

GX

THE GUARD EX

VOLUME THREE ISSUE FIVE
SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2006

OPERATION: JUMP START
**ARNG DEPLOYS TO
MEXICAN BORDER**

HOW YOU CAN AVOID
IDENTITY THEFT

LOWER BODY WORKOUT
FOR EVERY BODY

**THE WAY AHEAD
LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE
OF THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD**



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Letter from Leadership

Dear Soldiers,

On behalf of all Tennesseans, I want to thank all those who proudly wear the National Guard uniform for their steadfast service to neighbors, state, and country. All of Tennessee appreciates your service, past and present, during critical times in our nation and state's history.

As Governor, I have the honor and responsibility to serve as Commander in Chief of the Tennessee National Guard. I have had the privilege of seeing our troops in action at home, during the recent tornadoes in West Tennessee, and abroad, when I was honored to visit our troops in the Middle East.

Since September 11, more than 10,000 troops have deployed to serve overseas in the global war against terror. We have seen the largest deployment of Tennessee National Guard members in active duty since World War II. These men and women put their lives on hold, left their families and put themselves in harm's way to do what their nation asked of them. We are humbled by their courage and will continue to pray for their safe and speedy return.

When devastation hit at home, Tennessee's troops were also there. National Guardsmen and women traveled to Middle and West Tennessee to help neighbors affected by last year's storms, lending a helping hand, a calming presence and a strong arm that meant so much during desperate times.

Recently, our nation again called for help, and again, Tennessee's troops answered. In July, we deployed Guardsmen and women to Arizona to assist the U.S. Border Patrol in securing our nation's borders as part of Operation Jump Start. Our Soldiers will provide crucial support for this effort, and as the mission continues, we plan to rotate 500 troops to the Southwest.

With all that Tennessee's Guardsmen and women do for our state, it's only right that we at home do all we can for them. That's why I signed Executive Order No. 4, establishing special pay for state employees when they're called to active duty. It's also why we fought so hard to keep our beloved 118th Air Lift Wing at home. The 118th is a critical part of our ability to respond quickly to disasters, and we couldn't do without it.

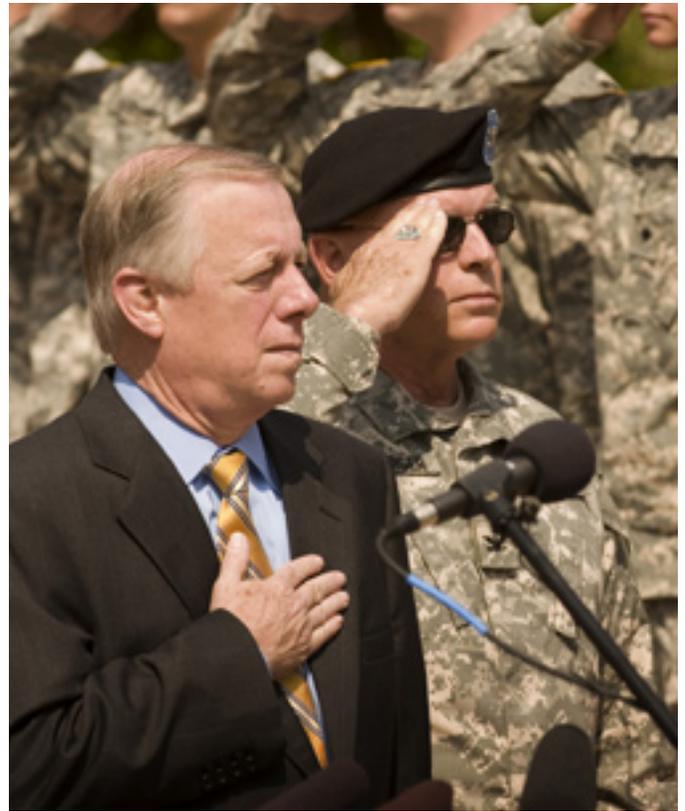
Tennessee National Guard is part of a proud family of men and women who serve and have served our country in the armed forces for over two centuries. Your service is not a requirement. It is a responsibility, a calling—one which you and thousands before you have taken voluntarily. It is this volunteer spirit that gives strength to our democracy and life to the rights we enjoy as Americans.

Again, thank you for all you do. You have made your families, your state, your nation, and your Governor very proud.

Warmest regards,



Phil Bredesen
Governor, Tennessee



Governor Phil Bredesen visiting Tennessee Soldiers in Southwest Asia



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Border Duty and the Global Guard

As promised, we kicked Departments Editor Chris West out of the office and down to the U.S.-Mexico border for a first-hand scoop on Op Jump Start. Aided by the invaluable support of Public Affairs Offices from all four border states, Chris was able to pull together a little Border Duty 101 (Operation Jump Start, p. 48), providing much-needed insight into this new mission. Through several interviews with top commanders and hours of field work, Chris relays what you can expect from this deployment now and in the coming months.

Our primary feature, The Way Ahead (p. 36), details the future of the Guard, which promises greater innovation within the system, increased organization, and greater benefits—all the while further dispelling any tired rumors of the Guard being irrelevant, unprepared, or "spread too thin." Of course, all you really have to do to ease your worried mind is to read the Intel section (p. 10), chock full of real news stories—real hero stories—of Soldiers operating more relevantly, more abundantly, and more preparedly than ever before across the globe, right this very moment.

This issue's Intel showcases Guard units in Missouri, New York, and Pennsylvania battling storms and flood waters, while rescuing thousands. New Hampshire Soldiers travel to El Salvador to provide medical aid to villagers, while receiving crucial field training. Virgin Islands Guard Soldiers forge beneficial and lasting relationships with Iraqi villagers, and Soldiers in Florida take time to help 140 kids build confidence and redirect their lives. One thing never ceases to amaze us: the global and varied nature of Guard service.

On a similar note, take a look at the Victory Map (p. 52). Now take control of it. We know you guys are operating in more than just four countries. This map is in dire need of information. Send us your stories so we can accurately display the Guard presence worldwide! We accept information from all Soldiers, not just Public Affairs. Send your victories to editor@gxonline.com and write "Victory Map" in the subject line.

Thank you,

The GX Team

ON THE COVER

SSG Eric Ramsey of Greenville, NC watches the horizon for signs of movement on the U.S./Mexican Border at Wellton, Arizona. The 252 Combined Arms Battalion, NCARNG is currently deployed here for their annual training, and are working with U.S. Border Patrol in support of Operation Jumpstart.

PHOTO BY TECH SGT BRIAN E. CHRISTIANSEN, NCANG

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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Published by Iostudio, LLC.

Mail: GX Magazine
c/o Iostudio, LLC
1625 Broadway, Third Floor
Nashville, TN 37203

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UNTOLD SACRIFICES

First, let me say, I have been receiving GX while my fiancé has been deployed to Iraq and I enjoy reading it. It gives me insight into the National Guard which, as an almost-spouse of a Guard Soldier, is very helpful.

While my fiancé has been deployed, our first child was born. Unfortunately, we found out I was pregnant the day he left for training, so he wasn't here for any of my pregnancy nor the [premature and difficult] birth of our child. He is still currently in Iraq, but was able to see his son for about 10 days, on leave.

That is my story, and I am contacting you to bring attention to the fact that a lot of deployed, military people are coping with this same issue—having children they have never seen. Many people don't realize this is a sacrifice a lot of young Soldiers are having to make to protect our country. Unfortunately, this is one of many sacrifices they are making, especially on the homefront, that aren't always recognized by society.

Do you have any children? Did you see the birth? Was the first six months of your child's life spent with you? If so, you understand the importance of such things. As a future military spouse, I thank you and appreciate the opportunity to contact you with my information/opinion.

Thank you
Amy McManama

Dear Ms. McManama,

I believe that you and your fiancé have made one of the greatest sacrifices possible in the service of our nation. I do have a baby girl of my own, so I have a great deal of empathy for what you both have been through and continue to go through.

