, eyes widened and watered ever so slightly as a look of obvious fear came across his face.

Looking upon his newly issued army combat uniform, it was obvious there must be more to the story of this raw, if not diminutive four-foot recruit standing at attention in the hallway. Beside him stood young men and women much older than he who were motivated, fit and prepared for shipment to basic military training.

Undeterred by the contrast, the heart and dream of a young man who fought all his life to get here beat steadily beneath the camouflage. As if his life depended on it, he would stand determined not to give up.

“Why are we looking around at the position of attention?” shouted SGT Andrew Frengel, a drill instructor for the 166th Regiment of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard. “Perhaps some flutter kicks are in order?”

“In cadence!” shouted SGT Frengel, and all the recruits dropped to the cold floor and began to chant.

“First to fight, last to fall . . .,” they shouted in unison as their physical training started.

And so it was, Grant Bracker, a 12-year-old boy from West Jordan, Utah, with cystic fibrosis, dropped to the floor and knocked out flutter kicks just like any other recruit. As he rose to his feet, he would realize that his Make-A-Wish Foundation dream of becoming a Soldier was starting to come true.

“I can’t even believe I did all they did,” said a smiling Grant, who had dreamed about being a Soldier since he was four years old. “It just makes me very happy.”

“Happy times have sometimes been few and far between for Grant and his family,” said his father Dan Brackner, who helps lead his son through hours of therapy every day.

Cystic fibrosis (CF) is a life-threatening disease causing mucus to build up and clog some of the organs in the body, particularly in the lungs and pancreas. It can make breathing very difficult and damages the lungs.

“When we first found out, it was quite a shock because, until recently, most children with (CF) did not live past their teens,” said Mr. Brackner.

Make-A-Wish Foundation stepped in to honor Grant’s wish, said Kim Ferrere, regional assistant of their York office.

Since 1980, the Make-A-Wish Foundation has enriched the lives of children with life-threatening conditions through its wish-granting network. The Foundation’s mission seeks to make life-changing impact on children, families and communities.

Throughout his two-day stay at Fort Indiantown Gap, Nov. 16-17, Grant would undergo basic training, graduate, be promoted to the honorary rank of colonel, and tour some of the most exciting equipment the National Guard has to offer.

“Do we get scores on this?” asked Grant, a self-proclaimed “gamer,” who was now beaming from his experience on an M-16 small arms simulator.

“He’s an inspiration to all of us,” said SPC

Timothy J. Heck, training technician. “We wanted to do anything to put a smile on his face and he ended up teaching us to appreciate living life and having fun.”

This opportunity was made possible by the Guard’s Family Action Center staff who worked diligently to prepare a schedule to exceed all of Grant’s expectations.

“The service members who participated in this event were tremendous,” said Janet R. Marquis, state youth coordinator for the PA Guard. “Everybody put down the issue of rank and importance and put Grant’s enjoyment at the top of the day’s agenda.”

“I saw full bird colonels salute him and call him ‘Sir,’” said Marquis. “I saw generals take time from their day to give him their attention. The entire two-day mission was a huge success.”



TOY SOLDIER SPC Timothy J. Heck teaches 12-yr-old honorary COL Grant Brackner how to safely operate his Browning .50 cal machine gun simulator.

As the sun slowly started its journey down the mountains of Bollen Range, home of the 148th Air Support Operations Squadron, PA Air Guard, Airmen snapped to attention and rendered a salute for the young colonel.

After welcoming him to the facility, Airmen showed Grant the wonders of night-vision goggles and navigation techniques used to succeed in their new tactical air control party mission meant to support the 56th Stryker Brigade of the PA Army Guard. Lurking in the background though was a 90-foot observation tower—a climbing challenge for the fit, let alone an ailing child who had just completed a whirlwind two-day tour. But since sorties had been scrubbed for the day, climbing was rendered prohibitive and unnecessary.

Today was to be different, though. It was Grant’s day after all and word was an A-10 Warthog just happened to be in the area. Without hesitation, Grant bolted for the tower as the sounds of an aircraft could be heard in the distance.

Within scant minutes, MAJ Terry Koudelka, unit commander, and Grant ascended the tower in order to guide the incoming pilot.

“Tell the pilot who you are,” said MAJ Koudelka, handing him the tower microphone.

“This is Colonel Grant Brackner,” said Grant, who couldn’t hold back a radiant smile.

“Nice to meet you, sir. Now get ready to wave,” said the pilot before swinging by the tower at more than 300 nautical miles per hour and tipping his wings in respect for Grant.

“I never thought he would get up that tower,” said Mr. Brackner. “At home, he never seems to have the energy and here he has really shown us what he is made of. These are the kind of memories that will help him keep hanging in the fight.” **GX**

We wanted to do anything to put a smile on his face and he ended up teaching us to appreciate living life and having fun.

—SPC Timothy J. Heck

MOONLIGHTING

Near Al Quiam, Iraq

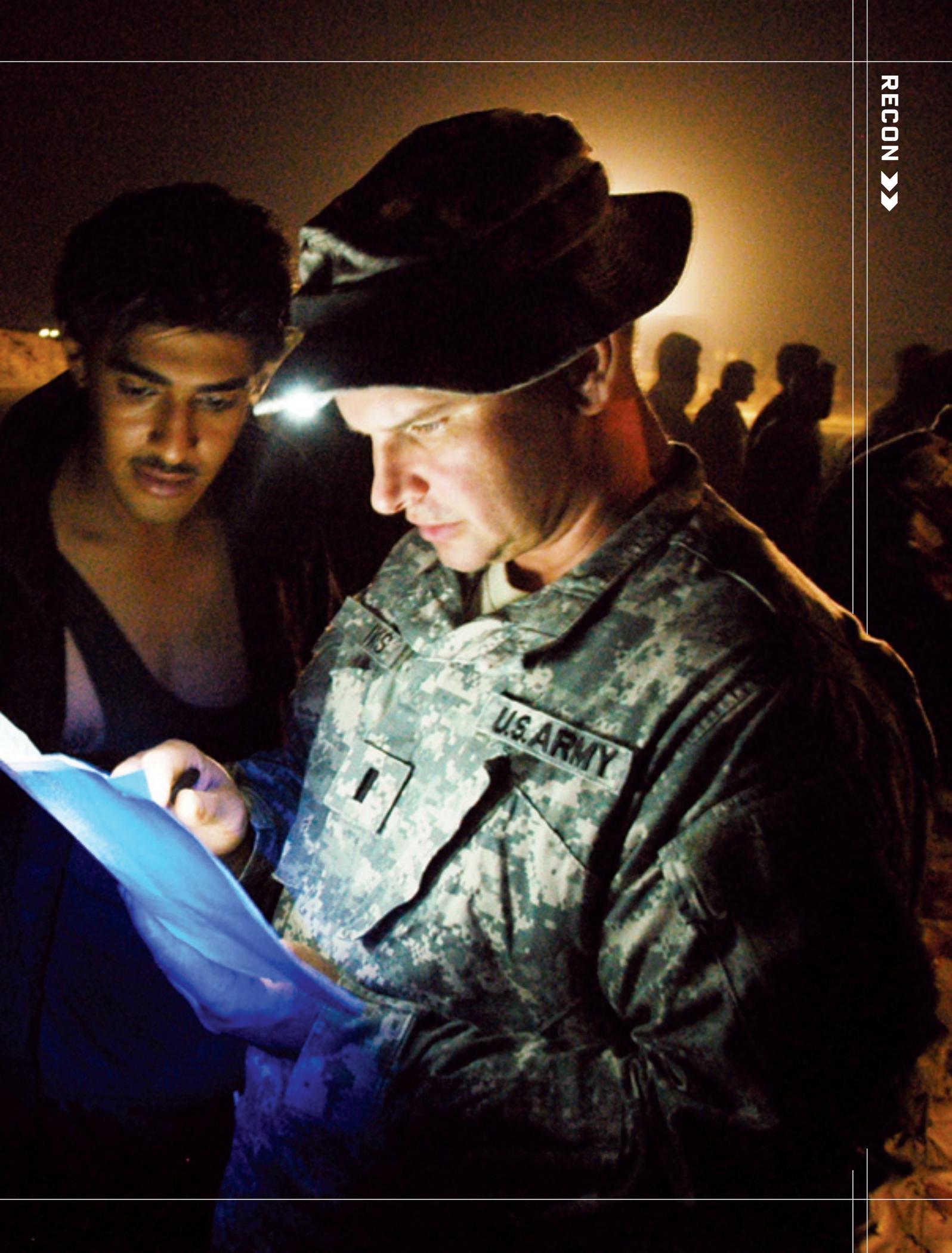
1LT Paul Ives, 2-136 Military Transition Team, MNARNG, is a CPA back home but now assists the Iraqi Army's personnel shop with accountability, pay and promotions. He has developed a photo ID for Iraqi Soldiers, the first of it's kind, processed overdue promotions and ensured his Soldiers receive their back pay.

Photo by CPT Mark Lappegaard, 1/34th BCT PAO



Distance from Minnesota to Iraq: 6,427 miles





REC'DN >>



CLIMATE CONTROL

Alaskan Wilderness

Alaska National Guard troops train in the snowy hills of Alaska before deploying to the Middle East. Now, these men and women have to operate on the complete opposite end of the spectrum in a country that regularly hits 130 degrees in the summer months.

Photo courtesy of 40th Public Affairs Detachment



Distance from Alaska to the Middle East: 5,491 miles





BRIGHT FUTURE

Rural Iraq

The sole light source in a rural Iraqi school, a hole in the back wall, illuminates a young girl and her new backpack. The backpacks were donated by friends and families of the Red Bulls as part of the 134th BSB's "Supply the Future" program.

Photo by SSG Bill Snelman



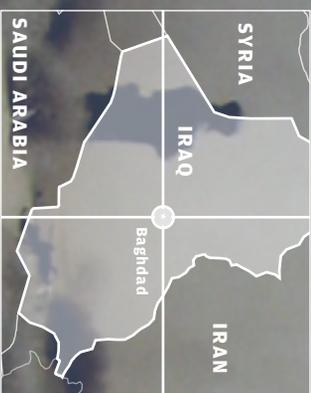


PIGGY BACK

Near Balad, Iraq

A CH-47 Chinook pulls up on a sling-loaded, UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter after the Downed Aircraft Recovery Team (DART) from Company B, 449th Aviation Service Battalion, TXARRNG removed the rotor blades and prepared the bird for movement.

Photo by SSG John Heresz



Distance from Texas to Iraq: 7,484 miles





THE NEW FACE OF GUARD RACING

CASEY MEARS

By Kenneth White

25

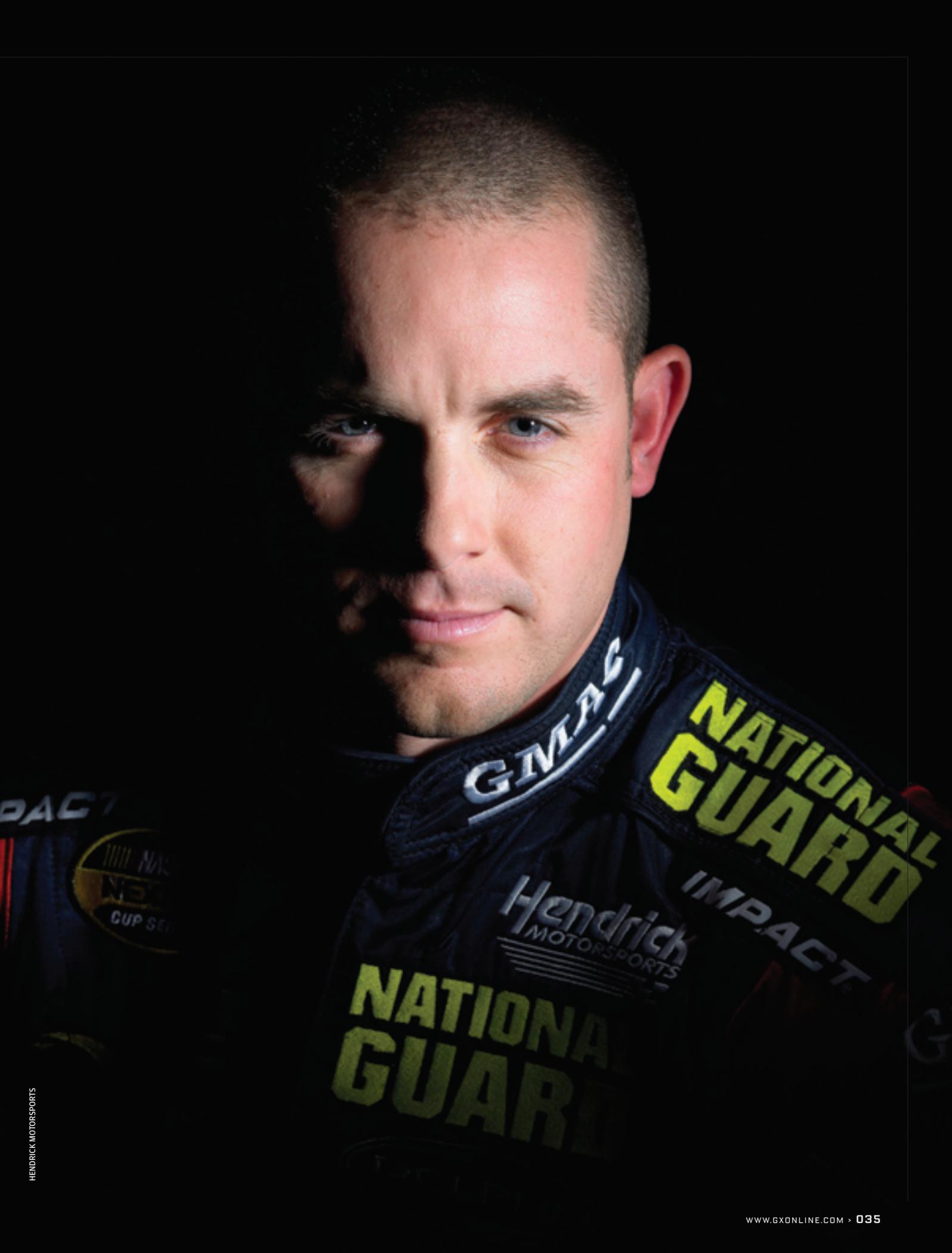
IT'S A NEW SEASON FOR GUARD RACING, and this year we're proud to introduce Casey Mears and the #25 National Guard GMAC Chevy. A move to a new driver and a new team, Hendrick Motorsports, means the National Guard will be represented in both the NASCAR Nextel Cup series and the Busch Series—that's twice the great racing action from your favorite team. Here's the breakdown of the man, the car and the team that will lead the National Guard to victory lane.

The Mears name is legendary among race fans. Casey Mears is the son of IndyCar driver and off-road racing champion, Roger Mears, and the nephew of four-time Indianapolis 500 winner, Rick Mears.

Casey Mears began his career in 1982 at the age of four, racing BMX bicycles and eventually ATVs at his hometown speedway in Bakersfield, CA. It was a quick jump from there to racing go-carts, off-road SuperLites and Sprint Cars. Mears followed the Indy family tradition in 1996, competing in his first Indy Lights race. By 2000, Casey was racing in the big league of open-wheel racing, the IndyCar Series.

Mears had the chance to race his first stock car in an ARCA race in 2001. After a stint racing stock cars in the NASCAR affiliated ARCA series, he faced a difficult decision to stay with open-wheeled racing or move to full-time stock car racing. Casey looked for advice about his future from his father and uncle and decided NASCAR held the best opportunities.

After positive results in his first full season of racing in the Busch Series in 2002, his team owner at that time, Chip Ganassi, decided to put him in a Nextel Cup car. He finished the 2005 season ranked 22nd, and moved up to 15th in 2006, with two second-place



As Mears works to make his own mark on his family's racing legacy, one thing is certain—he is ready . . . [for] victory lane.

finishes—including one at the biggest race of the year, the Daytona 500.

THE WINNING TEAM

In addition to a new driver, the National Guard is following Casey Mears to Hendrick Motorsports, his new NASCAR team.

Rick Hendrick started Hendrick Motorsports 23 years ago and created many of the institutions of NASCAR racing we take for granted today, including professional pit crews and the idea of multi-car teams. Rick Hendrick is just the second team owner in NASCAR's modern era to earn more than 100 Cup Series victories. Hendrick Motorsports drivers have won six NASCAR Nextel Cup Series championships, three NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series titles and one NASCAR Busch Series crown.

Today, all Hendrick racecars are constructed start-to-finish in Charlotte, NC near Lowe's Motor Speedway. More than 700 engines are built or rebuilt at the 100-acre complex each year.

This year, Casey Mears is going to be in good company on the racetrack with his other Hendrick Motorsports teammates: Jeff

Gordon, Kyle Busch, and defending Nextel Cup champion, Jimmie Johnson.

THE NEW CHEVY

Apart from the change to a new driver this season, die-hard race fans will also notice the change from a Ford Fusion to the Chevy Monte Carlo SS.

Before NASCAR's modern era of racing, the differences between manufacturers used to be very distinct. Different engine styles and power output would allow manufacturers to have major advantages over their competition from year to year.