Pregnancy is an overwhelming experience under the best of circumstances, and you went through it without the physical presence of your partner. Impending fatherhood is also a heavy load to bear, and I can only imagine how unnerving it was for your Soldier to be so far away when his wife-to-be and child were struggling. Witnessing his son's birth and seeing the boy grow for the first six months are experiences your fiancé will never be able to recover, and I can attest they are precious memories.

However, these missed events were not given without return. Your Soldier is working not only to improve his family's life, but the lives of people around the world. He is helping make a brighter future for his own son and countless other children. You are exactly correct that few people understand, much less appreciate, the massive sacrifices made by Soldiers and their families, in service of our nation.

But you know the true cost of liberty, the price paid so your son can grow up free and proud. You

and your family will value these gifts and each other more, knowing what it has cost. Also, know that there are some of us who do see what you have sacrificed and are more deeply grateful than we will ever be able to express. As I have prayed for my daughter, so too have I prayed in gratitude for you, and all Guard Families, knowing that you are helping ensure my little girl's future.

Jason West
Editor, GX Magazine

A CAUSE WORTH THANKING

As I prepare to leave for Iraq within the next month, I would like to take the time to thank one company for their care and support of the troops. The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf put together a really great program called "Operation Troop Cheer," in which customers can bring in items that our deployed Soldiers might need, in exchange for a free drink of their choice.

Working with the Recruiting Command gave me the chance to help promote this effort through local news stations. I just wanted to say thank you to The Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf and let them know their support is very much so appreciated.

Thank you,
SPC Sara Pickering
San Diego, CA

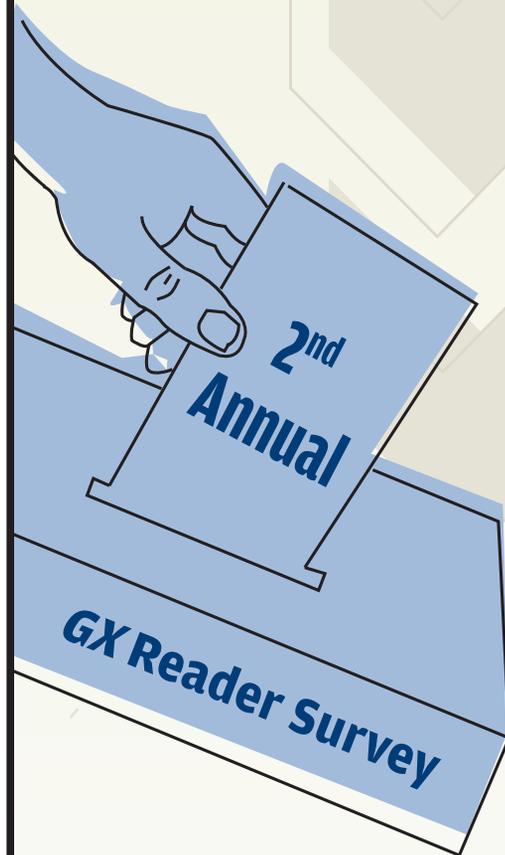


COMMUNITY EFFORT (Top row) Fox 6 News anchors Marc Bailey and Anita Lightfoot, and (bottom row) ARNG Soldiers SSG Hernandez, SPC Pickering, SSG Herrera, and MSG Leavitt.

CORRECTION

GX Vol. 3, Issue 4 (July/Aug.), p. 40 The article "G-RAP Update: Success Across the States" features several small articles from Public Affairs teams. The New York section is incorrectly credited to Kent Kisselbrack of the NY Division of Military and Naval Affairs. The section was written by MAJ Kathy Sweeney.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU



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NICK OF TIME SGT Justin Fulk, PAARNG, rescues a stranded resident near Mohrsville, PA just before his tractor is washed away.

PA GUARD COMBATS RISING WATERS

Courtesy PAARNG PAO

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP—More than 1,000 members of the Pennsylvania National Guard were involved in water rescues, evacuations and other emergency operations during widespread flooding that caused a disaster emergency to be declared in 46 of the state's 67 counties.

Pennsylvania National Guard personnel were involved in nearly 1,000 water rescues after a state of emergency was declared June 27 by Gov. Edward G. Rendell. Guard members also assisted with security, distributing food, delivering military water buffaloes and helping Pennsylvania State Police man control points.

"Things are going very well operationally," said COL Xavier Stewart, PAARNG emergency operations coordinator in a July release. "When you have a mission in your backyard, people really want to serve." The Guard's operation center supported "Operation Washout" through early July, and "washout" was not too strong of a term. In some areas more than eight inches of rain fell. In northeastern and southeastern Pennsylvania, along the Susquehanna and Delaware watersheds, water levels reached record levels.

In the northeast, it passed the historic 1972 Agnes flood, considered by many as the most historic flood in this region of Pennsylvania. During the emergency, tens of thousands of people were evacuated from the city of Wilkes-Barre. Guard aviators flew more than 55 hours using CH-47 and UH-1 helicopters to assist in the evacuations. During one mission, they flew to the small town of Conklin, NY, just over the Pennsylvania border, to rescue residents trapped by floodwaters. Residents of Conklin and the surrounding area were evacuated from their homes as the Susquehanna River rose to nearly 30 feet. Local officials evacuated over 4,000 residents to the Susquehanna Valley High School in Conklin, but as the river continued to rise the school became surrounded by water, trapping the evacuees.

Crews from the 2/104th Aviation Battalion and 628th Aviation Support Battalion were part of the aviation team. The PA Guard dispatched five Chinooks to transport the evacuees from the high school to buses that transported them to emergency shelters.

One of the crews was led by MAJ John Kubitz and CWO Patrick Quinton. They maneuvered their CH-47 Chinook around power lines and trees to land on the football field of the high school.

Once on the ground, crew members SGT Carl Hinton, SGT Dan Schmick, SGT Gregory Karli and SGT Justin Reynolds took charge of leading the evacuees onto the helicopter and securing them for the flight.

SSG Greg Heinbaugh and SGT William Wrede were crew members on another Chinook when a call came in that three people were trapped on a rooftop. With nowhere to land, their crew was forced to hover over the house while SGT Wrede was lowered in a jungle penetrator to rescue the residents. SSG Heinbaugh was responsible for operating the hoist and directing the pilots.

Gov. Rendell praised the Guard for its efforts. "The storm system devastated a large portion of the commonwealth," Governor Rendell said. "Our National Guard performed superbly in what was many times a difficult and dangerous environment." **GX**

Our National Guard performed superbly in . . . a difficult and dangerous environment.—Ed Rendell, PA Governor

GUARD PROVIDES RESCUE, RECOVERY DURING NORTHEAST FLOODS

By SSG Peter Towse, NYARNG PAO

WALTON, NY—Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard’s 204th Engineer Battalion worked alongside the residents here to help bring relief from the catastrophe wrought by the flooding of the town on June 28.

“We were on duty in the first hour of this disaster,” NY Adjutant General MG Joseph J. Taluto said during a commander’s reconnaissance of New York’s southern tier on June 29, as the rains moved out of the region. “We were very busy (Wednesday). We’re coming to the conclusion of the rescue-evacuation part, and now we’re starting to look forward to the next set of mission requirements where we could be helpful to the community as it starts to get itself back on its feet.”

In New York’s Broome County, officials evacuated more than 4,000 residents to the Susquehanna Valley High School in Conklin, but as the river continued to rise, the school became surrounded by water, trapping the evacuees. The Pennsylvania Guard responded with five CH-47 helicopters and coordinated with 204th Engineer Battalion Soldiers on the ground to transport more than a thousand evacuees from the high school to a nearby fire station for ground transportation to emergency shelters (*see previous page*).

The Citizen-Soldier cited for coordinating the aircraft response, SSG David Youngs from the 204th Engineer Battalion Headquarters and Service Company, received an impact award for his initiative and quick thinking.

“It just made sense to me,” SSG Youngs described later from the Walton village emergency operations center. “I saw the aircraft nearby and arranged to get their radio frequencies with call back to battalion (in Binghamton)—a quick radio call and we were in business.”

Guard members from central New York towns such as Horseheads, Binghamton and Walton converged on the town to offer their

assistance and support to help those who have lost so much due to the rain’s damage.

Timing is everything in such a crisis, and the Soldiers’ annual training conducted just two weeks prior to the flooding proved essential to the unit’s response.

“Our guys were at their peak for this mission,” said MAJ Carlton Cleveland, 204th Engineer Battalion Commander. “Two weeks of training in early June gave our equipment operators and planners plenty of preparation. When the call came, we hit the ground running.”

With water levels higher than they had been in 100 years, Main Street in Walton turned into a canal of thick mud with water rising in some places to five feet. The rushing waters washed-out roads and parking lots, moving cars, and the garages they were in, downstream.

“Everything in my store was floating about the place,” said Anna Nochtka, a Walton small business owner. “There isn’t much that I will be able to save. I don’t know what I would have done without the help of [the Engineers].”

Ten years ago, the Guard responded to Southern Tier flooding, but local residents say the scope of damage back then doesn’t compare. “We had the Guard out in ’96,” said Marty Way, a local resident whose home

received extensive water damage. “But it was nothing like this.”

As the waters receded, the National Guard quickly moved from emergency response and civilian evacuations to providing an assessment of the damage. Working with local officials and town road construction crews and using Humvees and Blackhawk helicopters to quickly move from site to site, The Guard was able to determine a course of action to restore the washed out critical areas that stranded some residents from the rest of the town.

Quickly, residents and Soldiers formulated a plan to remove all the waste material threatening critical roads, bridges, key businesses and homes of the town. Assisting emergency responders, the National Guard engineers quickly surveyed damaged roads to ensure access to police, fire and emergency vehicles.

In a matter of hours, residents in communities across the Southern Tier began to rebound with the help of the Guard. Less than 72 hours after the heavy rains, local residents could see the impact of the Guard’s response. Engineers moved from house to house, business to business, and removed the refuse with heavy equipment, making an impossible cleanup seem easy.

“We stay until we’re told to go home,” MG Taluto said. **GX**



UPROOTED NYARNG Soldiers from the 204th Engineering Battalion clean up fallen trees in Walton, NY in the wake of severe storms and flooding.

V-RAP UNVEILED ALONG WITH NEW YORK STATEWIDE "GUARD FOCUS"

Courtesy of New York Div. of Military and Naval Affairs

NY—On June 14th, New York Governor George E. Pataki unveiled legislation to create a new Veterans Recruiter Assistance Program (V-RAP), a new incentive plan for Veterans who successfully recruit new individuals to join the New York National Guard. The Governor also announced the launch of a new statewide "Guard Focus" campaign—an informational campaign designed to educate New Yorkers about the opportunities and benefits of joining the New York Army National Guard.

"At no other time in America's history have the men and women of the New York National Guard played so critical a role in both the security of our State and nation than today," Governor Pataki said. "Even as we face challenges in Homeland Security funding, we must do all we can to ensure that we continue to have a National Guard that is ready to respond to any threat, and our new Veterans Recruiter Assistance Program and statewide Guard Focus campaign, will help us significantly in strengthening our troop levels by promoting the recruitment of new volunteers who will join the ranks of our dedicated Citizen-Soldiers who work everyday to protect our communities and keep New York safe.

"I can think of no better way to commemorate the 229th birthday of our nation's flag than to encourage New Yorkers to volunteer to serve our State and Nation in the New York National Guard," the Governor added.

The new Veterans Recruiter Assistance Program (V-RAP) and "Guard Focus" campaign are designed to help maintain the ability of the New York Army and Air National Guard

to capably respond to emergencies and defend against terrorism.

The Governor's legislation creating a new Veterans Recruiter Assistance Program would offer a \$500 incentive bonus, encouraging Veterans to become independent recruiters, sharing their experiences with prospective entrants, helping to attract new volunteers. The program is available to Veterans who have served in the active and reserve armed forces of the United States and the New York National Guard.

The new statewide Guard Focus campaign is an informational campaign designed to educate New Yorkers about the opportunities and benefits of joining the New York Army National Guard and calls on community leaders from across the State to help identify and encourage individuals who are interested in joining.

After the June 14th announcement, the Division for Military and Naval Affairs began conducting a statewide campaign, partnering

with local elected officials in an effort to raise awareness about the National Guard and the many benefits available to new recruits.

Since 1995, Governor Pataki has called on the National Guard to respond to bliz-

zards, floods, ice storms, wildfires, tornadoes, mud slides, the TWA Flight 800 disaster, and the terrorist attacks of September 11th in New York City. In addition, the National Guard continues to provide additional security at Grand Central and Penn Stations in Manhattan and at nuclear power sites around the state.

This latest announcement builds on the Governor's longstanding record of providing members of the National Guard with additional support. The Governor



CONTINUED SUPPORT Governor of New York, George Pataki, continued his track record of Guard support with the unveiling of V-RAP, a new incentive plan for Veterans to recruit new individuals into the New York Guard, as well as the new "Guard Focus" campaign designed to educate New Yorkers about the opportunities and benefits of the NYARNG.

previously signed into law Patriot Plans I, II, and III—the first of their kind in the entire nation providing a comprehensive package of benefits and enhanced protections for New York's military personnel and their families. Highlights of the Plans include:

Protection against Military Status Discrimination: Expands the protections of the Human Rights Law to military personnel to ensure that he or she is not discriminated against in housing, employment, public accommodations, or credit applications.

Interest Rate Cap on Installment Loans: Caps rates of interest on installment loans at 6 percent while the individual is on state active duty.

Health Insurance Benefits: Directs the Insurance Department to protect the rights of military personnel to continue, suspend or convert health insurance benefits during periods of active duty. Also requires the Division of Veterans' Affairs to make health provider information concerning military-related illnesses, such as Gulf War Syndrome and Hepatitis C, available to military personnel and their families via a 1-800 telephone hotline.

We have come through a period of great challenges and achievement, and the New York National Guard has come out on the other side a proven, competent and confident force.

—MG Joseph J. Taluto, NY Adjutant General

State Family Liaison Officers: Directs the Adjutant General to designate Family Liaison Officers to assist families of military personnel during periods of deployments ordered by Presidential or Congressional directives.

MERIT Scholarship Program: Provides the children, spouses and dependents of New York military personnel killed or severely and permanently disabled during the Persian Gulf conflict (retroactive to 1990), the war on terrorism, or the current military action in Iraq with undergraduate awards to cover the cost of attending institutions of the State University or City University, or a commensurate amount to attend a private college or university in New York State.

Educational Military Leave of Absence and Tuition Relief: Requires colleges and universities to provide educational military leave of absence for students called to active duty.

Retirement Loan Repayment: Permits the suspension of loan payments for public employees who borrowed against their retirement system savings while such employees are engaged in active duty.

Electronic Transfer of Paychecks: Provides that paychecks of public employees activated for foreign deployments will be made by electronic transfer of funds unless such employee opts not to have such payments made in such manner.

Employer Recognition: Creates a "NY-USA Proud" employer of distinction award to recognize companies that show exceptional support for military reservists and National Guard members.

Evictions: Prohibits evictions of a member of a Soldier's family during a period of active duty military service. Extends mortgage foreclosure exemption for those called to active duty from three to six months following deployment.

Insurance Provisions: Life insurance policies cannot lapse during period of active deployment or 45 days following return.

Exempting Guard's Pay from State Taxes: Provides that compensation received by members of the State Organized Militia for active duty state service within the State is exempt from taxation. Currently, such income is taxable under New York State law; this provision would help ease the financial burden for those Citizen-Soldiers who are serving the state.

Increasing Rate of Pay for NYS Military Personnel: Increases the rate of pay for NYS military personnel ordered into state active duty from a per diem rate of \$100 to \$125 - a 25% increase.