Over time, concerns about driver safety as well as the desire to maintain a fair race have caused NASCAR to create very restrictive standards for the design of the racecars. Now, the only thing that really separates the cars between different manufacturers is each individual team's ability to put the powerplant, the frame, and the body together into one high-performance machine.

MORE RACING ACTION

In addition to driving the #25 National Guard/GMAC Chevy in the Nextel Cup Series, Casey

Mears will also be driving the #24 National Guard Chevy in the Busch Racing Series.

Technically, there's very little difference between the Busch Series and the Nextel Cup racecars, other than a reduction of about 100 horsepower and 5 mph from the maximum speed. The cars are also half an inch shorter and two inches longer.

The Busch Series is considered to be the minor leagues for upcoming Nextel Cup drivers. Many drivers have earned their stripes there before moving on to the next level, including many of Mears' teammates and former Guard Car driver, Greg Biffle.

Not only is the Busch Series a way for young drivers to get experience, it has also become a way for Cup drivers to get more exposure for their sponsors and more practice on the track for the bigger race the following day. What this means for Guard Racing fans is *more racing!*

As Casey Mears works to make his own mark on his family's racing legacy, one thing is certain—he is ready to drive the #25 National Guard/GMAC Chevy all the way to victory lane. **GX**

#25 NATIONAL GUARD/GMAC CHEVY MONTE CARLO SS

EXTERIOR

Wheelbase:	110 in.
Length:	200.7 in.
Width:	72.5 in.
Height:	51 in.
Tread width:	60.5 in. (max.)
Curb weight:	3,400 lbs. (w/o driver)

CHASSIS

Design:	Rear-wheel drive
Type:	Tubular
Front suspension:	Independent, coil springs, control arms
Rear suspension:	Trailing arms, coil springs, panhard bar
Steering:	Power, heavy-duty
Brakes:	Four-wheel disc
Wheels:	Steel, 9.5 in. x 15 in.
Tires:	Goodyear Eagle racing radials
Frame:	Rectangular tube by Hendrick Motorsports
Braces & Roll-cage:	Round tubing built by Hendrick Motorsports

ENGINE

Type:	Chevrolet V8-R07
Displacement:	358 cubic inches (max.)
Compression ratio:	12:1
Induction system:	4-barrel Holley carburetor
Horsepower:	850 hp @ 9,000 RPM
Torque:	540 ft. lbs. @ 7,200 RPM
Fuel economy:	4.5 mpg (1.5-mile track)

25



**What do you get when one of the country's biggest
auto financing companies and a branch of the most
powerful armed forces on earth work together?**

One really powerful car.



The National Guard and GMAC are proud to sponsor the
#25 Chevrolet in the 2007 Nextel Cup Series. All systems go.

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THANKS FOR THE MEMORIES

As Greg Biffle leaves Guard Racing, we relive the excitement.



ONE LAST BURNOUT FOR THE TEAM Greg Biffle, driver of the #16 National Guard/Subway Ford, performs a burnout on the track after winning the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series Ford 400 in 2006 at Homestead-Miami Superspeedway.



Biffle gave us a victory burnout that was so exciting, he backed into the wall, Dover, 2005.

Back-to-back wins at Darlington in '05 and '06

Winning at Texas in his backup car, April 2005

Winning at Homestead-Miami three years in a row—2004, 2005, and 2006

Thanks to super speed, Biffle won in Michigan with the #16 painted as The Flash, August 2004

Held first place in the championship points standings, June 2005

Ran in the top five in the championship points for most of the 2005 season

Despite finishing 11th place for the season, Biffle was 3rd for the most laps led in 2006

Set the track record at California Speedway for the most laps led (168), February 2006

Won pole position at the Daytona 500, the first race for Biffle and the #16 Guard Car, 2004

Came back from 42nd place and 3 laps down to finish in the top 10 at Bristol, March 2006



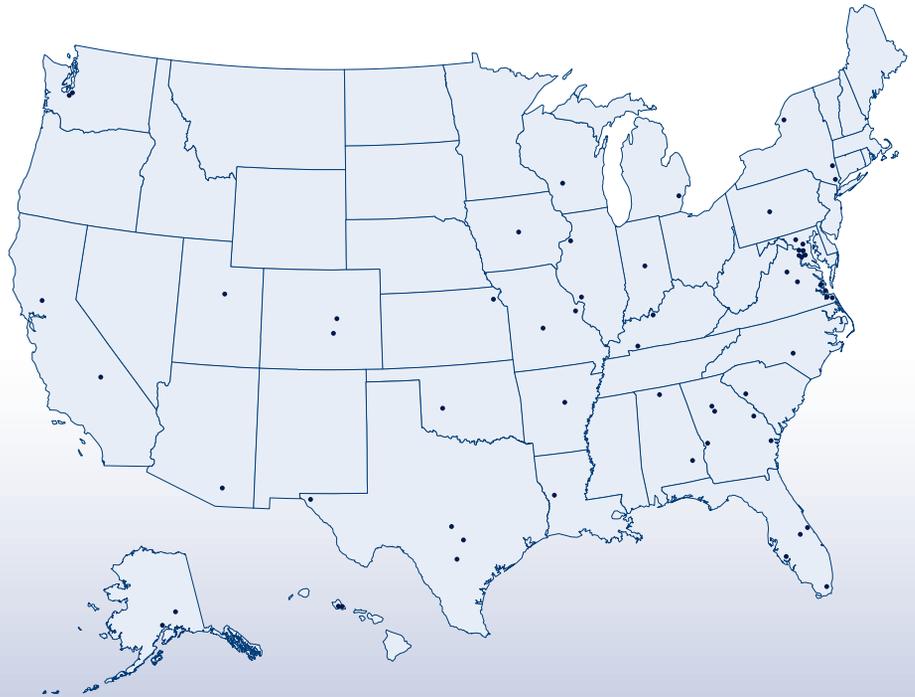
With his win at Homestead-Miami in 2005, the final race of the season, Biffle made an unbelievable move to finish 2nd in the Nextel Cup Championship.

Coming to a State Near You

Title 10 AGR Program Opportunities

Would you like to work for the Guard full-time, but don't want to deal with the traffic in D.C.? No problem, Title 10 opportunities are available around the world!

This map shows just a few of the postings that may be available in the United States and abroad.



Additional Overseas Locations
(not pictured)

- Heidelberg, Germany
- Grafenwoehr, Germany
- Kaiserslautern, Germany
- Vincenza, Italy
- Yongsan, Korea
- Ft. Buchanan, Puerto Rico

To find out more, visit

www.arng.ngb.army.mil/guardtours.aspx

GOT QUESTIONS?

We want to hear from you!

The Title 10 (T10) AGR Program is full of great opportunities, but not many people know about them. *GX* wants to help you find out what you need to know to take advantage of T10, so send your questions to

LOOK FOR ANSWERS
in upcoming issues of *GX*.

T10@gxonline.com

GX. HELPING YOU STAY INFORMED!

SHELTER FROM THE STORM

Now, your G-RAP accessions can provide you and your family with healthcare insurance coverage.

Thanks to a unique collaboration with UnitedHealthcare, all Active M-Day Soldiers of the Army National Guard participating in G-RAP may also qualify for optional healthcare coverage including Medical, Dental, Vision and Life Insurance. (Retired members of the Army National Guard are not eligible for the healthcare program.)



OPTION 1: INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE INSURANCE

Your payment for your next accession (\$2,000) is sent directly to United Healthcare to pay for 12 months individual coverage.

The Recruiting Assistant becomes eligible for 12 months of individual healthcare insurance coverage 30 days after verification of the first accession.



OPTION 2: FAMILY HEALTHCARE INSURANCE

Your payments for your next three accessions (\$6,000) are sent directly to United Healthcare to pay for 12 months of family coverage. The Recruiting Assistant becomes eligible for 12 months of family healthcare coverage 30 days after the verification of the third accession.

Apply today for the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program and you can earn **\$2000** for every new recruit you bring into the Guard who ships to Basic Combat Training OR you can use that payment to pay for health insurance.

NATIONAL GUARD 
RECRUITING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

To learn more about UnitedHealthcare, your coverage options or to apply visit www.guardrecruitingassistant.com

FAMILY DEPLOYMENT CHECKLIST



BE PREPARED

A carefully prepared and executed pre-deployment checklist can save you and your family from giant headaches in the future. It is very important for you, as a military family, to have certain documents in your possession. Military spouses are often required to take over the family during the Soldier's absence; therefore, it is important that both of you sit down together to gather information and documents named in this checklist. You are encouraged to keep originals or copies of all listed documents in a special container (safety deposit box) in a location you can find immediately and is known to both you and the Soldier.

PREPARE FOR THESE FINANCIAL SITUATIONS:

- Decide who will have the checkbook and who will have the cash card. Remember, it will take a week or longer for mail to be forwarded to the spouse's new duty station. Plan on paying bills timely.
- Know what types of accounts the family has with which banks. Do the current accounts allow family members access to funds?
- Know where the bank books are and their account numbers.
- Make sure all the credit card numbers are written down and in a safe place. Are the numbers and company addresses recorded in case of loss or theft?

THE FOLLOWING SHOULD BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO DEPLOYMENT:

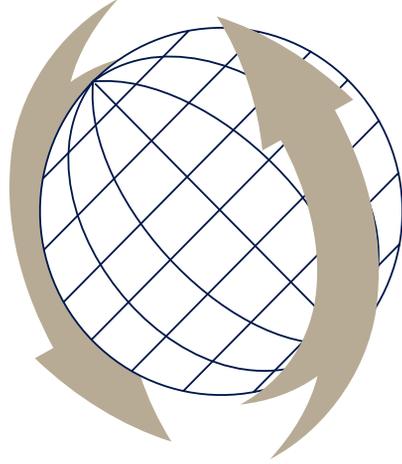
- Next of kin informed of rights, benefits, assistance available
- Family budget and business arranged
- Emergency Data Card updated in Military Personnel Record
- Joint checking/savings account arranged (list all account numbers)
- Parents informed of how to make contact in case of emergency
- Armed Forces ID Cards (renew if ID Card expires within next 3 months. Rear Detachment Commander can sign for ID Replacement after Soldier deploys.)

GATHER THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION AND DOCUMENTS:

- Marriage Certificate
- Birth Certificates of all family members:
 - Wife
 - Husband
 - Children
- Divorce Papers
- Death Certificates
- Medical (shot) and Dental Records of all family members (including pets)
- Citizenship/Naturalization papers
- Adoption Papers

Familiarize yourself with check writing and balancing. How will you determine if there are insufficient funds, and what is your plan in case this happens?

Determine a contact if allotments or checks to the bank are delayed.



Emergency services explained and located:
 Red Cross/ Army Emergency Relief (AER)
 Medical Facilities/CHAMPUS
 Army Community Service (ACS)
 Legal Assistance Office

Security check on house
 Problems with cars, household, and appliances identified and resolved

Power of attorney
General: Allows holder to act in all matters on Soldier's behalf
Special: Allows holder to act on Soldier's behalf in special transactions.
Medical: Authorizes holder to obtain medical care for family members under 18 years of age.

Wills for both spouses
 Orders
 Copy of Emergency Data Card
 List of all credit cards and account numbers
 AAFES Deferred Payment Plan (DPP), (to use, spouse must be listed as an authorized user or hold Soldier's General Power of Attorney).
 Federal and State Income Tax Returns (last 5 years)

Passports, Visas (remove only when needed for international travel)
 Insurance policies (Note: company, policy number and amount of payment)
 Real Estate Documents (leases, mortgages, deeds, or promissory notes)
 Copies of installment contracts and loan papers
 Current list of immediate next of kin, personal lawyer and trusted friend (include phone number and address)
 Car Title (registration should be in car)
 Last LES (Leave Earning Statement)
 Discharge Papers (DD Form 214)
 Allotments (updated with correct amount, name, address, account number)
 Social Security Number of each family member
 Current address and telephone numbers of immediate family members of both spouses.

Courtesy of the National Military Family Association, with information adapted from the National Guard Family Program (www.GuardFamily.org), Military OneSource (www.MilitaryOneSource.com), Military Money (www.MilitaryMoney.com) and Department of Defense resources.
Visit the National Military Family Association online at www.NMFA.org.



Media Wars

2006 Public Affairs Training Workshop

By Chris West

On a cold and blustery day in Bismarck, ND, National Guard Public Affairs leaders from all around the country came together to review their recent accomplishments and make plans for the future.

The past year has seen unprecedented use of the National Guard on every level. Participation in the Global War on Terror meant that at any given time, between 55,000 and 65,000 Guard Soldiers were deployed overseas. Six thousand Soldiers have been deployed to help the Border Patrol secure the U.S.–Mexican border as part of Operation Jumpstart. When Hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast, thousands of Guard Soldiers from across the country volunteered to help provide relief to the stricken region.

Throughout these missions, the Guard has received extensive and largely positive coverage from the media. This has been, in no small part, due to the efforts of the people at this conference. Representatives from all 54 States and Territories were present, and together they poured over After Action and Lessons Learned reports, analyzing what worked and what didn't. All of this effort was focused on a single goal—doing even better next year.

For example, when Katrina scoured the coast, it became obvious the Guard lacked sufficient ability to “surge” Public Affairs’ capabilities in a state undergoing a serious domestic crisis. That’s not to say the Public Affairs on the scene didn’t do a good job. Quite the contrary, they did excellent work under very difficult circumstances. However, if additional resources could have been quickly deployed, they could have done even better. In order to ensure this, Public Affairs is looking at standing up a Rapid Response unit that could be quickly deployed throughout the country to rapidly scale up coverage of domestic events.

Several notable speakers rounded out the conference, each of them bringing new ideas and plans for a better, stronger performance in 2007. Included in the line up were Mr. Daniel Donahue, the Director of National Guard Public Affairs; LTG McKinley, the Director of the Air National Guard; BG Raymond Carpenter, the Special Assistant to the Director of the Army National Guard; BG Anthony Cucolo, the Director of Public Affairs for the U.S. Army; and BG Michelle Johnson, the Director of Public Affairs and Deputy Director of Communications, U.S. Air Force.

One of the most exciting developments to come out of this conference was a new direction in procedure for Public Affairs Officers (PAOs).

As you can see, this is a critical time in our nation’s history, and it is incumbent upon us to tell the Guard’s story—because it’s an amazing story of courage, tenacity and grit—the Nation’s first military responders!—Daniel Donahue, Director of National Guard Public Affairs

This new plan is apparently being executed throughout the military, but BG Anthony Cucolo laid it all out for the conference attendees.

The concept is to remind PAOs they are war fighters responsible for carrying out the war using the weapons and tools they are trained to use: information. As the DOD and BG Cucolo see it, it is the responsibility of each and every PAO to continually attack disinformation put out by the enemy, the media or even our allies. Any misleading fact or story is to be challenged immediately, not in a confrontational or hostile manner, but simply by ensuring the facts of a story get out.



BATTLING MISINFORMATION BG Anthony Cucolo, the Director of Public Affairs for the U.S. Army, speaks to National Guard Public Affairs Officers at the annual Public Affairs Training Workshop, in Bismarck late October. BG Cucolo reminds Public Affairs Officers they are “warfighters” combatting misinformation.

On a national level this effort can be seen in the new Department of Defense Web page called “For the Record.” There, every misleading large-scale press release or speech is challenged and corrected. On a

local level, BG Cucolo called on every PAO to do the same thing. Any disinformation or misleading facts must be immediately addressed. Letters to the Editor, posts on local websites, press conferences and personal interviews were all presented as potential tools for getting the real story out there.

As Mr. Donohue said, “As you can see, this is a critical time in our nation’s history, and it is incumbent upon us to tell the Guard’s story—because it’s an amazing story of courage, tenacity and grit—the Nation’s first military responders!” **GX**

Extend to Defend New for 2007!

By Chris West

Give your re-enlisting Soldiers the recognition they deserve. Instead of having them raise their right hand, sign on the dotted line and fall back into formation, you can now provide them a re-enlistment ceremony befitting their years of service. Designed to recognize the Soldiers' ongoing commitment, as well as the commitment of their families, Extend to Defend provides you with everything you need.

Soldiers will receive a gold-embossed, black leather binder containing a certificate of recognition, a framable copy of the Soldier's Creed, an Extend to Defend challenge coin and, if they are married, a certificate of appreciation and challenge coin for their spouse. Soldiers who re-enlist for a minimum of six years will also receive a blue National Guard hoodie sweat shirt featuring the National Guard logo and the Extend to Defend logo.

The certificates of appreciation come in three different levels. Soldiers who have served between one and nine years will be presented with a bronze-level certificate, a silver for 10 to 14 years and gold for 15 or more years of service. Similar certificates of appreciation are presented to spouses to recognize the critical role they have played throughout their Soldier's career.

Battalion-level, career counselors can order these kits off of the "Mission Zone" Web site.

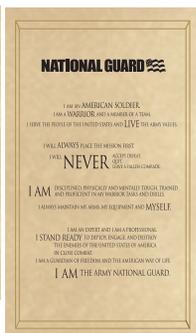
Be sure to let your Soldiers know their country appreciates their ongoing service and sacrifice. With Extend to Defend, you can!