Expanding Eligibility for Tuition Awards: Makes current Persian Gulf veterans and Afghanistan veterans eligible for tuition awards and extends the time period in which veterans must apply for the award to September 1, 2006. Currently, Vietnam Veterans and Persian Gulf Veterans from the conflict in 1990 are covered by this provision; this provision would include Veterans from the current Iraqi conflict and Veterans from the conflict in Afghanistan.

★ Providing the survivors of eligible public employees who give their lives while on active duty in the Armed Forces with the same death benefits that their survivors would be entitled if the public employees made the ultimate sacrifice while working as a public employee.

★ Providing the survivors of eligible public employees who pass away while on active duty in the Armed Forces with the same health insurance benefits to which such survivors would be entitled if the public employee was killed while working as a public employee.

Adjutant General of New York MG Joseph J. Taluto said, "We have come through a period of great challenges and achievement, and the New York National Guard has come out on the other side a proven, competent and confident force. Throughout his tenure, Governor Pataki has enacted new recruiting incentives and benefits such as Tuition Assistance, increased pay rates for State Active Duty, and signed into law Patriot Plans I, II and III. The New York Guard offers job training and experience, the sense of achievement for a job well done, and is an excellent choice for people who want to make a positive difference in their communities and in their country." **GX**

For more information about Guard Focus and related events, contact the Public Affairs Office at the New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs at

(518) 786-4581

MOARNG COMMANDER'S CUP COMPETITION

By MAJ David S. Kolarik, MOARNG PAO

MISSOURI—More than 400 Missouri Army National Guard Soldiers deployed to Fort Leonard Wood to compete against each other in the Recruit Sustainment Program's 5th Commander's Cup competition.

"I love this program," said PVT Joseph Creighton of Delta Company located in Springfield, MO, as he competed in the Zodiac boat races. "The RSP program is not only getting me ready physically for the military challenges that lie ahead, it's also teaching me valuable leadership and teamwork skills that will help me in whatever I do in life."

Soldiers from Missouri's eight RSP regions reported Friday to their respective armories, packed their gear and loaded the buses with hopes that upon their return on Sunday, the bus would have an extra passenger: the big, bright, shiny Commander's Cup.

"This competition is held quarterly at Fort Leonard Wood," said SSG Joel



AND THE WINNER IS Missouri Guard RSP State Manager SFC Shane Spellman presents Delta Co. student 1SG Caleb Holland the Commander's Cup.

LeMaster, Springfield Area Coordinator for the Missouri Guard's Recruit Sustainment Program. "Soldiers from each of the eight regions battled it out against each other in various events that included tug of war, Zodiac boat races, the Army Physical Fitness test, a personal endurance course and water survival training," said SSG LeMaster.

"It is with great pride that I award the Commander's Cup to the very deserving Delta Company of Springfield, all of you have put your hearts and bodies into this competition and I'm very pleased to declare you the Cup winners," said SFC Shane Spellman, state RSP manager.

SPC Adrian Hopper, assistant area coordinator for Delta Company, praised his company, "I'm very proud of all the hard work you've put in this weekend, and as a result, the Cup is coming back home. Don't lose sight of what you have to do in order to keep this cup in your possession."

The RSP is designed to give newly enlisted Missouri National Guard Soldiers the skills, knowledge and tools they'll need for successful completion of both basic and advanced individual training.

"This was an awesome weekend, I just knew Delta was the company bringing home the trophy," said PVT Caleb E. Holland, Delta Company student 1SGT. **GX**



By SSG Engels Tejeda; Courtesy of DVIDS

IRAQ—That "every Soldier is a diplomat" is particularly true for members of the 640th Quartermaster Company.

A unit from the U.S. Virgin Islands National Guard, the 640th is based out of St. Thomas and arrived in December to southern Iraq. They are serving a year-long deployment that includes nurturing a working relationship with local residents of villages surrounding two large coalition bases.

"Our main mission is to maintain the raw water pumps and canal waterways that supply water to camps Cedar and Adder," said SFC Kelvin Bailey, who is leading the group of approximately fifteen Soldiers deployed with the 640th.

VIARNG 640TH: EVERY SOLDIER A DIPLOMAT IN IRAQ

HANDOUTS SGT Conrad Brathwaite, a VIARNG mechanic, delivers ice and food to Iraqi communities.

The water pumps are located on land owned and inhabited by local residents. Consequently, the daily operation of the pumps depends on the relationship that the troops develop with the locals.

"We deal with them; they tell us what they need and we bring it the next day," said SGT Elvy Rogers, a gunner with the 640th. "Sometimes we even bring them extra stuff like soap, shampoo, and batteries."

Similarly, the local residents treat the Soldiers like friends, often offering them fruits and freshly caught fish.

The relationship is valuable because the locals can also provide the Soldiers with vital information that can help the area maintain its reputation as one of the safest for coalition troops. "I thought there would be more fire, but I haven't shot anybody since we got over here," said SPC Michael Joseph, a gunner with the 640th. "That's a good thing."

As rare as incidents are, they highlight the need for stronger relationships with the surrounding communities. The Soldiers with the 640th seem particularly adept for the mission, given their experiences in the military and in the civilian world.

Take for example SPC Jonelle Smith, a driver with the 640th. The unit's youngest Soldier at 23, she served on a peacekeeping mission to Haiti with several members of the unit just before coming to Iraq.

Similarly, SGT Orville Colbourne, a 54-year-old mechanic who has 22 years in the military, has served on several humanitarian missions including some to Venezuela and Honduras.

Moreover, most of the troops are involved in the service sector at home. Bailey, for example, is the captain of a small boat fleet that carries tourists between St. Thomas and the British Virgin Islands.

These experiences have required the troops to develop people skills that come in handy when dealing with the local civilians. **GX**



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133RD MPAD: TELLING THE SOLDIERS' STORIES

By Keith Kawasaki
with assistance from CPT Daniel Lyn Graves

KIRKUK, IRAQ—Every Army National Guard unit that deploys in support of OIF or OEF hopes to make a difference. One unit deployed to the north-central area of operations in Iraq has done just that.

The 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD), a split-state unit comprised of a command cell from the Kentucky Army National Guard and a detachment from the Tennessee Army National Guard, is attached to the 101st Airborne Division as part of the division's OIF IV deployment.

Upon arrival in theater, the 133rd MPAD hit the ground running and by mid-tour had

produced more than 300 print stories and 200 video products. These media packages have been picked up over 2,000 times by more than 150 different media sources, from the local Clarksville, TN newspapers to *GX* to major networks like CNN and NBC.

"We tell the Soldiers' story that the civilian media cannot always be there to tell," says CPT David Page, commander of the 133rd.

CPT Page, a full-time Kentucky Guard Public Affairs Officer, works closely with division staff and has helped to make the 133rd a vital part of the storied division's public affairs mission.

"Being a part of the Band of Brothers' heritage means a lot to me and to all our Soldiers—it connects us with a proud history of military excellence," CPT Page added.

"We started training for this as soon as we had our alert orders," said 1SG John Kibler, an employee of the Kentucky State Police. "We were in the middle of our annual training at the National Training Center in Fort Irwin, CA. We got the word that we would be deployed, and we started right then."

Preparing for the deployment meant a

flurry of activity between Kentucky and Tennessee, as members from both states focused their efforts on coming together in the Iraqi desert. After home station periods of active duty and a training stop at Wendell Ford Training Center in Kentucky, the unit arrived at Camp Atterbury.

"Many of our Soldiers have worked together for years, so coming together from two states was not as difficult as it could have been," said SFC Walter Van Ochten, Tennessee detachment sergeant. "Being public affairs professionals was second nature to us."

The 133rd MPAD is comprised of approximately twenty Soldiers, mostly print and broadcast journalists.

While deployed, the detachment embeds at the lowest levels of the Brigade Combat Teams to tell the Soldier's story. All the detachment's media products can be found at DVIDS under the key word search of "133rd Mobile".