Challenge Coin



Blue ARNG Hoodie featuring E2D Logo



Certificates of Recognition

For full details and to order, visit www.GuardMissionZone.com

COURTESY OF ARNG



OPERATION: **BACK TO BASICS™**

Kicking Off the Year Right

By Staff Sergeant Ken Weichert
Photos by Jonathan Miller

We've received many letters from Soldiers asking for help with their New Years resolutions to get into better shape. Some are preparing for the challenges of Basic Training and want to be in the best condition of their lives. Some are older Soldiers who want to be able to show their younger colleagues how it's done. All of them want to build muscle and endurance so that they can be better Soldiers.

To help you achieve your goals, we are kicking off a new program called "Back to Basics™" (B2B). This training program will help you take your physical conditioning to the next level. By practicing these simple exercises, you are guaranteed to lose body fat, stand with better posture and perform better in every aspect of military training and testing. Best of all these exercises can be performed anywhere with little or no equipment. It's the perfect way to start your New Year!

PLEASE NOTE: 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 shortness of breath.

UNIFORM REMARK: SSG Ken Weichert is pictured in the Army Combat Uniform (ACU) without the ACU Shirt in order to show you what muscles are employed during each exercise.

askthetrainer@startfitness.com

WORKOUT

BASIC - INTERMEDIATE

1. **Warm-up** (not pictured)
Running in-place (2-min.) or Side-Straddle-Hops "Jumping Jacks" (30)
2. **A few Rotation Exercises**
2-min. (not pictured)
3. **A few Stretches** 2-min.
It is advised that you repeat steps 1-3 prior to step 4 in order to be properly warmed-up. (Not pictured)
4. **Push-ups: Goal Post Grip, Normal, & Wide Arm Grip**
Basic: 1-20 sec.
Intermediate: 21-40 sec.
Advanced: 41-60 sec.
5. **Crunches on the ground, or Stability Ball Crunches**
Basic: 1-30 rep.
Intermediate: 31-60 rep.
Advanced: 61-120 rep.
6. **Cobra Pose**
Basic: 1-10 sec.
Intermediate: 11-20 sec.
Advanced: 21-30 sec.
7. **High Prone Back Kicks**
Basic: 1-6 rep.
Intermediate: 7-12 rep.
Advanced: 13-24 rep.
8. **High Prone Round Kicks**
Basic: 1-6 rep.
Intermediate: 7-12 rep.
Advanced: 13-24 rep.
9. **Modified Roman Crunches**
See page 49 for exercise photo
10. **Aerobics** 5-min. (not pictured)
Treadmill, or Elliptical Machines, or Running, or Cycle

FOR BEST RESULTS:

Basic: 1 set = approx. 20 min.
Intermediate: 2 sets = approx. 40 min.
Advanced: 3 sets = approx. 60 min.

Workout time depends on number of repetitions per set and rest periods.

6 Cobra Pose



Push-ups : Goal-Post Grip, Normal, and Wide-Arm Grip

4

If you are not able to perform the Push-up exercise from your feet, simply drop to your knees. If you are not able to perform the Push-up exercise from your knees, simply perform the MODIFIED PLANK POSE.

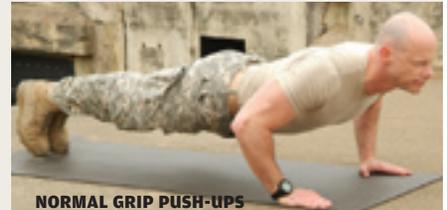
Start Position: Balance your body on your hands and feet (or knees) with your back forming a straight line. Look forward and keep your feet together or up to twelve inches apart. The Intermediate positions are where your hands are placed in the Goal-Post or Wide-Arm Grips.

Note: Different arm positions engage different arm and shoulder muscles. The closer your hands are together, the more Tricep muscles you engage.

Action: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, drop your body straight down by bending both elbows. Slowly return to the Start Position.



GOAL POST GRIPS PUSH-UPS



NORMAL GRIP PUSH-UPS



WIDE-ARM GRIP PUSH-UPS

Warning: Do NOT look down toward the ground during this exercise. Maintain a forward focal point at all times.



MODIFIED PLANK POSE

High Prone Back Kicks

7

START POSITION



Prep Position: Balance your body on your hands and feet (or knees) with your back forming a straight line. Look forward and keep your feet together or up to twelve inches apart.

Start Position: Twist your hips clockwise slightly while bending your right knee to tuck it in toward your chest.

ACTION POSITION



Action: Fully extend your right leg slowly and lock your thigh and rear while flexing your foot. Slowly return to the Start Position and continue. Switch leg and hip positions after you have completed the required amount of repetitions.

5 Stability Ball Crunches



8 High Prone Round Kicks



WORKOUT

INTERMEDIATE - ADVANCED

- 11. **Warm-up** (not pictured)
Running in-place (3 min.) and/or Side-Straddle-Hops "Jumping Jacks" (50)
- 12. **A few Rotation Exercises**
3 min. (not pictured)
- 13. **A few Stretches** 3 min. (not pictured)
- 14. **Swimmers**
Intermediate: 21-40 sec.
Advanced: 41-60 sec.
- 15. **Uneven Push-ups**
Intermediate: 4-12 reps.
Advanced: 12-24 reps.
- 16. **Flutter Kicks**
Intermediate: 21-40 sec.
Advanced: 41-60 sec.
- 17. **Leaning Lateral Leg Lifts**
Intermediate: 1-6 reps.
Advanced: 7-12 reps.
- 18. **Russian Twists**
Intermediate: 7-12 reps.
Advanced: 13-24 reps.
Extreme: Perform more than 25 reps. with a Medicine Ball in your hands
- 19. **Modified Roman Crunches**
- 20. **Aerobics** (not pictured)
Treadmill, or Elliptical Machines, or Running, or Cycle (6 min.)

FOR BEST RESULTS:

Intermediate: 2 sets = approx. 40 min.
Advanced: 3 sets = approx. 60 min.

Workout time depends on number of reps. per set and rest periods.

9 19 Modified Roman Crunches



14 Swimmers



START POSITION



ACTION POSITION



15 Uneven Push-ups

15

Start Position: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back forming a straight line. First, place your left hand on a step higher than your right hand. Look forward and keep your feet together or up to twelve inches apart.

Action: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, drop your body straight down by bending both elbows. Slowly return to the Start Position and continue. Switch arm positions after you have completed the required number of repetitions.

17 Leaning Lateral Leg Lifts



18 Russian Twists



16 Flutter Kicks



WORKOUT

ADVANCED - EXTREME

Note: This exercise routine is very difficult. Do NOT perform this exercise routine unless you can perform our Basic - Intermediate and Intermediate - Advanced fitness programs with ease. Please use extreme caution. "It's the toughest Boot Camp you'll ever love!"™

- 21. **Warm-up** (not pictured)
Running in-place (3 min.) and Side-Straddle-Hops "Jumping Jacks" (60)
- 22. **A few Rotation Exercises**
4 min. (not pictured)
- 23. **A few Stretches** 5 min.
(not pictured)
- 24. **High Steps** 2 min. (not pictured)
Jogging in-place with your hands at least above your shoulders and your knees as high as your hips
- 25. **Stability Ball Push-ups**
Advanced: 4-12 reps.
Extreme: Perform more than 12 reps. without compromising your form
- 26. **Leaning Stars**
Advanced: 4-8 reps.
Extreme: Perform more than 8 reps.
- 27. **Opposite Limb Prone Pointers**
Advanced: 4-8 reps.
Extreme: Perform more than 8 reps.
- 28. **Eagle Pose**
Advanced: 21-30 sec.
Extreme: Perform more than 30 sec.
- 29. **Superman/woman**
Basic: 1-6 reps.
Intermediate: 7-12 reps.
Advanced: 13-24 reps.
- 30. **Modified Plank and Pike**
- 31. **Aerobics** (not pictured)
Treadmill, or Elliptical Machines, or Running, or Cycle (10 min.)

FOR BEST RESULTS:

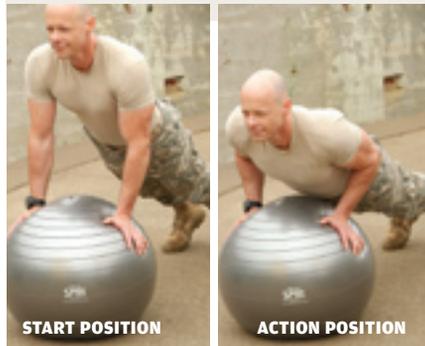
Advanced: 3 sets = approx. 75 min.
Extreme: 4 sets = approx. 90 min.

Workout time depends on number of reps. per set and rest periods.

Stability Ball Push-ups 25

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 twelve 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.



27 Opposite Limb Prone Pointers



29 Superman/woman



26 Leaning Stars



30 Modified Plank and Pike



28 Eagle Pose



GROUP EXERCISE:

Boot Camp Fitness “Exhausted in Ten Minutes!”

MAKE A GAME OF IT

If working out alone is not enough, take a good group exercise class program like Camp Crunch.™ Or, make your own cardio and strength training class by playing Push-up Poker. Simply draw a card from a deck of cards and immediately perform the number of push-ups indicated on the card, and double in crunches. Make each face card (Jack, Queen, or King) 10 push-ups and 20 crunches. Make the Ace 11 and 22. “No, the Ace is not a 1 for this fitness game. Nice try!” Make the 2 a wild card and have a family member or friend choose the number for you.

After completing the last crunch, immediately perform 20 seconds of sprinting in-place or high steps. After the 20 seconds of cardio, draw another card and continue. This is one of our favorite fitness games in the Operation Fit to Fight™ DVD trilogy and in the Instructor Certification program!



CALLING ALL CIVILIAN DRILL INSTRUCTORS

The sun was just making it's way over the San Francisco bay when twenty highly motivated civilian fitness instructors lined up for a day destined for sweat and muscle exhaustion. Recreating the intense exercises found in the START Fitness Operation Fit to Fight™ DVD trilogy, SSG Ken Weichert led a civilian platoon through a series of heart-pounding military fitness exercises, cadence calls, and fierce kick-boxing drills. They came looking to live 60 minutes of Soldier fitness and wound up getting a crushing shot of Boot Camp adrenaline!

REMARKS: Last November SSG Ken Weichert led a Military Fitness Instructor (Camp Crunch™) Training and Certification workshop at Crunch Fitness™ in San Francisco. Civilian fitness instructors traveled from all over California to endure this unique event. In 2007, SSG Weichert will travel all over the country to train anyone that wants to learn the START Fitness™ way! See www.startfitness.com or www.crunch.com for more details.

FEEDBACK FROM SGT. KEN'S BOOT CAMP

“I have been taking Sgt. Ken's Boot Camp class for over a year, and the instructor course for Camp Crunch brought my appreciation and intensity for the Boot Camp program to a whole new level! I feel I am armed with the knowledge to push forward and continue to learn more about group fitness techniques. I am looking forward to being part of the Camp Crunch Team! HOOAH!”

— Stephanie Scott

SPECIAL REMARKS:

We encourage you to request additional information by emailing us at askthetrainer@startfitness.com or to exercise with us while watching our OPERATION FIT TO FIGHT® DVD series. If you are ever in San Francisco, come to our studio where Military and Family members are always FREE.

A Gift TO THE GUARD FROM CRUNCH FITNESS®

Go to any Crunch Fitness™ gym in the country with this magazine and receive a \$200.00 value where they will waive the Enrollment Fee for any new Crunch membership purchased by a Guard Soldier or immediate family member. With over 30 Crunch Fitness gyms all over the country, you are bound to experience the fun and excitement of a new you through some sweat equity!

A \$200.00 VALUE

askthetrainer@startfitness.com

Blood Pressure Awareness 2007

“Get Cuffed!”



*How's Your System
Running?*



Army National Guard



DECADE ▶▶▶
▶▶▶ OF HEALTH

**Always Ready,
Always There...
Always
Healthy.**

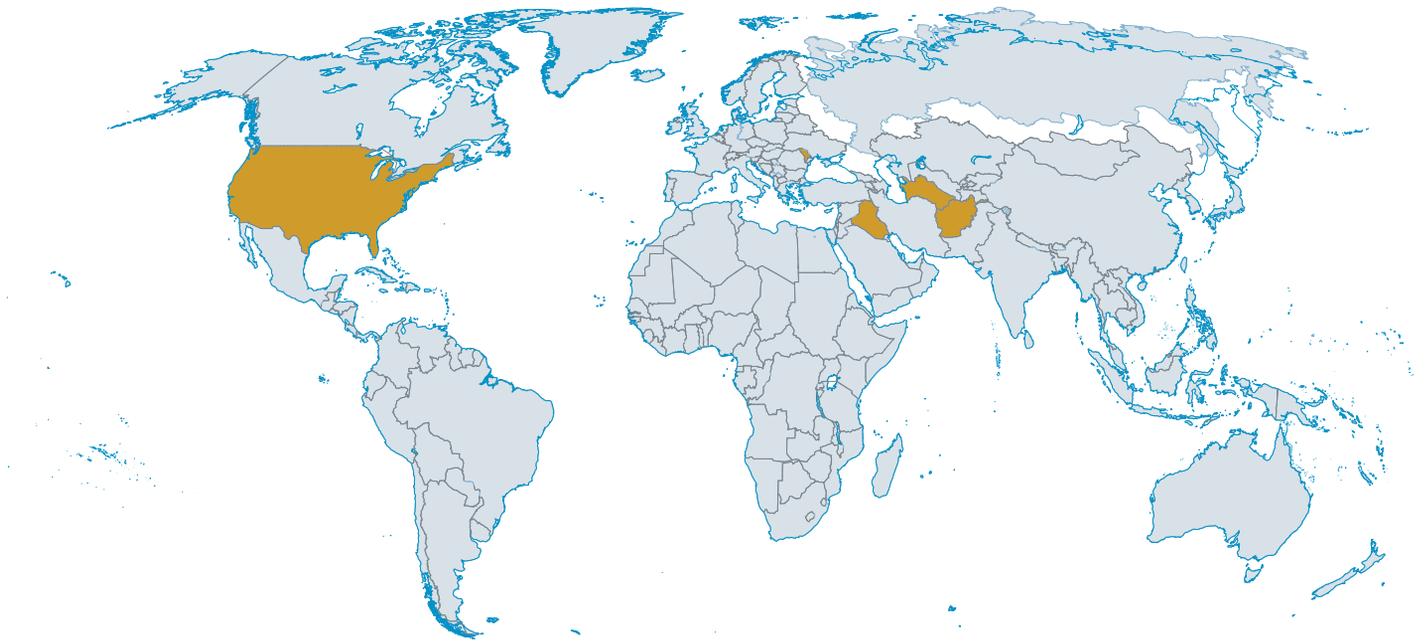


Oral Health Awareness 2006

“Dental Ready = Mission Ready”[©]

**System Maintenance 24/7
at
www.decadeofhealth.com**





VICTORY MAP

Sharing the good news from Guard units around the world. Send your news to editor@gxonline.com.



UNITED STATES

Ohio

On Nov. 9th in Westerville, hundreds of well-wishers gathered to celebrate the return of the OHARNG's HHC, 16th Engineer Brigade, following the unit's year-long deployment to Iraq in support of the Global War on Terrorism. During the ceremony, MG Gregory L. Wayt, Adjutant General of Ohio, declared, "You assured mobility with coverage of more than 17,000 square miles of area in the Baghdad AO (area of operations). Your Soldiers found over 882 IED's (improvised explosive devices) and were responsible for the improvement of the quality of life on the forward operat-

ing bases in which you lived. Like your fathers and grandfathers before you, you have defended freedom."

South Dakota

CWO Fred Loofbourow of Rapid City, returned Nov. 20, after completing a one-year deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. CWO Loofbourow, a member of Detachment 3, Co. A, 249th Aviation, served as a C-23 Sherpa pilot with Co. D, 126th Aviation at Balad Air Base, Iraq. CWO Loofbourow said he believed the mission in Iraq went well due to the tremendous working relationships developed by all the pilots and flight engineers that made up the unit. Company D, 126th Aviation is made up of Soldiers from IN, RI, and PA.

Kentucky

35 Soldiers from Bravo Co., 2nd Battalion 147th Aviation (KYARNG) returned to Lexington on Nov. 1 after serving a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The mission of the detachment while in theater was

to provide general aviation support to elements of the 101st Airborne Division. During the deployment, Bravo Co., 2nd Battalion 147th Aviation logged more than 8,000 flight hours. Although not a designated MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) unit, Bravo Co. assisted with three casualty evacuations from combat zones. The unit also participated in six Air Assault missions with infantry units.

Florida

21 members of the FLARNG's 2153rd Finance Detachment returned to St. Augustine Nov. 16 after completing a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The unit—based at the Mark Lance Armory in St. Augustine—deployed from Florida in September 2005, and during the deployment its members provided finance support to U.S. troops in Iraq and Kuwait.

New Jersey

SSG Robert A. Dollaway was named a monthly honoree in the Jackson Hewitt National Guard "Heroes of the Year" campaign for the month of October. Sponsored by Jackson Hewitt Tax Service®, the year-long campaign honors Guard Soldiers, families and employers around the country who have made a difference in their states or abroad.

Nevada

More than 100 Soldiers who deployed last year with the NVARNG's Co. D, 113th Aviation unit received NGB Freedom

Salute awards Sept. 24th during a ceremony at the Army Aviation Support Facility at Stead Airport. The day's events included a unit change-of-command ceremony when CPT Dan Lewis replaced MAJ Roger Capps as the company commander. There was also a deactivation and reactivation ceremony as the unit changed its name to B Co., 189th Aviation Battalion. CPT Lewis assumed company command of about 125 Soldiers and six CH-47 Chinook helicopters.

Missouri

CW2 Keith A. Wilcox, of St. Louis, was honored as one of 10 award recipients at the USO's 2006 "Salute to Heroes" Gala. The event took place at the Chase Park Plaza Hotel on Nov. 11. CW2 Wilcox is a full-time technician as the Surface Maintenance Mechanic Supervisor for the MOARNG's Field Maintenance Shop. He also serves as a key leader as Engineer Equipment Technician of the 1035th Maintenance Co. He has been a member of the unit for 10 years and has spent a total of 27 years in the military, including 23 years with the MO Guard. He recently returned in February from an overseas deployment with the 1035th in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The USO award recipients were selected on the basis of leadership, military accomplishments, and service.

Michigan

Following a 12-month tour in Iraq, 170 MIARNG Soldiers from the Detroit-based

1072nd Maintenance Co., returned home in early October. The Guard members come from two MI units: 108 Soldiers from Detroit, 42 Soldiers from Marquette, and 20 Soldiers from elsewhere around the state. The units were called to active duty July 2005 and sent to Fort McCoy, WI, for in-processing and mission specific training before they were sent to Iraq. Today, approximately 1,600 MI Guard Soldiers and Airmen are deployed across the globe, at locations such as Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, and Bosnia. Since Sept., 11, 2001, 75% of the MI Guard has been deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom; however, as MI troops serve the nation, more than 80% of the MI Guard remains available and ready to respond to a state emergency including a terrorist event.

Illinois

Nov. 30, the state was hit with major winter storms. Gov. Rod Blagojevich declared 49 counties disaster areas. More than 250 Soldiers of the ILARNG were called up to assess damage in Macon County and the city of Decatur. Members of the 233rd MP Co., D Co., 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment and A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 106th Cavalry were in place and ready to begin their missions less than 24 hours after getting notified by Adjutant General MG Randal Thomas. In addition, 1SG Robert Raycraft and SSG Adam Yau of A Troop, 2nd Squadron, 106th Cavalry, witnessed a car accident as they traveled through Decatur. Both Soldiers, certified Combat Lifesavers, jumped out of their vehicles and rendered aid to both drivers involved in the crash.

Iowa

Approximately 80 Soldiers from the IAARNG's 134th Medical Co. (Ground Ambulance) returned to their home state Oct. 11 after completing demobilization processing in Wisconsin, following federal active duty in Iraq. The 134th Medical Co. (Ground Ambulance) was ordered to active duty under a partial mobilization call-up that authorizes the President to order members of the Guard and Reserves to active duty for one year. Based in Washington, IA, the 134th Medical Co. (Ground Ambulance) evaluates casualties, performs basic medical treatment and sustainment of life, and provides transportation for injured and sick personnel in a theater

of operations. The unit previously deployed in 1990-91 for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. These Soldiers departed Iowa in early August 2005 for their mobilization station at Fort Sill, OK, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism and arrived in Iraq in October 2005.

Wyoming

WYARNG has had a record year for recruiting. During fiscal year 2006, WYARNG had recruited 322 new Soldiers to its force structure—a single-year record for the organization. The new recruits boosted WYARNG's force to 1,749 Soldiers. WYARNG aims to have 1,854 in place by the end of FY 2007.

New York

In Nov., WWE stars announced that they are taking a fourth trip to visit service members in Iraq, and this time they'll be carrying a very important letter. The letter is the 2.6 millionth letter for Shauna Fleming, 17, founder of A Million Thanks (www.amillionthanks.org), a California-based nonprofit troop-support group with an original goal of collecting 1 million letters of gratitude for troops. Fleming surpassed that goal two years ago, and in January 2006, her goal expanded to 2.6 million—the total number of people in the Armed Forces. WWE will take the 2.6 millionth letter over to Iraq and present it to service members.

New York

Dee's Nursery, (www.deesnursery.com) of Oceanside, NY, with the assistance of the community and DHL, shipped their annual Trees for the Troops on Dec 11th. Trees for Troops sent 800 Christmas trees to bases in Southwest Asia and 60 artificial Christmas trees to the U.S. military stationed in Germany. In addition, the initiative sent trees to wounded U.S. service members at Walter Reed Medical Center in Bethesda, MD. Toys and games were also sent for the children of those wounded service members.

Arkansas

A crowd of hundreds massed on the grounds of the First Baptist Church in Springdale, AR, on Nov. 7, welcoming their Soldiers back home from a year-long deployment to Iraq. Approximately 150 men with the ARARNG's Battery B of the 1st Battalion, 142nd Fires Brigade marched proudly in formation to

the site of the rally amidst a mass of cheering supporters and waving flags. The Soldiers initially mobilized on Aug. 3, 2005, and returned to the states via Fort Sill, OK, on Oct. 31, where they spent a week going through briefings and out-processing. During their mobilization, the battery worked at and eventually closed down the infamous Abu Ghraib prison. Their mission then switched to conducting patrols and providing convoy security in and around the city of Baghdad.

IRAQ

Under the massive crossed swords in the Green Zone, Iraq, three Soldiers took their oath of re-enlistment on Oct. 7. SGT Carol Sprawka, SGT Andrew Nicks, and SGT Justin Rogers, all of the 130th Field Artillery Brigade (KSARNG), swore once again to protect and defend for another six years in the KSARNG.

AFGHANISTAN

Soldiers from TNARNG's 568th Personnel Services Detachment in Nashville and "R" Troop, 4/278 Armored Cavalry Regiment in Jackson were treated to a special surprise on Thanksgiving Day. Their turkey and dressing was served up by MG Gus Hargett, TN's Adjutant General. MG Hargett and CSM Mike White traveled to Salerno, Kandahar and Kabul, Afghanistan to spend the holidays with TN Soldiers. Their journey covered more than 14,000 miles.

Nearly 400 hundred runners representing a number of Coalition forces, including the AKARNG, participated in the Terry Fox Run on Oct. 22 to raise money to support cancer research.



TURKMENISTAN

The NV Guard and the government of Turkmenistan worked in conjunction to open a state-of-the-art border crossing between Iran and Altyn Asyr, Turkmenistan, on Nov. 10. The modern facility allows for efficient international commerce while concurrently deterring narcotics traffic, illegal immigration and other contraband. The building was constructed in support of the counter drug initiative between the U.S. and Turkmenistan. The NV Guard and Turkmenistan have been linked by the National Guard State Partnership Program for more than 11 years. The NV Guard provided three Guard members and hundreds of hours of time to ensure the success of the project. Turkmenistan is located between Iran and Afghanistan in the area of the world often associated with opium exportation.



MOLDOVA

Four NCARNG Soldiers and two professors from the Univ. of NC at Chapel Hill School of Dentistry traveled in November to give vaccinations and dental treatments to 6,200 children in the former Soviet republic of Moldova, Europe's poorest nation. The team gave fluoride dental treatments to children in 32 orphanages and boarding schools across Moldova. More than 2,050 children also received vaccinations against chickenpox, and 1,500 received shots for Hepatitis-A. **GX**

BEFORE Engineers clear debris from an Iraqi highway to reduce the number of hiding places for an IED.



Innovation and Improvisation

A New Way to Fight IEDs in Dhi Qar Province By Chris West

Improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, are one of the greatest threats facing U.S. forces serving in Iraq. Often hidden along roadways to attack convoys, these simple, jury-rigged contraptions consist of an explosive charge, a detonator and an initiation system to trigger the detonator. The explosives can be everything from an unexploded 155mm shell to a homemade concoction of various flammable liquids. The initiation systems include almost anything capable of producing the small, electric charge needed to set off the detonator. This includes cell phones, remote controls, magnetic triggers, pressure-sensitive bars and trip wires.

The IED problem is aggravated by the condition of the Iraqi highway system. Wherever you go in Iraq, you see that the conditions of the roads vary from bad to atrocious. Potholes, piles of trash and animal carcasses are common sights. There are no regular road crews to clear up the mess and keep it clean. In other countries, this would be considered unsightly and unsanitary, but in Iraq, it's deadly.

Every pothole and piece of debris that litters the road is a potential hiding place for an explosive. Since there is rubble everywhere, it is extremely difficult to spot these traps. Quite literally, everything you see on the road holds the potential of hidden explosives.

The 1/34th has not been immune to these problems. In June, they suffered their first two losses due to IEDs hidden in trash beside the road. Some road-clearing units provided temporary assistance, but there simply aren't enough of these units to cover the entire country. So, they have to focus the vast majority of their efforts on Baghdad, where the vast majority of these attacks occur.



Further complicating the situation, the 1/34th had been ordered to stop throwing candy to children on the side of the road. It had been a common practice that made the G.I.s and the kids feel better, but it became incredibly dangerous. Children as young as four or five lined the side of the road in hopes of receiving a handout. They would crowd each other and jostle for position, mere inches from the armored convoys speeding by. To keep the children safe, throwing presents from moving vehicles had to stop. This, needless to say, didn't sit well with children who had become accustomed to these gifts. They responded with anger and hurled stones.

This may not sound bad, but a rock thrown into the windshield of a quickly moving vehicle can do some pretty serious damage. The troops in the humvees were pretty safe, but the truckers they escort were getting torn up.

(60TH PGAS) COURTESY OF 1/34TH BCT PAO

In response to the IEDs, rock throwing and other incidents, MAJ Jake Kulzer, head of the Civil Military Operations team came up with an innovative program that is showing some very promising initial results.

First, MAJ Kulzer recruited a platoon of combat engineer Soldiers. He borrowed some unused bulldozing equipment, and under the watchful eye of the 1/34th, proceeded to clear the road. Not long ago, these highways had been resurfaced, and all of the debris from that project had simply been piled at the side of the road. These mounds of dirt, stacks of ripped-up tarmac and hulks of old vehicles were

rapidly. If the indigenous crews saw something out of place, whether it was a freshly dug hole that hadn't been there the day before or simply a suspicious character, they used their cell phones to immediately notify the Iraqi Highway Patrol or local police. The local authorities would investigate and, if needed, call in the E.O.D. boys to remove any bombs.

The success of this pilot program, known as the Civilian Transportation Improvement Team (CTIT), was unprecedented, and the 1/34th quickly expanded it, moving up the highway toward Baghdad. Not only do the tribes help keep the roads clean and provide

Employing 200 men for a month takes only a small fraction of the replacement cost for a humvee. And of course, the lives saved by this program are priceless.

all scrapped. The carcasses and trash that littered the roads were all removed. What remained was a pristine highway with a perfectly clean shoulder that extended away from the road for some distance.

However, if the roads couldn't be kept clean, all of this work would mean nothing. This had always been the sticking point. It's not too difficult to surge capabilities and handle one big job, but providing labor on a daily basis would be an unacceptable drain on the Brigade's manpower.

The next step—maintaining the newly cleaned roadways—proved more difficult. MAJ Kulzer and his staff found the answer to this dilemma back home in the land of 10,000 lakes. Inspiration took the form of Minnesota's successful "Adopt a Highway" program, in which local communities sponsor and take responsibility for the cleanliness of a stretch of road near their homes.

The Major, as head of Civil Military Operations, has over the months built a strong relationship with the local Sheiks. Once the heavy work of the initial cleanup was done, MAJ Kulzer went to one of these tribes and offered to hire a team of local men to keep the road clean. They would be employed on a month-to-month basis, with continuation of the contract based entirely on performance.

The men employed were members of one of the more powerful tribes in the area, and word quickly spread they were taking care of this part of the highway. The rock-throwing incidents stopped almost immediately. IED detection increased, and IED explosions decreased

information, but based on the trust built during this project, they will likely be much more willing to work with U.S. troops in the future.

The CTIT doesn't just help secure the roads for the troops. It brings numerous benefits to the local communities as well. These roads are used most often, not by troops, but by Iraqis conducting trade or just traveling from place to place. Making the roads safe means they can travel with confidence. Additionally, over 200 families now derive their income from this project. It is infusing wealth into a community that has suffered from a 60 percent unemployment rate.

The expense of this program is so low as to barely register. Employing 200 men for a month takes only a small fraction of the replacement cost for a humvee. And of course, lives saved by this program are priceless.

MAJ Kulzer's CTIT pilot program has been receiving attention at both Division and Corp levels. After its success in the relative quiet of the southern provinces of Iraq, it is now being tried in much more contentious areas closer to Baghdad. Initial results in these areas are promising and confidence remains high. There is good cause for the optimism around this program. In Dhi Qar province, the cleared highways have remained free of IEDs and rock throwers, and maintenance teams have been responsible for disrupting several IED emplacements and turning in weapons caches. Relationships with some of the most powerful and influential tribes in the area have improved dramatically. The future of the CTIT program looks bright, indeed. **GX**

INNOVATOR (previous page, bottom) MAJ Jake Kulzer, commander of the 1/34th BCT Civil Affairs Team and creator of the Civilian Transportation Improvement Team

AFTER A road once littered by concrete and trash is smoothed to standards approaching those found in the U.S.



Red Bulls Family Follow-up

By Keith Kawasaki

We checked in with our featured families this past fall. While discovering lessons learned through the challenges of deployment, we were humbled by the miraculous strength and love fueling these incredible individuals as they continue marching forward as true, shining examples of the Soldier's Hero, the Military Family. Read additional comments at www.gxonline.com.



LISA RICKERT

WIFE OF CPT PAUL RICKERT

Which is the most reliable way to keep in touch: email, phone, or letters?

Email remains the most reliable form of communication. You don't get cut off in the middle of conversations like on the phone.

What is the best way to help children, friends, and relatives cope with and understand the deployment?

The best way to help the kids is to let them talk with Daddy when they can, see recent pictures of him, receive mail from Daddy and lots and lots of hugs. Also before Daddy left, he video-taped himself with the kids while reading their favorite stories. That has been, by far, one of the best things he did for the kids. [M]y husband sends out a general email update to describe what is going on to all of our family and friends. I leave the information he divulges up to him. It is hard to explain in words why he was, and remains, committed to the duties involved in this deployment; but when you looked at his face prior to his deployment, you could see why.

Where have you found the most continuous and effective support?

Our families have been just

wonderful and so positive. I don't know what I would do without them. Our friends have been supportive, too. The FRG has been doing a great job of keeping the units' families informed of important information and has been offering so many things for the families of deployed Soldiers to attend. I know that if I really needed them, they would be there for me.

Is there anything more you wish to share concerning lessons learned?

Being prepared and having a clear understanding of my husband's commitment to this deployment and its endeavors has proved valuable. It makes dealing with the everyday stuff a little bit easier to handle.



ALISON DOUTY

WIFE OF SSG JOSEPH DOUTY

Which is the most reliable way to keep in touch: email, phone, or letters?

[E]mail, or actually Instant Messenger. I have been able to talk to Joe almost every day over the computer. We both have a webcam and can call each other over the computer for free and can also see each other. It's been great for my two girls to be able to see their dad and actually talk to him and wave at him.

What different steps would you have taken to prepare for this deployment?

You kind of have to take things as they come and deal with them on a case-by-case basis. I actually prepared myself for the worst, [but] I get to talk to him on a regular basis and I know the general area where he is located. And although I don't know exactly what he is doing every day, I know enough to give me peace of mind.

What is the best way to help children, friends, and relatives cope with and understand the deployment?

When they find out I get to talk to Joe on a very regular basis, I think that gives everyone a sense that he must be safe. Everybody usually likes to know that he's doing well and staying busy and receiving the packages they send and appreciating them. As for children, my four-year-old has had a hard time understanding why Daddy can't be home. The best way I've found to help her is to be patient and to just try to distract her attention from that moment.

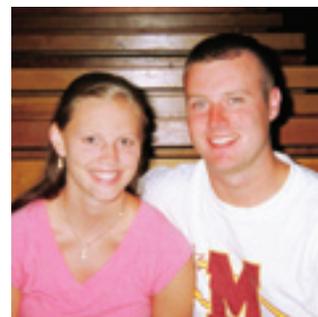
Where have you found the most continuous and effective support?

I don't know what I would do without my family here to support me. It helps to know they're there whenever I need them. Having good friends around me has helped, as well. They may not know exactly what I'm going through, but they're always there to keep me busy.

Is there anything more you wish to share concerning lessons learned?

I've learned that I can handle just about anything when I have to. When I first learned of the deployment, I thought, "How in the world am I going to be able to do everything on my own?" But as a year has passed, it's amazing what you can do when you don't have any other choice. It's almost an incentive to want to tell your husband, "Everything is okay back at home, so you don't need to worry about it." It makes me feel good to be able to take that

worry or burden off of him, so he can concentrate on what he is doing.



HOPE EVERS

FIANCEE OF SGT CLINT MICHAEL MACK

Which is the most reliable way to keep in touch: email, phone, or letters?

All of these options are much more reliable than I thought they would be. The only bad part is you never know when they won't be working. Sometimes a letter will arrive there in a week, and other times, it will take almost a month. The same applies to phone calls. There is always the chance of getting cut off, bad connections, or the phone lines not working at all. Email is probably the most reliable. [I]t helps so much being able to keep in touch.