"At the conclusion of the tour, our hope is to bring the Soldier's story home to the American people," said CPT Page. "We serve among heroes, and the rest of the world has the right to know their stories." **GX**

We serve among heroes, and the rest of the world has the right to know their stories.

—CPT David Page, CMDR 133rd

SFC Mike Winters prepares to film a patrol near Kirkuk, Iraq



SEND FREE POSTCARDS OF SUPPORT TO TROOPS

Courtesy of Xerox Corporation

ROCHESTER, NY—SPC Tommy Brooks from the 2-130 Illinois Infantry Battalion served a 12-month tour in Iraq—and said there's nothing like getting mail from home.

"A letter has a sense of warmth and is more personal than e-mail. With regular mail, it's all yours to keep and take with you when you're on the move," said SPC Brooks.

You can send your appreciation to U.S. Soldiers like SPC Brooks through a new Web site sponsored by Xerox Corporation at www.LetsSayThanks.com. The site allows you to write a personalized message on postcards—drawn by kids across the country—which will be printed and sent to deployed forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Following the success of local community card drives in Atlanta and Phoenix, which delivered thousands of postcards overseas,

Xerox created LetsSayThanks.com to give people a way to show their support no matter where they live.

Visitors simply click on their favorite design, drawn by children ages 6-14, and write a personal message to a Soldier. The colorful postcards are then printed and mailed in care packages by the military support organization Give2theTroops.

"We started this effort so specific communities could get even more involved with supporting their local servicemen and women," said Mike Brannigan, president of Xerox's United States Solutions Group. "But when we saw the reaction not only from the public but also from the troops overseas, we moved to an online effort that will allow people from across the U.S., and around the world, to send postcards to the men and women of the armed forces." **GX**



OPERATION HOMECOMING: 276TH SOLDIERS CONTRIBUTE TO WELCOME HOME FOR VETS

By 1LT James Vaughn, Unit Public Affairs Representative
203rd Engineer Battalion

BRANSON, MO—A group of 20 volunteers from the 276th Engineer Company, located in Monett and Pierce City, were sent to assist with Operation Homecoming Branson 2006. Guard members were used to assemble a traveling half-scale replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall, located in Washington, D.C., and served as escorts for distinguished guests during highlighted portions of the six-day event.

Operation Homecoming Branson is an event dedicated to bringing Vietnam Veterans home as Soldiers who served their country, without regard to political debate and without blame for the war itself. The half-scale Memorial Wall has been traveling around the world since 1996, typically staying at different sites for a week.

When Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans of the 276th arrived back on American soil, they were greeted by a cheering crowd. They were allowed to hold their heads high and be proud they had served their country. They stepped from the plane then walked through a double line of handshakes and pats on the back. Hats and jackets worn by some of the people in the reception line were decorated with pins and gold writing depicting the wearers as Veterans of the Vietnam War. They were there with their spouses and friends full of praise for the Soldiers of the 276th and other military units arriving home from overseas.

“These Vets were the ones there making sure we came home as Soldiers who had just returned from serving our country,” said SFC Tony Cupples, an OIF Veteran.

“I look at it as an opportunity. These Vietnam Vets are the ones who put us on the path we are on today. And, they were there when we came home, shaking our hands and welcoming us home. This is our chance to do the same for them,” said SSG Mike Helsley, an Iraqi Freedom Vet and guest escort at a formal awards ceremony.

“When you talk to these Vets, you get the true story of what happened. You get to see the other side of what was going on. I think it does help heal a lot of the emotional scars. Events like this don’t put away the bad memory but they create a good memory. For some of them, it’s probably just the camaraderie,” SSG Helsley said.

Many of the same volunteers at this year’s homecoming celebration were there last year for the first annual Operation Homecoming. They said they intend to contribute their services for at least the next five years.

“Last year, we got to talk to some Medal of Honor recipients. They were just average people. We got to

hear them talk about what they had been through and every one of them said they were just doing their job,” said SGT Clint Rudd, 276th Engineer Company.

The Missouri Guard’s military funeral honors team of Springfield held a service in honor of the 58,229 fallen and missing Soldiers whose names are listed on the Memorial Wall. The ceremony included a 21-gun salute and playing of Taps along with speeches and songs in honor of the Veterans.

“It’s a time for the guys to get back together and remember the good times they had. I saw Veterans last year who came out to help us put the wall up. They ran into buddies they hadn’t seen in 35 years,” SGT Rudd said. “When we got the call to go to Iraq, we just went.

We didn’t question it, just packed up and went to do our job. It all pales in comparison to what those Vets went through,” SGT Rudd added.

Saturday morning, civilians and generations of Veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam and Iraqi Freedom lined Shepherd of the Hills Expressway, the main strip through Branson. Vietnam Vets walked or rode on floats, motorcycles and antique cars through the city as people cheered them on, said thanks and waved American flags.

“I still have a lot of patriotism, I guess. I don’t know about the healing part. I think most of us have healed,” Lawayne Gronau, a Vietnam Veteran from Iowa said. “A lot of it is you get to see some friends.” **GX**



REMEMBRANCE (left to right) The half-scale replica Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall has traveled around the globe since 1996 to serve as a reminder of the sacrifices made by all of our Veterans. MOARNG Soldiers volunteer their time to help set up the wall for Operation Homecoming in Branson, MO.

MO GUARD TO THE RESCUE

By SGT Katherine L. Collins
Courtesy of MOARNG PAO

ST. LOUIS, MO—In the aftermath of heavy storms in the St. Louis area, the Missouri National Guard joined with the local agencies to ensure the safety and recovery of the city's residents.

Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen from throughout Missouri began arriving within 24 hours after storms first hit on July 19. Their mission focused on health and welfare inspections and debris removal. On July 20th, senior officers and enlisted set up a Guard headquarters at the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial in downtown. At the same time, members of the Guard's 1438th Multi-Role Bridge Company from Macon and Detachment 1, 1438th Multi-Role Bridge Company from Kirksville began knocking on community members' doors to ensure the safety of residents and assess their needs. St. Louis Fire Department representatives with radio communication accompanied them.

"The Soldiers inspected to see that residents were staying cool and hydrated during the power outage" said SFC Mark Rash, the unit's operation

sergeant. "Many of the residents had already relocated to the city's cooling centers or other locations. To residents still at home, the Soldiers relayed phone numbers and directions to the cooling centers and gave them bottles of water."

Guard members also transported residents from shelters back to their homes to access medications and clothing. Soldiers performed this service primarily for the elderly and handicapped residents seeking shelter at the Whol Center, the city's most acute care shelter, which houses about 300 people.

Starting the afternoon of July 21st and continuing throughout the weekend, Guard members removed debris from St. Louis streets. "It's great to be able to help," said SGT

Daniel Tooloose of the 880th Haul Team from Perryville. "This is the best training, too. We were conducting our annual training when we were called to St. Louis . . . no training beats getting in the trucks to perform real-world missions," he added.

Sam Simon, director of public safety for the city of St. Louis, commended the Missouri Guard's efforts; "We give the Missouri Guardsmen a standing ovation. The City of St. Louis thanks them."

COL David Irwin, commander of the St. Louis-based 70th Troop Command, praised the Missouri Guard's performance, as well as the efforts of all the St. Louis departments involved in the relief mission.



TALL DRINK OF WATER SPC Arthur Rulo, 1140th Engineer Co., MOARNG, provides clean water to a St. Louis resident after the storms.

"This mission requires fluid teamwork between all the city of St. Louis' departments and the Missouri Guard. Everyone has done a great job," he said.

"The St. Louis community is very appreciative of our help," COL Irwin added. "Many residents have honked their horns and waved at us to say 'thanks.'"

During the first two days of the mission, the team effort of the city of St. Louis and the Missouri Guard helped revive the city from the storm, which caused loss of electricity to about 200,000 residents.