What different steps would you have taken to prepare for this deployment?

Since this was my first time going through a deployment, I didn't know what to do at all. Mostly, spending as much time as possible with your Soldier before he/she leaves is extremely important.

Where have you found the most continuous and effective support?

Like always, my friends have been there for me. [M]y family helps, too. But, since I don't live near them, it's mostly my friends. Above all, my support comes from Clint. Talking to him about the future helps to make me think about what's going to happen instead of him being gone now. Knowing that life will eventually get back to normal keeps me going. **GX**



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The Kosovo Force [KFOR]

The National Guard and NATO's Multi-National Kosovo Task Force

By Chris West

At the end of the last century, the tiny Eastern European region of Kosovo was facing a grave humanitarian crisis. Ethnic tensions in this cradle of two World Wars (see timeline) were at a fever pitch and had claimed the lives of thousands. Nearly one million refugees had fled Kosovo to seek safety and peace in neighboring European countries. In 1999, the international community, under UN and NATO leadership stepped in to stop the violence.

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) is a NATO-led international force, consisting of 37 countries responsible for establishing and maintaining security in Kosovo.

This peace-enforcement task force entered Kosovo on 12 June 1999 under a United Nations mandate. UN Security Council Resolution 1244 provided for UN governance of Kosovo until its final status could be determined. Security for the operation was to be provided by a multi-national group of NATO countries.

The objectives of KFOR are to establish and maintain a secure environment in Kosovo, including public safety and order; to monitor, verify and when necessary, enforce compliance with the agreements that ended the conflict; and to provide assistance to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The United States primary responsibility is command of the eastern region of Kosovo. This group is known as the MNTF (E) (Multi-National Task Force East) and is largely composed of National Guard Soldiers. As of 2007, the Guard troops of KFOR 8 will begin their year-long watch. These Soldiers, gathered under the flag of the 29th ID, will serve with distinction protecting the Kosovar people, just like the seven rotations that have come before them.



Courtesy of CIA World Fact Book



QUIET RIOT 36th ID Soldiers from KFOR 7 MNTF(E) train-up for riot control

TIMELINE (top to bottom) :

ANCIENT HISTORY Warriors clash in the epic battle between the Kingdom of Serbia and the Ottoman Empire, 1389.

Battle of Kosovo, by Adam Stefanovic, oil, 1870

WWII Serbs and Gypsies who have been rounded up for deportation are marched to the Jasenovac concentration camp under Ustasa guards. Circa 1942 - 1943; [Croatia] Yugoslavia.

FALL OF YUGOSLAVIA Kosovar children cheer the arrival of U.S. Marines in Gjilan/Gnjilane, June 1999.

A Brief History of Kosovo

The History of the Kosovars is irrevocably intertwined with that of the Serbian and Albanian peoples, their unification under the flag of Yugoslavia and the tragic civil war that tore that country apart at the end of the Cold War.

This area has played a major role in every European conflict in the 20th century due to

its prominence as the “crossroads between East and West.” As the easiest land route between Western Europe and Greece or Asia Minor, the territory is of critical strategic importance. Historically, almost all land traffic, whether commercial, military or contraband has been forced to travel the troubled roads of this region.

ANCIENT HISTORY



- Bronze Age** The Illyrians arise as a distinct culture. Though the connection is disputed by some historians, Albanians consider themselves to be descended directly from these ancient people.
- 630 AD** Slavic tribes, known as the Serbs, settle in the Balkans at the invitation of the Byzantine Emperor. Under the leadership of powerful nobles, The Kingdom of Serbia soon becomes a regional power to be reckoned with.
- 1389** The Battle of Kosovo—The Serbs meet the Ottoman Empire in a great battle. In military terms, the battle was a draw, but over the next few years the Ottomans conquer the entire region. During the Ottoman occupation, Albania, along with much of the Balkan populace, is converted to Islam. Serbs remain, by and large, within the Orthodox Church.
- 1800s** A series of uprisings and wars leads to the eventual reestablishment of Serbia and several other Balkan countries. The Treaty of Berlin of 1878 grants Serbia and Montenegro independence but hands Bosnia over to Austria-Hungary, much to the displeasure of the Serbs living there. This sets the stage for the event that sparks World War I.

WWI



- 1912 - 1913** Balkan Wars—The Balkan League (Bulgaria, Montenegro, Greece and Serbia) conquer Ottoman-held Macedonia, Albania and other parts of the Balkans.
- 1914** A Serbian separatist from Bosnia assassinates Arch-Duke Franz Ferdinand. This prompts Austria-Hungary to declare war on Serbia. Due to a series of treaties, the rest of Europe is quickly drawn into World War I.
- 1918** Macedonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, Slovenia and portions of Albania are handed over to Serbia after World War I. The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, later renamed Yugoslavia, is founded. Instead of unifying the region, ethnic tensions become more pronounced.

WWII

- 1941** Axis Germany occupies Yugoslavia. The Nazis actively promote inter-ethnic bloodshed in order to keep the region under control. Josip Tito leads the resistance efforts, and after driving the Nazi's out in 1945, he takes control of the country.

THE COLD WAR

- 1945 - 1980** Yugoslavia is reorganized as a Socialist Republic on the Soviet model. The country is divided into semi-autonomous Socialist Republics along roughly ethnic lines under the overall rule of Belgrade and strongman Josip Tito.

THE FALL OF YUGOSLAVIA



- 1980** Tito's death marks the beginning of the end. Without him to hold the country together, Yugoslavia is soon torn apart in the economic chaos that accompanied the fall of the Soviet Union.
- 1989** Slobodan Milosevic removes Kosovo's autonomy and brings it directly under control of his government in Belgrade. The Kosovar Albanians strenuously oppose this move.
- 1991 - 2001** The Yugoslav Wars—Yugoslavia undergoes a series of terrible civil wars as it fractures along the old ethnic boundaries.
- 1991 - 1995** Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia secede first and war with the Serb-led Yugoslav Government until 1995. NATO air strikes and gains by the seceding countries force Slobodan Milosevic to sign the Dayton Accords.
- 1998 - 2001** Violence breaks out in southern Serbia between Serbs, Macedonians and Ethnic Albanians. Serbian atrocities lead to UN resolution 1244, which hands governance of Kosovo to the UN. The UN has a mandate to transition the Kosovars to a democratic and independent government.
- 2006** The area has largely stabilized, but tensions between Serbs and ethnic Albanians continue. The Serbs have recently approved a new constitution that asserts that Kosovo is an integral part of Serbia. Tensions have increased as a result, but the UN mission remains unchanged. The final status of Kosovo remains to be determined.

KFOR8

Elements of the 29th Deploy for Peacekeeping in Kosovo

By Chris West

"I couldn't be prouder of the men and women who stand before you today," said BG Douglas Earhart. "While we came here from different places and different components of the U.S. Army, we leave here united under the flag of the historic 29th Infantry Division. Our success here at Camp Atterbury is a testimony to the hard work of the Soldiers in this task force and the officers and non-commissioned officers who lead them. Each one of you should feel a great sense of accomplishment for what you have done here."

These were the proud words of the commander of the Multi-National Task Force East (MNTF (E)) for the KFOR8 rotation as the 1,500 National Guard Soldiers under his command prepared to leave Camp Atterbury for Europe. For the next year, they are tasked with maintaining security for the Kosovo region of Serbia.

The standard reaction to this usually goes something like this: "We have troops in Kosovo? Why? Wait a minute: is Kosovo even a country?"

The answer to the first question is: Yes, the National Guard has been serving with distinction in Kosovo as part of NATO's multi-national Kosovo Task Force (KFOR) for some time.

The answers to the next two questions are a little more complicated.

Kosovo is an autonomous province within the country of Serbia. However, because of the bloody warfare and ethnic cleansing carried out under Slobodan Milosevic, the governance of Kosovo was stripped from Serbia and handed over to the UN. The UN Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) is tasked with governing Kosovo until the country can transition to a democratic government where all ethnic groups are fairly represented and protected. It's final status has yet to be determined, but despite halting progress by the Kosovars, it is widely expected among the international community that this process will result in their independence.

It's up to the men and women of KFOR8 to ensure that the people of Kosovo and UNMIK have a secure environment in which to accomplish this Herculean task. The Soldiers of KFOR8 are not there to build schools, infrastructure or a democratic government; that's the job of the UN and the Kosovar people. They are in Kosovo to create a secure environment. Whether this means arresting drug dealers (this is a major east-west corridor for heroin) or intervening when ethnic violence flares up, KFOR8 is here to uphold the peace.

According to LTC Steve Fritz, the commander of Task Force Eagle, "Our mission is to make the environment such that they can solve their own problems . . . This helps the local government strengthen itself. Ultimately, my job is to put myself out of a job."

MNTF (E) PARTICIPATING NATIONS:

United States (commanding)
Armenia
Greece
Lithuania
Poland
Romania
Ukraine

- ☆
- ☆
- ☆
- ☆
- ☆
- ☆

U.S. CONTRIBUTING STATES:

The National Guards of Virginia and Massachusetts provide almost two thirds of the Soldiers, while Guard Soldiers from 22 other states, and Puerto Rico, provide additional personnel. Men and women from the following states will be deploying as part of the KFOR8 task force: California, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Mississippi, North Carolina, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Wisconsin and West Virginia.

BG Douglas Earhart, Commander of MNTF (E) KFOR8, described the mission this way; "The job is peace enforcement. We are there to provide a visible deterrent and uphold the rule of law that has already been established by the international community. In the end, anyone should be able to go anywhere without fear of injury."

MG John Yingling expressed his confidence in the 29th at their departure ceremony. "It was an honor to sign the validation letter for this unit; they are ready to assume the duties of this mission. They are competent and confident, and I know they will successfully complete their mission of giving the people of Kosovo a chance to work and live in peace."

As of this writing, MNTF (E) KFOR8, is in Germany participating in their final mobilization readiness exercise. This intense, ultra realistic, theater-specific training will put the final polish on their skills before they move in country. By the time this article is published, they will be on the ground and standing watch, helping provide an environment in which democracy can flourish. **GX**

GX will continue to follow the 29th throughout their deployment in Kosovo.

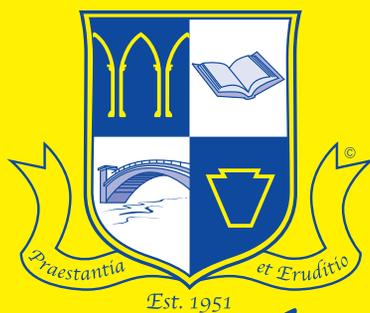


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Is Distance Learning Right for Me?

By Johanna Altland
Grantham University

Distance learning works best for those who are self-motivated and self-disciplined; it isn't for everyone. How well will distance learning courses fit into your everyday life? Take the quiz below to find out.

1. I think online classes are:

- a. More difficult than face-to-face classes because help is only available by e-mail or phone.
- b. A little easier than face-to-face classes because of the flexibility.
- c. Easier because online classes don't require as much work.

2. I would describe my personal style as:

- a. Self-motivated, self-disciplined and organized.
- b. Motivated, but I need help remembering deadlines from time to time.
- c. Disorganized, I need someone to motivate me and stay on top of me.

3. When it comes to procrastination:

- a. I rarely procrastinate.
- b. I sometimes procrastinate.
- c. I always procrastinate.

4. My critical thinking skills are:

- a. Very good, I can read materials and formulate opinions on my own.
- b. Fair, I can read materials and formulate opinions, but it can be a struggle.
- c. Poor, I have difficulty reading materials and formulating opinions on my own.

5. Being a part of a class is:

- a. Not necessary to me.
- b. Somewhat important to me.
- c. Very important to me.

6. Going to campus regularly is:

- a. Difficult with my commitments.
- b. A little difficult, but I can rearrange my schedule.
- c. Easy.

7. If I had to describe my learning style, it would be:

- a. Visual, I learn best when I can read the materials and see visuals.
- b. Kinesthetic, I learn best when I can learn hands on.
- c. Auditory, I learn best when I can listen to an explanation.

8. I find learning independently:

- a. Easy, I don't need to hear lectures on assignments that I have already read.

- b. A little difficult, I like hearing a lecture after I have read the material.
- c. Difficult, I definitely need an instructor to review the material in class.

9. If I need help, I:

- a. Don't mind asking questions.
- b. Don't like to ask questions, but will if I am struggling.
- c. Don't like to ask questions at all.

10. I prefer to learn by:

- a. Going at my own pace.
- b. Going at my own pace with some class discussion.
- c. Interacting with a group.

SCORING:

Add 3 points for each "a," 2 points for each "b" and 1 point for each "c" you have circled. If you scored 20 or more points, you are a disciplined self-starter and a flexible, self-paced distance learning environment will fit well with your lifestyle. If you scored between 11 and 20 points, distance learning may work for you, but you will need to keep yourself motivated and adjust your study habits. If you scored 10 points or less, a more structured distance learning program may be the best fit for you.

IMPORTANCE OF ACCREDITATION

Accreditation is an important factor to think about when evaluating any college or university, because it indicates that a school is reputable and has met certain quality standards. Accreditation assures students that the institution operates on a sound financial basis, has an approved program of study, has qualified instructors, adequate facilities and equipment, and approved recruitment and admissions policies.

WHAT IS ACCREDITATION?

Accreditation is a voluntary process that an institution undertakes in order to be publicly recognized for their performance, integrity, and quality. The accrediting process can take years and requires a visit from the accrediting agency's evaluation committee (typically comprised of peers within the education field) to examine an institution's goals, operations, and achievements. The committee then provides the institution with the suggestions, recommendations, and judgments of the

accrediting body. Because accreditation is reviewed periodically, institutions are encouraged to continuously monitor themselves and focus on areas of improvement.

WHO ARE THE RECOGNIZED ACCREDITING AGENCIES?

Because there are a variety of accrediting organizations, you should look for an institution that has been accredited by agencies recognized by The U.S. Department of Education (www.ed.gov) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (www.chea.org).

The majority of accrediting bodies fall into three major categories: national, regional, and specialized/professional. For a complete list of accrediting agencies recognized by the



U.S. Department of Education, please visit:
www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.asp.

HOW DO I KNOW IF A SCHOOL IS ACCREDITED?

One way to tell if a school is accredited is to call and ask who they are accredited by or check their Web site. Many accredited schools will have a Web page devoted to their accreditation and licensure.

Another way is to search the U.S. Department of Education's Institution Accreditation Database (www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.asp). With this database, you can search by institution name, agency, geographic region, state, or type of institution.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL AND SPECIALIZED OR PROGRAMMATIC ACCREDITATION?

Institutional accreditation applies to an institution as a whole, meaning that all

aspects of the institution have been reviewed from the faculty to the admissions process to the coursework. For example, Grantham University is nationally accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC).

Specialized or programmatic accreditation normally applies to specific programs, departments or schools that are within an institution. For example, an institution's Engineering program can be accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), while the institution as a whole could be nationally or regionally accredited.

As you can see, accreditation plays an important role in higher education. Not only does it make institutions accountable, but it holds them to high standards while letting you know that you are earning your degree from a reputable organization. **EX**

HOW TO SPOT A DIPLOMA MILL

According to the dictionary, a diploma mill is "an unaccredited school or college that grants relatively worthless diplomas for a fee." A diploma mill is also described as "an institution of higher education operating without supervision of a state or professional agency and granting diplomas, which are either fraudulent or because of the lack of proper standards worthless" (*Webster's Third New International Dictionary*). This is not to say that every school that isn't accredited is a diploma mill, but there are definite signs to look out for:

- 1) **The Slogan: Get a Degree for Your Experience** Many of us have seen this e-mail pop into our inbox from time to time, and it is a tell-tale sign of a diploma mill. Sure, getting a degree without having to do the work sounds tempting, but it could get you into a lot of trouble. There are many institutions that give some credits for work or life experience, but they won't award an entire degree.
- 2) **The Look of the Institution's Web site** Now granted, there are many diploma mills in existence that have very professional, well thought-out Web sites, but one sign of a diploma mill is an institution whose Web site looks cheap and thrown together.
- 3) **No Contact Information** Schools that want you to enroll with them will go out of their way to provide you with several ways to contact them. A reputable school will make their address and phone number available to you on its Web site. Some diploma mills will only interact with you through their Web site, and the phone number they list will have a recording instructing you to leave your name and phone number even during normal business hours.
- 4) **No Faculty or Staff Information** Reputable schools are proud of their faculty and staff and are more than willing to showcase them on their Web site. You should be suspicious of schools that don't list any names. They might be hiding the fact that they don't have any faculty.
- 5) **A Flat-Fee Degree** If a school wants to charge you one lump sum for a degree that will require little to no coursework, this is a sign that they might not be very reputable. Genuine institutions will charge you by the course, credit hour or semester, and you will be held accountable for your work.

While there are many tell-tale signs of a diploma mill, the best thing you can do is your homework. Research the school, ask questions and use the Internet. For a list of schools and accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, visit: www.ope.ed.gov/accreditation/Search.asp. Also, www.wikipedia.com has a list of unaccredited institutions of higher learning, as well as a list of unrecognized accreditation associations of higher learning.



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Dental Care for You and Your Family

Deployment FAQs

Courtesy of Tricare Dental Program

1 I'm a National Guard and Reserve sponsor and am enrolled in the Tricare Dental Program (TDP). I'm about to be activated. Do I need to disenroll from the TDP since I'll be eligible for active duty dental benefits?