In addition to the 1438th Multi-Role Bridge Company and 880th Haul Team, Missouri Guard units assisting in the relief effort include the 1140th Engineer Company, from Cape Girardeau; 220th Engineer Company, from Festus; 1138th Engineer Company (SAPPER), from Farmington; the Missouri Air Guard's 218th Engineer Installation Squadron, from Jefferson Barracks; Troop Command, from Jefferson Barracks. About 50 volunteers from the 1175th Military Police Company, from St. Clair and Jefferson Barracks, and other volunteers from various MOARNG units are also assisting. Almost 400 total aided the city of St. Louis in the July 19th storm recovery. **GX**

HELMETS TO HARDHATS: ONE SOLDIER'S SUCCESS STORY

By Shane Anderson

I spent over eight years in the Army and am now going to join the Army National Guard. The funny thing is that Helmets to Hardhats not only helped to find me a great career with the Elevator Constructors, they also encouraged me to join the Guard. So in a way, they found me two careers at once.

After I was accepted into the Elevators union, Helmets to Hardhats contacted me to attend a Seattle Seahawks game. They wanted to recognize me on the field at half time. My wife and I could not believe what a great response we received from the crowd. A Guard recruiter also attended the game and told me about the benefits of becoming a Guard member. I knew that my new career with the Elevator Constructors would be supportive of my service so decided to join the Army National Guard.



I believe 100% in the Helmets to Hardhats program and would encourage any Soldier to register. I can apply my training from the military to my new career. I am also able to make a great wage without the time it takes to complete a degree. The benefits and pension programs are among the best in any industry and there is a feeling of brotherhood among my union members, much like what I became accustomed to in the military.

Because of Helmets to Hardhats, I found two great careers, one with the Elevators and one with the National Guard. I don't think it could have been any easier. **GX**

To register for free with the
Helmets to Hardhats program visit

www.helmetstohardhats.org

GUARD SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Courtesy of Career Training Concepts, Inc.

This spring, Army National Guard Representatives had the privilege of presenting seven \$1,000 scholarships to high school students through a contest offered by Career Training Concepts, Inc., publisher of the Career Direction program.

Students in Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, South Carolina, Virginia, Virgin Islands and West Virginia, who had completed the Career Direction workshop, competed in an essay contest. The essay subject was: "Guarding America, Why the Role of the Army National Guard is Important to Me." Winners include:

ARKANSAS Charles Morton Epperson of Heber Springs High School, Heber Springs, AR

Morton plans to attend University of Arkansas Little Rock for a degree in Engineering Technology. Morton says the Career Direction program, presented by SFC Smith, helped him to identify his strengths and find ways to improve his weaknesses.

A key portion in Morton's essay: Whether it is fighting for freedom, teaching in the classroom, or coming to the aid of fellow citizens in time of need, the National Guard has proven their ability to protect and defend our country.



KENTUCKY Matthew Bard of Lloyd Memorial High School, Erlanger, KY

Bard participates in football and track. He plans to attend the University of Kentucky to study Electrical Engineering. Bard says the Career Direction program, presented by SSG Paul Schneider, confirmed for him the educational and career plans he was considering.

A key portion in Bard's essay: Although often overlooked, the US National Guard plays an equal, if not greater, role in the lives of the average citizen. The National Guard is

always the first to respond to internal crises, lead local rallies and drives while still holding the capabilities to ward off foreign aggression at home or off US soil.



MISSOURI Chelsie Parshall of Maryville High School, Maryville, MO

Parshall plans to attend University of Missouri Kansas City Medical School. Parshall says her goals were strengthened through the Career Direction program and she learned proper etiquette for job interviews.

A key portion in Parshall's essay: As long as the United States acknowledges God as her strength, America will be protected.

SOUTH CAROLINA Savannah Osborne of Goose Creek High School, Goose Creek, SC

Osborne plans to attend college. Osborne says the Career Direction program, presented by SSG David Revell, helped her understand what she really wants to do with her life.

A key portion in Osborne's essay: When you walk into school saying what you want to say, wearing what you want to wear, just know that you are here doing those things because people love you enough to fight for you and this country and you should just be so proud of that.

VIRGINIA Whitney Bolling of Pound High School, Pound, VA

Bolling plans to attend King College to major in Psychology. Bolling says the Career Direction program, presented by SGT Brett Trinkle, helped her consider important things about her career plans.

A key portion of Bolling's essay: The Army National Guard is an elite group of fighters. These fighters protect us and support the United States. Without the Army National Guard, our nation would be lost and vulnerable to attack from foreign countries.

VIRGIN ISLANDS Melissa Baron of Ivanna Eudora Kean High School, St. Thomas, VI

Baron plans to attend a 4-year university majoring in Business Administration. Baron says the Career Direction program, presented by SSG Collin Joseph, helped her learn more about her intended major and career field.

A key portion of Baron's essay: I have the utmost respect and courtesy for these men and women, for they disregard their own personal safety to represent and designate their exertion on behalf of the United States of America. I commend them for their efforts and concerns towards protecting and guarding this nation.

WEST VIRGINIA Martin Bush of Ripley High School, Ripley, WV

Bush plans to attend college and join the Army National Guard. Bush says the Career Direction program, presented by SSG John Lawrentz, was helpful and informative.

A key portion of Bush's essay: The Guard can act as a catalyst for those who wish to achieve their goals with honor, integrity, and loyalty to one's nation. Joining the Guard can be very beneficial to anyone wishing to further their education and receive advanced, up-to-date training in multiple fields. **GX**

2007 Career Direction Scholarship Contest

This year's qualifying states are **Arkansas, Colorado, Kentucky, New Hampshire, South Carolina, Virgin Islands, Virginia, and West Virginia.**

To be eligible, students must:

- Reside and attend school in one of the qualifying states/territory.
- Be on target to graduate by Spring 2007
- Participate in a Career Direction workshop during the 2006-07 school year
- Write and submit a two-page printed essay on the topic: **"Preserving Freedom—The role of the Army National Guard and how it impacts me."**

The essays will be judged and one winner for each qualifying state/territory selected by a panel from Career Training Concepts, Inc.

Winners will be notified in spring, 2007.

For more information, visit

www.1-800-Go-Guard.com

ON A MISSION TO HEAL NEW HAMPSHIRE GUARD IN EL SALVADOR

By Lori Duff, Concord Monitor
Courtesy of NHARNG

EL SALVADOR—Ninety-nine-year-old Maria Vasquez rose with the sound of chickens, put her hair in a bun, tied a white, lacy apron over her dress, walked to the center of town and waited.

She had heard the American army doctors were coming.

And so she waited.

The temperature rose to 115 degrees. Buses dropped off patients dressed in party clothes and flip-flops. They joined the line.

And still, Vasquez waited.

"What types of problems are you having?" a translator asked in Spanish. "I can't see very well," she said. "And sometimes I have aches."

Her problems were noted, and she moved through the line to see a doctor.

Vasquez was among more than 5,000 patients treated by the New Hampshire National Guard Medical Command during a medical readiness exercise in rural El Salvador in late April. Stories like hers were central to the team's experience.

"You know what's amazing?" asked 1LT Jim Piro, 46, a nurse from New Boston. "For people to spend hours waiting in the hot sun for Tylenol and Motrin and things that we can just go to the store and buy at home. People are coming in with bare feet and mud and waiting. It chokes me up."

At a time when New Hampshire Soldiers are serving in combat missions in Iraq, Afghanistan and beyond, the medical command was on a peaceful goodwill trip. Its goals were simple and straightforward: to help people in a poor, rural environment, to train for future missions, to work together as a group, and to strengthen ties with El Salvador.

Along with the satisfaction of helping thousands of people with medical needs great

and small, came the frustration of knowing that some of their fixes were temporary—and that some patients who needed help most desperately were beyond their reach.

The work was hard, and the hours were long.

"You have to have a very selfless attitude—the kind of person who feels that doing his

town with cobbled streets surrounded by ancient volcanic hills. Their two-week mission had already taken them through Tablon, Guatajiagua and Chapeltique. This was the fourth and final destination for the doctors, dentists, nurses and other medical personnel. Their mission: "level one" care—medical and dental screenings and treatment of basic concerns.

"We can't do any major surgeries or anything serious, but we can identify issues, provide some prescription drugs and refer treatment to hospitals as needed," said CPT Mike Moranti, 32, of Manchester.

The 30-member team pulled 446 teeth, fitted 241 pairs of eyeglasses, treated thousands of aches and pains, and saw, among other things, a goiter the size of a cantaloupe, an infected toenail and injuries from an attempted suicide.

"We can be somewhat like Doctors Without Borders," said CPT Moranti, the medical command operations officer. "Most medical professionals want to help people, and that's exactly what we're doing."

The group's primary function is to support the National Guard at home. Members provide medical screenings for Soldiers and track those who are deploying or returning from active duty. They can be deployed themselves but are generally sent overseas individually, attached to other units.

Many members have done tours in Iraq, Afghanistan and Bosnia. Some, like SGT LaClaire, 34, a former Russian linguist for

the Navy, have never been on a field mission.

"This is a completely different universe," said SGT LaClaire, a patient administration sergeant. "I was not aware of just how much I was taking for granted. Until you live the experience and see people face-to-face, you



OPEN UP AND SAY AAAH! (top) A Soldier, working with the NHARNG Medical Command's exercise in El Salvador, examines a young boy during a medical check-up. **WAITING GAME** (bottom) SGT Gregory Bisson checks in patients who travel miles and wait for hours just to see a doctor.

or her job is more important than enjoying a high quality of life while he or she is out here," said SGT Jen LaClaire of Concord.

'LEVEL ONE' CARE

The medical team met Vasquez and her neighbors in Chilanga, a brightly painted

don't know how much luxury you have had in your life."

BASE CAMP BASICS

For nearly two weeks, the team slept co-ed style in canvas tents on an old runway in the Morazan province in the northwest corner of El Salvador. They rose before dawn to hearty egg-and-meat breakfasts shipped in boxes from the United States, served cafeteria-style in a trailer and eaten in the open air. For lunch, they picked up Meals Ready to Eat or Salvadoran pupusas, fried cornmeal tortillas filled with beans, cheese or pork. They drank plenty of water.

Surrounded by razor wire and filled with heavy equipment, the base camp was shipped from the United States in pieces for the Army's New Horizons exercise.

There were Humvees, trailers for a mess hall, showers, generators, tents and a gargantuan washer and dryer system, all to support their humanitarian objectives, which included building schools, wells, and clinics and running medical readiness exercises.

The Army's work was focused near former rebel territory, pieces of which were once held by a former guerrilla group, the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front. The area is also home to the city of El Mozote, where in 1981, Salvadoran soldiers killed an estimated 900 civilians in an anti-guerrilla campaign, one of the worst massacres in Latin American history.

The country's civil war has passed, and today El Salvador, roughly the size of Massachusetts, is home to more than six million people. Agriculture is an important industry, but recently there has been a decline in the export of coffee and a rise in clothing manufacturing. According to embassy personnel, about 17 percent of the country's gross domestic product comes from money that people working in the United States send back to their families.

RASHES, DIZZINESS, FOOT PAIN

The Chilanga medical mission was set up in an elementary school, an open-air cement block building brightly painted in blue and white, the national colors.

1LT Piro sat at an intake table; next to him was a Salvadoran Army interpreter translating medical complaints. 1LT Piro held

a cheat sheet of ailments listed in Spanish—rash, dizziness, foot pain, low appetite, fever, fungus, sweating, stomach ache, vomiting, chicken pox. By Day 8, he knew most of them by heart.

1LT Lezli Clark, a nurse from Rochester, worked next to 1LT Piro, shuttling people through the line. Last year, 1LT Clark won the Army Nurse Corps' excellence award for her work with Soldiers returning from war.

She and 1LT Piro have both been part of a team of New Hampshire Soldiers in charge of case management for troops returning from Iraq and Afghanistan. They tracked injuries and managed care for nearly 400 people. When Soldiers came home, 1LT Clark gave them her cell phone number. "I'm a nurse," she said. "That's what nurses do."

Inside the medical area, CPT Jen Moranti, 30, a nurse from Manchester, gave out hundreds of bags of pills, took temperatures and blood pressure, and saw people with aches and pains, lice and dehydration. "You want to do so much for them," CPT Moranti said, "but you can really only do so much without follow-up care."

LTC Robin DeLeon, 41, a doctor from Boise, ID, called a group over to listen to a young girl's heart. Instead of the normal "glub, glub," her heart "whooshed" — a sign of trouble.

LTC DeLeon told the family she needed to go to the hospital. Her condition would require a more serious operation than the mission could handle. Situations like that were not easy for the team. The short dura-

tion of the trip, the extent of the need, and the level of care they were able to provide could be frustrating.

"Not being able to do the things that I can do back home is hard," said LTC Susan Caprio, 59, a nurse practitioner from Goffstown. Chronic disease was the most difficult problem she wrestled with.

"I'm worried about the women (having a stroke)," she said. "We tell them to go to the clinic, but if they could do that, they wouldn't have come here."

While the team treated and bandaged and shared smiles with people again and again, it was the people they couldn't help that some remembered most.

"It's heartbreaking," said SGT LaClaire.

The team had been up since around 5:30 a.m. At the end of the day, as members waited to get on the buses in the stifling heat, the Soldiers' sleeves were rolled down to show solidarity with the troops in Iraq.

"I'm tired. It's hot. It would be nice to sleep in a bed again," said LTC Caprio.

Members of a military medical team walk a fine line between soldiering and healing. In fact, the Geneva Convention gives them their own category in the rules of war. Medical and religious personnel are considered noncombatants even though they wear uniforms and can carry small arms.

That doesn't mean they haven't tasted danger. While riding the buses home to the Salvadoran base camp one night, fireworks exploded in the roadway ahead of the team.

"My heart stopped," said SSG Roy Lowes, 44, a medic who spent time in Afghanistan.

Loud noises surprise him and take him back to his tour. **GX**

LOST IN TRANSLATION PFC Ashley Philibert sits under a wall used for Spanish/English translation. One section reads, "Do not bite my finger" in Spanish.

I was not aware of just how much I was taking for granted. Until you live the experience and see people face-to-face, you don't know how much luxury you have had in your life.

—SGT LaClaire, NHARNG





By Phil Manson, First U.S. Army PAO
Courtesy of Army News Service

1ST ARNG HELICOPTER BRIGADE CALLED TO OIF

COMBAT READY SGT Tommy Hughes, Blackhawk crew chief, 1/108th Aviation Regiment, 36th Combat Aviation Brigade, during immersion training.

Multi-National Corps-Iraq,” said COL Vernon Sevier, Jr., 36th CAB commander. “Multi-spectrum means we can provide attack capability, move troops and cargo, give air support to convoy operations and a myriad of other operational support missions.”

A unique facet of the 36th CAB’s deployment preparation is that the Soldiers were trained under the doctrine of Theater Immersion at the same time they were training for their primary flight mission.

Developed under the direction of LTG Russel L. Honoré, commanding general, First U.S. Army, Theater Immersion means to “train as you fight.”

“Immersing the 36th CAB Soldiers in theater-specific scenarios daily for months at a time develops an intuitive response to a given situation,” LTG Honoré said. “The Soldiers are presented many situations—IED’s, convoy operations, gate operations and processing

prisoners—over and over again until their response becomes second nature.”

CPT Randy Stillenger, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 36th CAB, praised the Theater Immersion concept.

“We came to Fort Hood six months ago, and for the first several weeks, we concentrated on such tasks as cultural awareness, Laws of Land Warfare and weapons qualification,” said CPT Stillenger in late June. “Then we incorporated our Warrior task knowledge into the missions we will perform in Iraq. I believe the TI training has enhanced our mission capability and will help us achieve our mission and return home safely to our families.”

LTG Honoré echoed CPT Stillenger’s thoughts. When asked if the 36th CAB was ready to fight, LTG Honoré did not hesitate.