No, National Guard and Reserve sponsors who are enrolled in the TDP and who will be activated for 31 days or more are automatically disenrolled from the TDP. They will be automatically re-enrolled upon deactivation.

2 I'm about to deploy and have enrolled my family in Tricare medical. Isn't dental included in the medical coverage?

No, Tricare medical and dental are two different programs. You must enroll in each separately.

3 What type of dental coverage is available for my family members once I'm activated?

Family members of National Guard and Reserve sponsors are eligible for the TDP whether the sponsor is activated or not. The TDP provides a comprehensive dental benefit that is comparable to civilian dental insurance plans.

4 Can my family enroll themselves in the TDP?

The sponsor must enroll family members unless he/she has signed a Power of Attorney (POA) allowing family members to enter into contracts. The POA must be provided with the enrollment form.

5 When is TDP dental coverage effective?

If the enrollment form and first month's premium are received by the 20th of the month, coverage begins the first of the following month.

6 My family is already enrolled in the TDP. Are there any changes once I'm activated?

Yes. If you are activated for 31 days or more, your family's monthly premiums will be reduced since the Department of Defense pays 60 percent of monthly premiums for active-duty family members. National Guard and Reserve family members whose sponsors are activated for 31 days or more are considered active-duty family members, and therefore receive the reduced premium rate.

Premiums for active-duty family members are paid via military allotment from the sponsor's pay and will be reflected on the Leave and Earnings Statement (LES).

Upon deactivation, your family will revert to the National Guard and Reserve family member premium rate (no government participation).

7 My family wasn't enrolled in the TDP prior to my activation. Are there any time limitations regarding enrollment?

You can enroll your family at any time. However, there is a 12-month commitment for your family to remain enrolled in the TDP. Premiums will be adjusted to the National Guard and Reserve family member rate (no government participation) upon deactivation. Note that if the sponsor enrolls the family within 30 days of activation in support of certain contingency operations, the family will be automatically disenrolled from the TDP upon deactivation and the 12-month commitment will be waived.

8 Where can I get more information on the TDP (enrollment, monthly premiums, cost-shares, benefits, POA, etc.)?

Visit TDP online at www.TricareDentalProgram.com or call the TDP contractor, United Concordia Companies, Inc., at 800-866-8499.



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Operation First Response

Supporting Wounded Heroes and Their Families

Courtesy of Operation First Response, Inc.

Operation First Response, Inc (OFR) was founded in the Commonwealth of Virginia in 2004. OFR's mission is to support our Nation's wounded Heroes and their families.

What this mission means to the staff of OFR has grown and changed to expand to the needs of our families.

OFR staff members consider it an honor and a privilege to be able to lighten the load of our wounded Heroes and their families. We have seen devotion beyond words from family members to their loved ones: mothers, fathers, spouses and extended family and friends who have spent endless hours at the bedsides of their loved ones. Because of the severity of many of the injuries, this journey can last for several months, and for others, several years.

For many of our families, the financial hardship begins quickly, and for others, it is after the domino effect of extra costs and lost wages. At whatever stage they are in when they contact OFR, we are committed to doing all we can to support these families, because it is our responsibility as American citizens. The heart of OFR is exactly what makes America great. We know our Freedoms are not free, and we are committed to those who make those Freedoms possible.

There are different ways that a wounded Hero may enter into the family of OFR:

- Some begin at a combat support hospital in Iraq or Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) in Germany, where a wounded or injured service member may receive an OFR backpack filled with a new set of clothing, travel-size hygiene products, a handmade blanket and a phone card to ensure they have needed items until they return stateside.
- Some may learn of OFR and their services through our Vice President Carolyn Crossley, who is a nurse at LRMC. She gives out OFR information and ensures our Heroes there is help waiting for them and their families back in the states. At that time, this service member may contact OFR, or give his or her family the information, and the family will contact OFR.
- Several unit Family Readiness Groups (FRG's) from bases across the United States have heard of the services provided by OFR, and they will contact OFR directly to obtain help for their comrades.
- Some families search for help via the internet after their family member is wounded or injured.
- Many are sent to OFR by wounded Heroes who have received OFR services and then send those they find in similar situations to OFR for support. This is one of the highest compliments.
- Some learn of OFR through government organizations that research for help for service members.
- OFR's president, Peggy Baker makes weekly visits to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Bethesda, MD. This enables OFR to let the families know we are here to assist, as well as providing one-on-one interaction with these wonderful Heroes.

Whatever way any of our very special families come into our path, they soon learn they are part of our family, and that we will be a voice for them and forever ready to help in whatever comes their way.

The staff members of OFR have worked together with our wounded and their families long enough to have become seasoned

with compassion and understanding for what our families need to overcome the long road ahead. We realize a very large part of what we do is listening and gathering valuable resources to help our families with a multitude of issues.

Most importantly, OFR keeps in mind that families will continue to present new issues will broaden the scope of services provided by OFR. OFR staff members are honored to have become a very important part

of the recovery of so many wounded service members. We are thought of as family and do not take that lightly. Our families know they are respected and their privacy is of the utmost importance to us. If their need is outside our financial abilities or scope, we will spend as much time as possible to find other resources to meet that need.

OFR dedicated staff members are volunteers who are available 24/7. It is our sincerest hope to inform Americans everywhere of the needs of our wounded and their families,

to continue through the years with support for them—knowing full well that by giving them the respect and honor rightfully due them, we will be able to give them the hope of a promising future. In doing this, we will ensure that all who have worn the “Uniform” will be an instant reminder to all Americans that a Hero stands before us—one of courage, strength and love for his or her country. And whether their injuries are visible or invisible, we will never forget, “All gave some and some gave all!” **GX**

OFR FINANCIAL AID VARIES AS EACH CASE IS BASED ON INDIVIDUAL NEEDS RANGING FROM:

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- Vehicle payments and repairs
- Groceries
- Clothing
- Air Transportation
- Ground transportation, which includes transportation to and from DC-area airports and also dollars given to purchase gas for traveling by car to medical facilities.
- Requested personal items by service members or their families

For more information, please visit www.operationfirstresponse.org.



DEDICATED SUPPORT
OFR's President
Peggy Baker, Brian
and Nova Radke.

Dental Health Awareness A Top Priority During Decade of Health's First Year

By MG Patrick D. Sculley, DDS (U.S. Army, Retired)

A novel approach by the Army National Guard (ARNG) to provide health promotion to its members is underway in the Decade of Health (DOH). The first year has focused on dental readiness with an oral health awareness outreach, "ARNG Dental Bytes." An oral health promotion newsletter is available online, via email and print to ARNG Soldiers and families. It provides oral health promotion messages on a regular and recurring basis and fosters good oral health habits and regular professional dental care. It encourages ARNG Soldiers to take charge of their own dental health to improve their dental readiness.

"Never before has our Nation called upon the ARNG to serve in the front lines of two major operations and simultaneously take the lead in Homeland Security. Healthy deployable Soldiers are the backbone of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom as well as for operations within the boundaries of our great Nation," says Clyde A. Vaughn, Lieutenant General, GS, Director, Army National Guard. "Maintaining force strength and sustaining these critical operations rely heavily on the health and physical fitness of our Soldiers."

The Decade of Health campaign draws upon other ARNG health and wellness initiatives and includes a multi-faceted media and outreach approach. The Decade of Health is presented via print, web, direct mail and broadcast media. Federal, commercial, and not-for-profit marketing models and techniques fuel the program's outreach. An easily accessible ".com" Web page (www.decadeofhealth.com) provides access for ARNG Soldiers and their families 24/7. A participation incentives program is being developed and is a critical element of the Decade of Health outreach.

Colonel Craig Urbauer, ARNG Chief Surgeon, emphasizes that the goal of the Decade of Health is to target health-focus areas that will provide measurable outcomes and yield returns on investment by enhancing



ALL SMILES LTG H Steven Blum in front of Decade of Health exhibit.

deployability, readiness, recruiting, and retention. The program goal is reflected in the campaign slogan: "Always Ready, Always There . . . Always Healthy."

Colonel Urbauer selected oral health awareness and dental readiness as the 2006 campaign focus. Numerous studies and years of use have made the dental readiness system an ideal model. It is clear that Soldiers in class 1 and class 2 dental status have many fewer dental disease non-battle injuries than Soldiers in class 3 status and are hence more ready to accomplish their mission.

In a January 8, 2004 memo from LTG H Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau to the Adjutants General, the accountabilities for dental health were clearly outlined. The memo states: "Dental readiness is a command responsibility. Fitness for duty, to include

oral health, is a personal responsibility." The ARNG Dental Bytes outreach was developed to help commanders and Soldiers accomplish these responsibilities.

The many demands placed upon the ARNG require a preventive approach to oral health. In the ARNG Dental Bytes, prevention has been highlighted. The reasons for good oral health have been presented—improved combat effectiveness and improved quality of life. The tools of prevention—good oral hygiene, proper diet, regular professional care and avoidance of harmful habits and practices—have been stressed in detail.

Recognizing that military service is also family-centric, special articles focus on topics that enhance the well-being of the entire Soldier family. In a letter to all ARNG Soldiers and families last December, COL Patrick Nolan,

Dental Readiness is a top priority for force-health protection and the responsibility and duty of every Soldier.—COL Patrick Nolan

DDSD, then the ARNG Chief Dental Officer, wrote, "Dental Readiness is a top priority for force-health protection and the responsibility and duty of every Soldier. Additionally, good oral health is a family affair." Users are offered direct access to the TRICARE Reserve Dental Program Web page from the ARNG Dental Byte Website located at www.arngdentalbytes.com. The first year campaign, Oral Health Awareness is designed to reinforce the prevention mindset leading to improved oral health for Soldiers and their families throughout the entire Decade of Health.

The ARNG will launch Year Two, "Get Cuffed!"—a blood pressure awareness campaign in a partnership with the American Heart Association—in January 2007. **GX**

For more information:
www.decadeofhealth.com
www.arngdentalbytes.com

DENTAL CLASSIFICATIONS

The dental fitness classification is the primary measure of a Soldier's dental readiness. The commander can use the dental fitness classification of unit personnel as an index of dental preparedness and to identify individuals who will require treatment during mobilization. The Department of Defense Dental Classification Guideline and AR 40-35 outline the following dental fitness classifications:

Standardized Dental Fitness Classifications*

- Class 1: Worldwide Deployable with no further treatment required.
- Class 2: Worldwide Deployable with need for non-urgent routine treatment.
- Class 3: Nondeployable without treatment for urgent conditions that likely will cause a dental emergency within 12 months.
- Class 4: Nondeployable with no examinations documented within the past 12 months.

* A Synopsis of Reference: DoD Health Affairs: Policy 02-11 on Standardization of Oral Health and Readiness Classifications, June 4, 2004

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Get in the Fight! Gunfighter School with the NMARNG

FIRE! CW2 Chad Lytle (far right) practices transitioning to his sidearm after a simulated malfunction of his M4 Carbine.



By Chris West

SFC Ed Kawamura's M4 banged away in slow, measured strokes, providing suppressing fire as I made the short dash to the car he was using as cover. "Checking!" came barking out of my mouth as I rushed forward. My hands were executing a speed-reload as I ran, ensuring I had a full magazine ready. "West, up!" I shouted as I slid into place on my knees behind the hood of the car. I acquired my target downrange and began firing a moment later. As soon as my first shot sounded, Ed was on his feet bounding forward to his next piece of cover. I could just barely hear him shout, "Checking!" as he reloaded on the run.

It was day four of Pat Rogers' Gunfighter Course and, frankly, I was more than a little astounded that I had pulled off that maneuver. For skilled and experienced Soldiers like SFC Kawamura, this sort of thing was old hat, but for me, this was all quite new and surreal. Four days ago, I barely knew one end of an M4 from the other. Now, I was managing to keep

up with seasoned Soldiers in live-fire field maneuvers. I was, by no means, at the SFC's level, but I wasn't slowing him down either.

My sudden transformation from scribbler to shooter happened at the hands of Pat Rogers, his ever-so-gentle instructors and the other students in the course. I had been invited for a return visit to New Mexico's Combat Arms Training Company (CATC) by longtime friend of GX, 1SG Jason Riley. The CATC trains Soldiers in combat rifle, close quarters battle, survival and a host of other skills in weekend-long courses that replace three of their normal drill weekends. Every member of the NMARNG goes through the CATC's high-speed training.

I had observed the CATC instructors in the past*, but this trip was going to be a little different. First, instead of sitting on the sidelines, I was going to be participating. Second, instead of a regular three-day CATC course, I'd be going through a course for the instructors. Finally, this wasn't just any course; this was something altogether different—the Pat

Rogers Gunfighter course. Pat Rogers is an experienced Marine and NYPD officer who now provides training for Department of Defense and other government agencies.

His five-day course focuses on fighting with the M4 carbine at close range. "This is not a marksmanship or shooting course," Pat explained. "This course is about how to fight!"

We aren't talking about standard Army training either. Day one consisted of firing controlled pairs, hammer drills, failure drills, brain shots, NSR (Non Standard Response) drills as well as firing standing, kneeling and prone . . . then we broke for lunch.

Learning to fight with Pat means a whirlwind course where he opens up your head and pours in years of accumulated and distilled knowledge and experience. Every drill is live-fire, and as a result requires exacting attention to safety. It's a little nerve wracking, especially for a less experienced shooter like myself, but it does tend to focus your thoughts on the task at hand.



Border Patrol, Albuquerque SWAT, Homeland Security, Department of Energy and several other agencies were all represented. The chance for these Soldiers, Law Enforcement Officers and Agents to train together and network is priceless.

I learned a lot from Pat and his crew that week, but I learned just as much from the CATC instructors. Every one is a natural teacher and more than once, a casual question would turn into an instructive lesson. Pat taught me to fight with an M4. The CATC guys taught me how to clean and maintain my weapon. They educated me about gear, tactics and the hundred other questions that came up through the course. Most of the time, I didn't even realize they were teaching me, it just felt like natural conversation.

Speaking with Pat after the course, he quietly praised the CATC instructors. "Jason and his guys (1SG Riley and the CATC) are really very good to go . . . better than a great many Active Duty units in all branches." From one of the most respected tactical instructors working today, that's high praise indeed. **GX**

**GX 2.3, available online at www.gxonline.com*

For more info on Pat Rogers' courses, visit

www.eagtactical.com

For more info on CATC, email

jason.w.riley@nm.ngb.army.mil

CRITIQUE (top) Pat Rogers reviews shot placement with CW4 Richard Gwilt after a series of drills. **ROUND AND ROUND (below)** GX Departments Editor Chris West put several thousand rounds down range over the course of the week. The class started with 86,000 rounds and before it was over, had to send for more.

Fast-paced and relentless, Pat tirelessly stalks the shooting lines shouting out drills like some profane Marine version of the *Karate Kid's* Mr. Miyagi. We "wax on and wax off" with our M4s throughout the day, drilling these motions into our muscles until they become second nature.

Pat's techniques are so effective that after five days, I was no longer able to shoot a rifle of any kind without going through the drills I was taught. When we finished firing, Pat taught us to rotate the carbine, inspect the firing port, close the dust cover, safe the weapon and bring it to low ready. We did this countless times until the motions were firmly embedded in muscle memory. Recently, I had the opportunity to fire a B.A.R. and almost burned my fingers off as they automatically tried to close the non-existent dust cover.

These classes work, and that's why the CATC is here. They want the best training available, and their Adjutant General, BG Kenny Montoya, is determined to see they get it. When asked about the cost of this kind of training he told me, "It's a matter of setting priorities. My Soldiers deserve the best training they can get. We place a high priority on their training, and it pays off."

He went on to further explain that classes like Gunfighter and the CATC-style training not only taught excellent combat skills but served other purposes as well. "There is no replacement for trigger-time," the General explained. "It increases the Soldiers confidence in his weapon and his own skills."

Additionally, this training acts as an excellent recruiting and retention tool. High-speed training is, to put it simply, fun. Many Soldiers join up for the opportunity to do exactly this

kind of tactical training. In fact, during the Gunfighter course, one of the corrections officers shooting with us made the decision to join the Guard. When I asked him why, he told me, "I've always wanted to join and doing this training, working with the CATC instructors this week—seeing what great guys they are—well, it just helped me make up my mind."

This brings me to the other purpose of this class. While the CATC instructors make up the majority of the class, 1SG Riley makes a point of inviting a variety of other military and law enforcement personnel from the area. These shooters aren't randomly chosen. They represent the agencies the NMARNG will coordinate with in case of a local emergency.



What it Takes to Make Gold

By CPT Tim Irvin

Since Specialist Jill Bakken earned a gold-medal in women's bobsledding in 2002, I've wondered what it takes for an Army National Guard Soldier to compete in the Olympics. I was pretty certain there had to be other Soldiers out there with this unanswered question floating around in their heads, as well. So after doing a little research, I found out it takes athletic ability (which sadly I do not possess) and a lot of hard work (which I do my best to avoid). Realizing that my chances of being an Olympian are minuscule at best, I therefore proudly provide the following information for all you PT studs out there who still have some cartilage remaining in your knees.

There are several different paths to earning a coveted spot on a U.S. Olympic Team, all of which require you to make it through various levels of competition before becoming an Olympic contender. Depending on what sport you are interested in, the levels and the locations of the programs change.

Over 20 different sports, both Olympic and non-Olympic, are offered through the National Guard Sports Program, from individual competitions like parachuting and boxing, to team sports like rugby and basketball (For a complete list of available sports, visit www.dod.mil/armedforcesports/index.html).

In order to participate in the National Guard Sports Program, you must be a Guard member in good standing with your unit, and you must meet all military obligations. This means you must attend all drills and Annual Training, as well as any deployments assigned to your unit. Further, warrior-athletes must meet and attend all the same military schools as other Soldiers to get promoted. Being part of the program is considered a voluntarily additional duty. Let's take a look at the programs.*

THE DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAM

All Army personnel, including National Guard, are eligible to participate in the Army's Departmental Sports Program. This program, conducted by the Army's Community and Family Support Center, gives Soldiers the chance to train and compete at the highest level their athletic skills allow.

To get into the program, all you have to do is apply (see contact information at the end of the article), and if accepted, you will attend an Army Trial Camp. The Camp leads directly to Armed Forces national and international sports competitions.

Once a Guard warrior-athletic makes it to the All Army or the World Class Athlete Program level of competition, he or she can be placed on active duty during training and competitions.

Upon success at the All Army level, athletes move to the second level of competition—All Armed Forces.

After winning All Armed Forces, athletes may compete at State and/or National Championships. For some sports, results from preliminary tournaments (All Army/All Armed Forces) can be used as qualifiers for the State and National Championships.

UNIT LEVEL AND INTRAMURAL SPORTS PROGRAMS

The next level of competition is organized by the International



GOING FOR GOLD SPC Jill Bakken (R) and Vonetta Flowers sprint down the track on their way to a gold medal at the 2002 Winter Olympic Games.

Military Sports Council (CISM, which actually stands for Conseil International du Sports Militaire). The CISM and the Nationals championships are key preliminary competitions for Guard athletes who qualify to compete at the Pan American and Olympic games.

The Pan American Games are held every four years (in the year preceding the Olympic Games). It is the second most important sporting event in the world in terms of number of sports and athletes—the Olympics being number one.

Obviously, the next step is the Olympics. As you can see, it's a long road with athletes facing the highest caliber of competition along the way.

The Armed Forces Sports Programs includes 18 Armed Forces Championships, 7 National Championships and 20 International Championships

within CISM. The program is open to all National Guard personnel.

INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Unit-level and intramural sports programs provide Soldiers an opportunity to participate in a full range of individual and team sports. Emphasis is placed on mass participation at the intramural level, including instruction, practice, and competition planned for all skill levels. **GX**

Next month: The All Guard Shooting Team!

Think you have the skills to be a warrior-athlete? Contact your unit or state sports representative or contact the Armed Forces Sports Office at **1-888-875-PLAY (7529)** or via email **AFS@cfsc.army.mil**.





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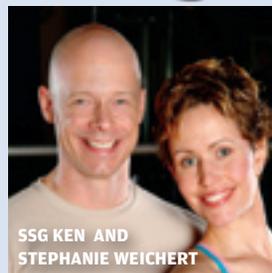
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START Fitness™

New Year Resolutions



OPERATION DIET DISSECTION™



SSG KEN AND
STEPHANIE WEICHERT

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.

By Stephanie Weichert
Group Exercise Instructor

“I WAS GOOD TODAY!”

You might think food is “good” or “bad” by the way people speak about it in society. The truth is, food isn’t good or bad; it is a carbohydrate, a protein, and a fat that is used as fuel in the body. It isn’t unusual to hear someone say, “I was good today.” I propose we change the dialogue we have surrounding food and exercise, and get down to the key issues. If eating habits could be broken down into parts, you might find the source of the last nagging 10 pounds. When a balanced diet is coupled with a steady workout regimen (including regular cardiovascular endurance exercise), you will have the opportunity to continue weight loss and keep the weight off.

Mike writes:

I read your articles in *GX* and will be trying some of them. I have to make weight for OCS; I leave in January, PT Test in a month. I’m 10 pounds over and coming off a torn ankle ligament and dislocated shoulder that kept me on the mends since March. I started working out again about a month ago and lost 10 pounds quickly, but the next 10 is a struggle along with getting in good shape and a body I like. I saw the ‘strong to the core’ workout in the latest *GX* and thought I’d go at it.



DIET DISSECTION TIME

In order to determine whether you are on the right track, simply ask yourself the same two questions I asked Mike.

Question One: What do you eat from the time you wake up until the time you go to sleep? Include the time you wake up, the time you go to sleep and your average daily food items. Remember to include daily supplements, liquids and portion sizes if possible.

Mike’s task from me was to make a simple Diet Journal. The following is Mike’s diet in his own words:

- 7:30 a.m.**—Cereal, toast or oatmeal and apple (carbohydrate and fiber).
- 11 a.m.-1p.m.**—Peanut butter and jelly sandwich or turkey sandwich with a little Mayo, lettuce and onion. Chips or cracker chips (fat, carbohydrate and protein).
- 4 p.m.**—Granola bar or pretzels (carbohydrate).
- 7 p.m. and 10p.m.**—Pasta, hamburger helper (97% lean beef), or grilled/broiled meats typically (carbohydrate and protein).

His remarks:

With dinner, I'll usually have 2% milk (carbohydrate), and water the rest of the day. IF I have a soda, I'll have no more than one Coke (carbohydrate). I'm drinking at least 64 oz. water a day.

My feedback for Mike:

Cut out the following while you are trying to lose weight:

- Peanut butter (saturated fat)
- Mayo (saturated fat)
- Chips (saturated fat and carbohydrate)
- Red Meat (fatty protein)
- Coke (carbohydrate)

Add in:

- Vegetables (carbohydrate and fiber)
- Fruit (carbohydrate and fiber)
- Water

Question Two: What do you do for a workout Monday-Sunday?

His remarks:

I work out three times/week for an hour each day, but I want to increase that. I work full-time for the National Guard at our state HQ, and we have a small weight room upstairs we can utilize. These workouts are midday during work; Wednesday is our group workout day.

My suggestions for Mike:

- Workout schedules should directly correlate with eating habits. Additionally, exercise after eating increases calorie burn.
- To keep the weight off, maintain a balanced diet (the input) and workout schedule (the output).
- Eating 4-5 smaller meals per day will increase weight loss.
- Maintaining a steady blood sugar by spacing out small meals throughout the day can accelerate weight loss.
- Increase your cardiovascular activity throughout the week (meaning, add more cardio to your workout schedule).
- Take advantage of more walking opportunities, even if you have to go around the armory. Walk at a brisk speed. Jog if you are able, but don't jog through pain (he was on profile).
- Begin doing cardiovascular endurance training for 20 minutes and then try to gradually increase your time to an average of 45-60 minutes each time.

One week later Mike wrote me back:

I dropped 5 lbs., down to 191 at 10 a.m. on Thursday.

Congratulations, Mike, for losing five pounds in one week! Good luck on losing the other five.

All the best,



HOOAH! askthetrainer@startfitness.com
Let us hear from you.

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 shortness of breath.

SPECIAL REMARKS: We encourage you to request additional information by emailing us at askthetrainer@startfitness.com and to exercise with us while watching our FIT TO FIGHT DVD series. If you are ever in San Francisco, come to our studio where Military and Family members are always FREE. Our new Military line of tubing by SPRI Products is now available at www.startfitness.com.



START Nutrition

New Year Resolutions

By Dr. Robert Portman

Following the holidays, many people make their annual New Year's resolution to get in shape. That's why January and February are called "the resolution months." Unfortunately, many people approach their new weight-loss program with ideas based on myths that are counterproductive.

The first such idea is "no pain, no gain." You try to get back in shape in one day by working out so hard you can hardly raise your arms or walk because your muscles are so sore. Since you've gained a few pounds during the holidays, you try to see how long you can go without eating after a workout. You think, "The two keys to losing weight are working out and eating less. So, why not combine them and speed up the process?" Finally, as part of your new weight-loss program, you stop eating sugar, since all those holiday desserts and sweets are what caused you to gain weight in the first place.

Most people would be very surprised to learn that the above approach will actually make getting into shape harder, not easier.

Commonly Held Misconceptions:

- ❖ Working your muscles until they are extremely sore will slow the build-up of muscle strength and prevent you from having an effective workout the next day.
- ❖ Not eating after a workout will probably cause you to gain more body fat instead of losing it.
- ❖ Eliminating simple sugars is likely to make you tired and prevent you from doing productive workouts. In fact, consuming sugar and other nutrients immediately after exercise is a great way to reduce muscle pain and accelerate fitness gains.

WHAT YOU CAN DO:

Eat within 45 minutes after exercise

❖ What many people don't realize is that the 45-minute window after exercise offers a special opportunity to use nutrition to boost your efforts to get in shape. Consuming the right combination of nutrients during this window of opportunity will build more muscle mass, prevent muscle protein breakdown (which causes muscle soreness), and replenish your muscle energy stores so you have a stronger workout the next day.

Following a workout, the enzymes responsible for building new muscle, repairing damaged muscle and replenishing muscle energy stores are activated. This period of heightened activation only lasts for about 45 minutes. For example, if you consume your nutrition immediately after a workout you will build up to nine percent more muscle mass than if you wait three hours



before eating. Studies have also shown that individuals who don't eat right after their workout consume equal or greater calories later in the day. Finally, the longer you wait after exercise to eat, the larger the percentage of those calories wind up being stored as body fat.

Drink plenty of water

❖ Having established that timing is important, the key question is what should post-exercise nutrition consist of? First off, you should drink water. Water is important to help restore your fluid balance. This will accelerate the removal of metabolic byproducts and the transport of important nutrients to the muscle.

Post-exercise nutrition should include carbs

❖ During exercise your muscles are depleted of their carbohydrate stores. Since carbohydrate is the primary energy source for muscles, it must be replenished as soon as possible. The



Dr. Robert Portman

If you have a question about nutrition in general or sports nutrition in particular, please e-mail Dr. Robert Portman at askthetrainer@startfitness.com

He will answer selected questions in an upcoming column. For more information about Dr. Portman, please refer to www.pacifichealthlabs.com.

askthetrainer@startfitness.com
[pacifichealthlabs.com](http://www.pacifichealthlabs.com)

best way to do this is to consume a drink that has carbohydrate in the form of simple sugars. Simple sugars work much better than complex ones when it comes to post-exercise nutrition because they are transported into the muscle cells much more readily, so they replenish muscle energy stores more efficiently. Remember that the metabolic window is only open for about 45 minutes.

Recovery nutrition should include protein

❖ Here is an example of where less is more. Many people make the mistake of drinking a protein shake as their recovery beverage. A protein shake consumed immediately after exercise will actually slow muscle recovery. A carbohydrate-protein sports drink is 50% more effective in stimulating protein synthesis than a protein shake. The reason is that in order for the protein to be converted into muscle mass, your body needs to stimulate enzyme pathways involved in the manufacture of muscle protein, and it's carbohydrate that provides this stimulus. The ideal ratio of carbohydrate to protein is four grams of carbohydrate per gram of protein.

When you start your New Year's weight-loss program, there are two important things to keep in mind if you want to get the most out of each and every workout. First, consume your recovery nutrition within 45 minutes after your workout. And second, using a carbohydrate-protein sports drink after exercise will help you reach your fitness and weight goals faster. **GX**



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That Machine Gun Grin

The Brothers West Descend on Knob Creek

By Chris West

The WRX growled as we put it through its paces, screaming around the tight corners of the back roads leading to our destination. As we came flying over the top of a hill and down into an open valley, the Subaru's speed started dropping back towards something resembling the posted speed limit. This wasn't a conscious choice.

Directly ahead of us, a massive plume of black smoke billowed slowly into the sky. "I think that's the place," the Younger Brother said with a tinge of awe in his voice. We followed the smoke until we found ourselves in a crowded parking lot. Apparently, several thousand other people had the same idea.

As soon as we stepped out of the car, we were hit by a wall of white noise. At first, it sounded like a waterfall but after a moment, it started to die down, and we realized that we were hearing the reports of thou-



FLAME ON The flamethrower demonstration is an awesome display of this weapon's destructive power.

sands of rounds being fired at the same time. The volume of fire was so large and constant that it was impossible to distinguish any single gunshot. We smiled at each other and grabbed the cameras. We were definitely in the right place—the Knob Creek Machine Gun Shoot.

You see, ever since we started working with the Guard, we've each had a personal goal: to fire weapons on full-automatic. We've fired semi-automatic weapons on many occasions, but access to machine guns is rather strictly controlled, making them difficult to come by

We stepped up and were told, "It works best if you just drop the entire belt at once." Well, okay. If you *insist*.

in the civilian world. So for the past several years, we've pestered you guys for access to your 240 Bravos, Ma Deuces or even an M4 on burst-fire . . . anything. There are a few variations on the theme, but the answer is always the same, "Give the Press access to machine guns?! Are you insane?! You'll shoot your eye out!" Okay, they don't say the last bit, but you get the idea.

Fine, if everyone wants to be all worried about safety, we figured we'd just find somewhere else to play. But where? There are, we under-

stand, a few places in Vegas where you can rent machine guns.

However, after the debacle that was the "Brothers West Vegas Vacation '01," we weren't sure we would be welcome back in that town. We were stuck.

Then one fateful afternoon, the History Channel ran an episode of R. Lee Ermy's "Mail Call." In this episode, the

Gunny went to a magical place called Knob Creek where you could not only shoot machine guns of every shape and variety, but could actually rent a flamethrower. Yes, for a nominal fee, you too, could spit flaming death at a variety of cars, boats and other non-standard targets. Top this off with one of the largest military gun shows in the country, and this was surely the promised land.

Knob Creek was only a couple of hours drive away, and the bi-annual shoot was right around the corner. We wrung our hands in anticipation, evil cackles slipping past our lips, as we proceeded to plan our pilgrimage.

As soon as we walked through the gate, the crowds parted and there it was—flamethrower rentals; and a demonstration was just starting. We muscled through the crowd in order to get a front row seat for a truly spectacular fireworks show.

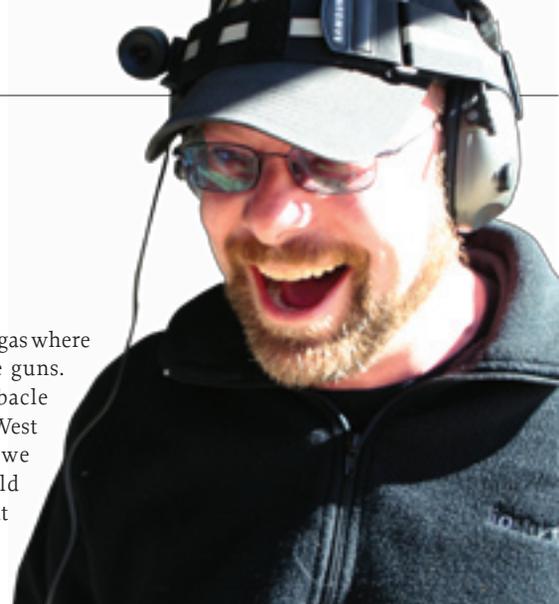
As we watched, three men armed with WWII-era flame throwers advanced on their targets, laying down huge swathes of incendiary liquids that quickly consumed everything they touched. The flames leapt into the air sending up the enormous clouds of smoke we had spotted earlier. The crowd went wild. Every time a gout of flame would shoot out, everyone would cheer, delighted by the sheer destructive power of these devices.

Frankly, we were more than a little intimidated. We'll tackle just about anything, but one look at these fifty-year-old contraptions and the inferno they produced and we flat lost our nerve. Our respect for the men who fought with these weapons in WWII went up several notches.

Cowed by the flamethrowers, we decided to reassert our manhood by wandering down to the machine gun rental area. Here, for approximately a dollar a round, you can rent and fire almost any machine gun from any era. Have you always wanted to lay it down with a Gatling

gun? Not a problem; do you prefer a Civil War-era hand-cranked Gatling, or one of the *Blackhawk Down* mini-guns? How about a stroll through the modern era? Take your pick of the M2 Browning, the SAW or the M60. Or perhaps, like us, you are a history fan and would like to take the weapons of WWII for a test drive.

Our choices for the day were the Browning Automatic Rifle (BAR), the Thompson Sub-machine gun and the .30-cal Browning 1919 belt-fed machine gun.



EAR-TO-EAR GX Departments Editor, Chris West, displays his machine gun grin at the Knob Creek Machine Gun Shoot.

The Thompson was first, and in a slight departure from the WWII theme, we opted for the larger Capone-style drum magazine. We braced ourselves for the expected recoil from the “Chicago Typewriter,” but were pleasantly surprised at how easy this gun was to handle. It weighed a ton compared to modern weaponry, but the weight kept perceived recoil to a minimum. The only disappointment was that there were no walls we could try to write our name in.

Next was the Browning Automatic Rifle, a WWII-era weapon that served much the same role the SAW does today. We have a particular affinity for this firearm, since our Uncle Henry was a decorated BAR gunner. Again, the weapon was much heavier than expected, but this turned out to be necessary to bring the recoil of its .30-06 rounds down to a manageable level.

These guns were great. We had a blast with them, but through it all, we kept glancing anxiously over at the .30 cal, which sat smoking on its mount. Yeah, baby! Crew-served weapons. That’s what we’re talkin’ about! We stepped up and were told, “It works best if you just drop the entire belt at once.” Well, okay. If you *insist*.

Ahh, full auto on a John Browning masterpiece; there’s nothing like it. We sprayed bullets downrange, walking fire from target-to-target. When we finished, we turned to each other with huge smiles on our faces. We had discovered the machine gun grin—the irrepressible smile on the face of everyone who gets to fire these weapons for fun.

We wandered around the gun show for a while but, due to time constraints, had to leave before the highlight of the weekend, the night shoot. After the sun sets, a line of machine guns commence firing tracer ammo downrange into cars, boats and almost anything else they can drag onto the range. Add in exploding targets, and you’ve got the ultimate, testosterone-fueled activity. This was a great way to spend a weekend. If the NRA had a theme park, it would be the Knob Creek Machine Gun Shoot. **GX**

The next shoot is scheduled for the weekend of April 13, 2007. For more info, visit www.knobbcreekrange.com/shootinfo.htm. Just make sure to look around for the grinning idiots in the GX t-shirts—that’ll be us.



Pursuit of Honor

The Rise of George Washington

Here at *GX*, we’ve all become fans of the various documentary channels over the years. But, as it turns out, cable isn’t the only place you can find excellent historical programming. Paladin Communications has recently released a superb piece on the life of George Washington entitled, *Pursuit of Honor*.

This independently produced documentary covers the life of George Washington, between the French and Indian Wars and the beginning of the Revolutionary War. The film is a fascinating peek at the man behind the symbol. It reveals an important period in the life of Washington that we rarely see—his marriage to Martha Custis, his relationship with his step children and an insightful analysis of the motives that drove him to his destiny.

The film is available for purchase at www.gwmovie.net



LET IT RIP *GX* Editor-in-Chief, Jason West, cuts loose with a WWII-era Browning Automatic Rifle.

Legendary Patriot *GX* Hero Charlie Daniels

By Keith Kawasaki

It's 1956 and Charlie Daniels steps onstage before a crowd of Marines huddled in a small bar outside Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, along the damp Atlantic coast.

A three-piece band shuffle around the then-20-year-old singer and guitar picker.

Within a moment, they launch into a set of rockin' rhythm and blues—and the house is jumpin'.

Fifty years later, Charlie Daniels is stepping onstage before hundreds of Army National Guard Soldiers gathered together in the 110-degree Iraqi heat in the middle of a combat zone.

The legendary Charlie Daniels Band stands ready beside their 69-year-old front man. And in a moment, they're tearing up a thunder like you never heard—and the ground is shaking.

Of course, the ground always shakes at a Charlie Daniels Band (CDB) show. The band is white hot. Throughout a career spanning half a century, they've racked up their share of hits. We all know "Devil Went Down To Georgia," "The South's Gonna Do It Again," "Still in Saigon," and folks across the world embrace "The Legend of the Wooley Swamp," "Right Now Tennessee Blues," "Trudy," and a thousand other CDB songs as the soundtrack of their lives. More than a legend of rock, country, Christian and bluegrass music, Charlie Daniels has come to personify and produce distinctly American music—music that bursts with pride like the fireworks on the Fourth of July, dwells in the deep remembrance of Memorial Day, and parties like the workingman on Friday night. Yet, at the same time, Daniels is the driven advocate for military support, military discipline, and the American way of life. His list of awards and recognitions is endless, reaching beyond the music industry. In September, he was honored with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Hall of Fame Award. At the VFW ceremony, then-Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld exclaimed if he could sing, he'd sing "The Star Spangled Banner" like Charlie Daniels. VFW had several prominent people on their list of possible recipients, but when the name Charlie Daniels came up, all others went out the window. Just before Thanksgiving, Daniels received the Seven Seals award from the Employer Support for Guard and Reserve (ESGR). >>>





>>> According to the ESGR Web site, the prestigious recognition is awarded to those who have made “significant contributions to the welfare of those that serve.” During the ceremony held in Nashville, TN, at the Charlie Daniels’ Museum, members of the 779th Maintenance Co., TNARNG, also presented Daniels with a fiddle bow. Daniels had passed the bow to WO1 Lance Jenkins of the 779th prior to his unit’s deployment to Iraq in June ‘05. When Daniels met up with the Soldiers in Iraq, WO1 Jenkins attempted to return the bow. Daniels instructed the young Soldier to return it when he came back home to Tennessee. Now, having returned in June of ‘06, WO1 Jenkins finally presented the bow to Daniels at the ESGR ceremony. Though Daniels was deeply honored by the ESGR recognition, you could see as he hugged that Soldier tight, he was even more moved by the Soldier’s safe return. Both the bow and the ESGR award are now displayed in the Museum.

Since 1990, the CDB has toured over 20 times for a specifically military audience, including two tours throughout Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Iraq: now that’s tours, not individual shows. When the CDB hit the sand in ‘05 and ‘06, the band was playing as many as three shows a day. And, there is no record of how many military-centric shows and tours Daniels ran in the 34 years of performances prior to ‘90.

GX Departments Editor Chris West caught one of the CDB Iraq shows while embedded with the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) last April. West witnessed firsthand the immense heart of Charlie Daniels in action, writing in his GX milblog:

“He met with Soldiers before and after the concert . . . glad to do anything he could to put a smile on their faces. His tireless work, his willingness to put himself in harm’s way to bring these men and women a little taste of home mark him as a true American hero.”

CPT Gary J. Windels, 1/34th BCT Historical Officer/Public Affairs Project Officer currently deployed to Iraq, was also on site and shared this comment: “It was great. The outdoor area where they hold concerts is quite large, and it was still packed. When he played ‘The Devil Went Down to Georgia,’ the crowd went nuts.”

Stars for Stripes, a nonprofit organization that brings headlining entertainment overseas to perform for Soldiers, brought the CDB to five bases in Korea this past October. President/CEO Judy G. Seale wrote of the trip in her online journal at www.starsforstripes.com: “You would not believe how many people came through the line and said, ‘I saw you in Iraq or Kuwait or here in Korea in so and so.’ [T]hey REMEMBER Charlie’s visit.”

I had the honor to chat with Daniels throughout ‘05 to ‘06. In this period, Daniels conducted ten support tours and carried out Operation Heartstrings. The brainchild of Daniels, Operation Heartstrings brought hundreds of guitars, amps, mikes, and electronics to Morale, Welfare, and Recreation centers in Iraq. Mississippi National Guard transported the pallets.

“I’ve always been patriotic,” expressed Daniels, describing the roots of his fiery support for American troops. “My patriotism comes from the second World War era. I remember when Pearl Harbor was bombed. Where I came from in North Carolina was a coastal town.

And we used to have German U-Boats that sat out off the mouth of the Cape Fear River that used to sink the oil tankers that used to come in. It was a very serious thing to us. We had the ‘Loose Lips Sink Ships’-type things around. There was so much heroism in the second World War—so much sacrifice and heroism. We were involved in a struggle to decide which way the Planet Earth was gonna go. It was called World War II for a reason. And we did everything. Kids could collect everything. Newspapers, tin cans, *used cooking grease*—everything went to play a small part in the war effort. And everybody was into it. There was something everybody could do. And that’s where my brand of patriotism comes from. It’s very strong. It’s very hot.”

Daniels first turned that intense patriotism into song with “In America” in 1980, a response to the Iran Hostage Crisis. He retooled the song in ‘01 after September 11th. Once again, the song struck a match in hearts nationwide.

Lyrics for this rousing anthem include the lines: “We may have done a little bit of fighting amongst ourselves / But you outside people best leave us alone / ‘Cause we’ll all stick together and you can take that to the bank / That’s the cowboys and the hippies and the rebels and the yanks / You just go and lay your hand on a Pittsburgh Steelers fan / And I think you’re gonna finally understand.”

In ‘82, CDB again tapped into the heart of America by making a classic out of Dan Daley’s “Still In Saigon,” the long overdue look into the sacrifices of our Vietnam Veterans.

“You know, I’ve never been in service, and I can’t really crawl inside somebody’s head and say exactly what it was like to be in Vietnam. I felt kind of funny about doing the song because it was in the first person. And I didn’t want anybody to think that I was trying to speak for the people who had this experience. It was the first time anybody had been able to get back from a war in two days instead of sitting back on a ship. One day, you’re in Vietnam, and the next you’re walking through a bunch of hippies in San Francisco. It had to be one of the most harrowing, one of the most

confusing situations that people ever got into . . . So I asked some people, ‘You were in Vietnam; how would you feel about me doing this song?’ And they said, ‘Do it.’ It seemed like a song that could more or less personify the feelings that a lot of the Vets had, that maybe gave a little legitimacy to what they were feeling. If you remember, it was the first pro-Vietnam Veterans’ song to kind of explain the situation that I know of.”

The CDB continued to record a string of patriotic songs throughout the ‘90s and into the 00’s, one of the most poignant being “This Ain’t No Rag, It’s a Flag” on the *Freedom and Justice for All* album of 2003. Very much in the vein of “In America,” “Ain’t No Rag” is a barreling and electric anthem that boldly and quite frankly voices Daniels’ unapologetic love for this country:

“These colors don’t run and we’re speaking as one. . . When you mess with one, you mess with us all . . . This is the United States of America / The land of the brave and the free / We believe in God and we believe in justice / We believe in liberty.”

The album and single coincided with Daniels’ book that year, *Ain’t No Rag: Freedom, Family, and the Flag*, published by Regnery Publishing, Inc. These days, Daniels garners just as much attention for what he’s



TRUE HONOR Charlie Daniels accepts the prestigious Seven Seals award from ESGR late November at the Charlie Daniels’ Museum in Nashville, TN.

saying as what he's singing. He makes frequent appearances on TV and radio talk shows. His online journal, *The Soapbox*, which is published on his official Web site, has become a welcome voice for many patriotic folks who are fed up with liberal politicians and Hollywood values. Daniels offers almost daily entries declaring a need for America to continue to stand with our Soldiers, to pray for our Soldiers, get tough on foreign policy, and keep the Ten Commandments close to our heart. The latter is his strongest endorsement as it is the foundation for his life.

"My rock is my faith," Daniels explained. "The Bible speaks of peace that goes beyond understanding—and that's what I had in Iraq, both times that I've gone. We got shot at one night in a helicopter. While we were going to one of the outlying bases, the base we were on got mortared. And, I never had a problem. I had this great peace about me. Hey, I'm in God's hands. I got a lot of good people praying for me back home. That's not only my rock, that's *the rock*. When I was a child, I was raised in a Christian home, but I didn't understand. It took me a

welcome you in like an old friend—and in a second, stare you dead in the eye and tell ya just like it is—then let out a big ol' laugh putting you right back home. No doubt his genuine nature despite his legendary status is what helped him to earn respect of military leadership and even U.S. Presidents.

Tennessee National Guard Adjutant General MG Gus Hargett contributed this comment to *GX*:

"I've had the privilege of traveling with Charlie on several occasions and I am always impressed by his desire to entertain America's military! He has an innate ability to relate to all ages and the troops love him. He is a true American icon!"

In 1998, President Gerald Ford said of Daniels, "Charlie's love of music is only surpassed by his love of people, especially the American people."

Having just turned 70, after finishing the fall tour through Korea, you'd think Charlie Daniels would be ready to join his peers. Maybe retire and focus on his golf game? Not a chance. Driven by Daniels'

Charlie's love of music is only surpassed by his love of people, especially the American people. — former President Gerald Ford

long time to understand what it actually was to commit your life to Christ. I used to think you had to be good enough. Nobody can be good enough. And, God knows that."

"The 91st Psalm, I've committed it to heart," continued Daniels. "It's the Psalm of protection. 'We live in the shadow of the Almighty, sheltered by the God who is above all gods... He alone is my refuge. My place of safety is my God and I'm trusting Him.' That's a very special thing to me. The thing about the stuff in the Bible, those are not empty words. Those are promises. I certainly don't understand it all. But I do know that the things that are in it are true. If we could trust God in every instance of our lives, we would be so much better off."

The thing about Charlie Daniels is he isn't just talking the talk to *GX* because we're a military-minded audience. Daniels walks the God-fearing and patriotic walk every day all across this world. He is involved in a long list of charities including St. Jude's Children's Hospital, cancer research, and The Angelus—a residential home and school for the severely handicapped. At his annual fan club party this past summer, Daniels featured a wounded Veteran who sang the National Anthem before anyone took the stage. The CDB set list for a support show doesn't deter much from any other night along the tour, which really makes every show, all year long a support show. He still plays at least two or three overtly patriotic and Christian songs every night, often including "The Star Spangled Banner."

Then, on top of this, Daniels did the unheard of. He changed lyrics to some of his most-loved songs to censor out cuss words and drug references. You can catch the revised versions of "Devil Went Down to Georgia" and "Long-Haired Country Boy," together with other re-recordings on the *Essential Super Hits* release from 2004. How did he get away with that and still hang on to his immense and dedicated following? Can you imagine the Rolling Stones altering the lyrics to "Tumblin' Dice" or the Steve Miller Band altering "The Joker?" Yet, night after night, CDB jams their biggest hits with new lyrics, and none turn away because the CDB still sounds so darn good.

Daniels is a master musician and master entertainer. After all, this is the man who helped create the finest, most intricate jams birthed from this nation with the Marshall Tucker Band, Lynyrd Skynyrd, the Allman Brothers Band and more—that superb blend of country, rock, blues and jazz known as Southern Rock. Daniels first made his mark in the '50s and '60s writing songs for Elvis, recording around Nashville and playing session work on three Bob Dylan albums. Daniels will

powerful dedication to God and the American Soldier, the CDB is railing into 2007 with tremendous momentum. As I write this, the CDB is gearing up another month and a half of back-to-back dates from Pennsylvania to Arizona to Florida. He's got two studio releases set to jump in '07. One features duets with top artists like Brad Paisley and Gretchen Wilson, and one blazing rock album. In addition, he's finishing up a killer live disc sure to rock your socks off—*The Charlie Daniels Band: Live In Iraq*.

"Our troops are just *the best*," concluded Daniels, recalling his time with America's deployed service members. "They're the best that America has to offer. Absolutely. There's no doubt in my mind. When you look at the U.S. Military, we've got a volunteer army here. Just literally, they're *the best* we've got. And they deserve to be treated as such." **GX**

SOUTHERN ROCK IN THE SANDBOX SFC Randy Harris (right), Public Affairs Director for the Tennessee National Guard jams with the Charlie Daniels Band at FOB Cobra, Iraq, while the band was visiting the 3rd Squadron 278th RCT in 2005.



THE BEST DEFENSE...



SPC RICHARD GHENT, A NEW HAMPSHIRE NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIER, SERVED AS A GUNNER WITH BRAVO TROOP 1-104TH CAVALRY (1-172ND ARMOR), STATIONED AT CAMP RAMADI, IRAQ.



ON STATION AS SECURITY AT A RIVER BRIDGE CHECKPOINT ON MARCH 1, 2006, THE SNOW STORMERS' AVERAGE DAY WAS ABOUT TO BECOME SEVERE.

AN INSURGENT ASSAULT FORCE ATTACKED WITH FEROCITY...



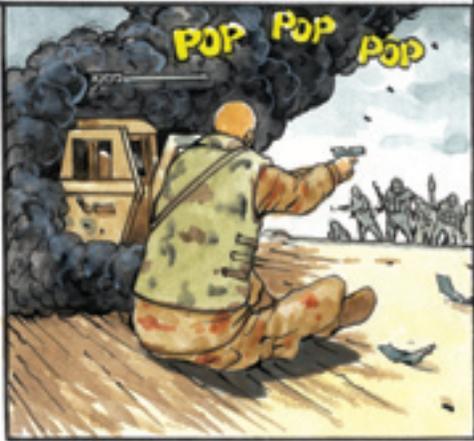
GRENADE!



THA BOOM

WITH THE DRIVER, SPC CHRISTOPHER MERCHANT, KIA AND VEHICLE COMMANDER, SSG JOSE PEQUENO SERIOUSLY INJURED, ONLY SPC GHENT, ALSO PEPPERED BY THE GRENADE, COULD CONTINUE THE FIGHT.

EJECTED FROM THE DESTROYED VEHICLE WITH HIS M-4 CARBINE OUT OF REACH, SPC GHENT DREW HIS 9MM PISTOL AND ENGAGED THE ADVANCING ENEMY.



POP POP POP

DAZED AND WITHOUT ANY BENEFIT OF COVER OR CONCEALMENT, SPC GHENT CHARGED THE INSURGENT FORCE, DEMONSTRATING GREAT COURAGE...



...AND DROVE THE ENEMY AWAY FROM THE OBSERVATION POST. HE HELD HIS GROUND UNTIL HE WAS RELIEVED BY HIS PLATOON PATROLLING MSR MOBILE...



POP POP POP

...AND A DUSTOFF COULD BE PERFORMED. FOR HIS HEROISM AND BRAVERY UNDER ENEMY FIRE, WHICH RESULTED IN PREVENTING THE ANNIHILATION OF HIS CREW, SPC RICHARD GHENT WAS AWARDED THE SILVER STAR FOR VALOR IN THE FACE OF THE ENEMY.



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