“These warriors can do it,” LTG Honoré said. “They’re great pilots; they’ve undergone world-class Theater Immersion training with COL (Mike) Counts and his Soldiers from the 3rd Brigade of the 75th (Training Support Division), and they’re well led.” **GX**

FORT HOOD, TX—Final dress rehearsals ended for the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade’s deployment to Iraq in July.

With 2,700 Soldiers from 44 states across the nation, the 36th CAB is the first Army National Guard helicopter brigade called to duty in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“We will be the aviation brigade providing multi-spectrum operations in support of

FL DDR HOLDS YOUTH CAMP

By SSG Lorie Jewell
107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BLANDING, FL—Tiffany Wright eyed a thick braided rope stretched between a wooden platform and a post some 30 feet away, watching fellow campers balance their bellies atop it and carefully hoist their bodies across.

Wright, 12, was sure she couldn’t do it. Uh, uh. No way.

But when SGT Jamaal Burris waved her over to take a turn, she gamely gave it a shot. With SGT Burris’ encouragement, Wright slowly and carefully reached the other side.

“It was hard, harder than I thought it would be,” said Wright, of Riviera Beach.

“But he kept telling me I could do it, and I made it.”

Wright’s obstacle course success came during her recent participation in a youth leader summer camp, sponsored by the Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) program of the Florida National Guard’s Counter-drug program.

Approximately 140 youths, ages 12 to 18, took part in the first session of this year’s camp, June 26-29. With one more session on tap, attendance is expected to double that of last year, DDR’s first year of hosting the camp, according to SGT James Gatchell.

A small camp session in March was offered to about 20 youths from military families only; the summer sessions are open to youths from all over the state, military or not.

Campers start their day with physical training at 6 a.m. They attend drug education classes and rotate in groups through outdoor activities like compass navigation and the obstacle course.

“The goal is to teach leadership and life skills, along with the dangers of drugs in a fun

and physically challenging environment,” SGT Gatchell said.

SGT Burris, one of the camp’s six staff members, gets a kick out of seeing campers surprise themselves. “It’s so easy to say ‘I quit’ and give up,” said SGT Burris. “But most of the time, they just need a little push from someone telling them they can do it. It’s a joy to witness.” **GX**

HANGING ON Tarruan King, 15, pulls himself across a horizontal rope as SGT Jamaal Burris stands by.

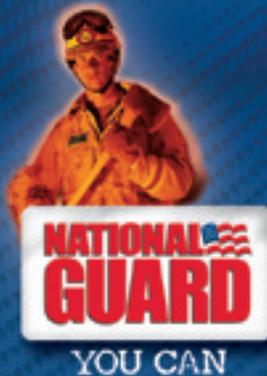




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TASK FORCE NO MERCY



DOUBLE THREAT The Stryker and AH-64 D Apache Longbow—two of the primary weapons of Task Force No Mercy.

By SGT Ryan Matson and SGT Joseph Scott
Courtesy of DVIDS

TALL AFAR, IRAQ—“This is an incredible team we have up here,” MAJ David Kramer, 1st Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade Executive Officer said.

MAJ Kramer was referring to Task Force No Mercy, a task force comprised of elements from 10 companies and six different Army units throughout the world who have pooled together at Tall Afar to support the 172nd Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

On January 15, the first elements from 1st Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, arrived in Tall Afar to relieve the 4th Squadron, 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment. Task Force No Mercy supported the 1st Brigade, 1st Armor Division until May 19 when the 172nd Stryker Brigade assumed responsibility for Western Nineveh.

The 172nd Stryker Brigade patrols an area about the size of Rhode Island in Northwest Iraq on the Syrian border. In the city of Tall Afar, which lies roughly in the middle of the area, Task Force No Mercy supports the 2nd Battalion, 37th Armor Regiment. The Apaches of 1st Battalion provide an attack asset to the ground units, conducting reconnaissance and surveillance for Soldiers on the ground.

A breakdown of the various units comprising Task Force No Mercy and their particular role within the Task Force follows.

HEADQUARTERS, TASK FORCE NO MERCY

“With the help of 1SG McGuire in 1st Battalion, 10th Aviation Regiment, we were able to establish one of the finest command

and control facilities of any battalion-level task force in theatre,” MAJ Kramer said.

He said the handful of Soldiers who staff the communications, intelligence, operations and logistics sections of the headquarters element are all able to run a fully mission-capable tactical operations center with less than half the manpower usually allotted for such an operation.

SPC Michael Comboy is responsible for handling the task force’s communication needs, along with a handful of other young Soldiers serving on their first deployment.

“It’s a unique situation here,” SPC Comboy said. “We’re supporting a Task Force with

more units than your typical battalion. The commo section provides tactical communication and automation for the entire Task Force’s needs.”

LTC (promotable) Doug Gabram, the Task Force Commander, talked about the dynamic team assembled in Tall Afar, Iraq.

“This is a true test of the ‘One Team, One Fight’ concept,” LTC Gabram said. “It is active duty and National Guard units coming together to form a cohesive Task Force in a combat environment. The success of the Task Force belongs to the junior leaders’ and Soldiers’ commitment to each other and their country. The true test and report card for any aviation unit comes from the Soldiers and commanders on the ground.

“We are proud to say our ground Soldiers are more than happy to have No Mercy aircraft above their heads. I have often said, ‘You can fake attitude, you can fake enthusiasm, but you can’t fake passion.’ Our Soldiers have a passion for what they do.”

COMPANY B, 1ST BATTALION, 101ST COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE

The “Bearcats” are the Longbow Apache attack helicopter company of Task Force No Mercy. They provide direct aerial attack helicopter support to the 172nd Stryker Brigade.

The Bearcats have flown about 2,500 flight hours in support of the 172nd and 1st Brigade, 1st Armor Division since the Task Force took effect Jan. 15.

CW2 Matthew Zepp is an Apache pilot with Company B. He discussed some of the various operations the company has performed in the Task Force.

“We get a chance to provide convoy security, cordon and searches, and zone and route reconnaissance,” he said. “Our role goes as far as helping the Infantry Soldiers find a route to their destination from above, acting as eyes in the sky.”

COMPANY E, 1ST BATTALION, 101ST COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE

The Company E “Executioners” are responsible for running the Forward Ammunition and Refueling Point (FARP) for Task Force No Mercy. They also provide vehicle maintenance

for the Task Force No Mercy motorpool, according to SFC Tomorris Robinson, Company E and FARP Noncommissioned Officer in Charge.

“Anything that comes in here with fuel requirements,

we refuel it,” SFC Robinson said.

The four-point FARP has pumped over 800,000 gallons of fuel and issued over six million dollars of ammunition, SFC Robinson said. Soldiers at the FARP work two 12-hour shifts a day to provide constant fueling to any incoming aircraft, from C-130’s to Kiowas.

COMPANY D, 1ST BATTALION, 101ST COMBAT AVIATION BRIGADE

As the company in charge of the aviation task force maintenance, the “Dragonslayers” of Company D also handle the maintenance and armament needs for the Apaches of Task Force No Mercy. A small detachment of Soldiers from the company moved to Tall Afar to support Task Force No Mercy with

You can fake attitude, you can fake enthusiasm, but you can’t fake passion. Our Soldiers have a passion for what they do.

—LTC Doug Gabram, Task Force Commander

basic aircraft maintenance, 250-hour inspection capability, and other basic needs to keep Company B flying high.

The crews work two 12 hour shifts each day, every day, and have never dropped a mission due to maintenance issues.

“I’ve been in aviation maintenance for 16 years and nine in the 101st Airborne Division, and 1st Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, is the most professional organization I’ve worked with,” SFC Tommy Daigle said. “I’ve got a great bunch of guys—guys who work hard and put in 100-percent every day.”

COMPANY C, 1ST BATTALION, 10TH AVIATION REGIMENT

The “Outcasts” provide the Kiowa piece of Task Force No Mercy.

“We provide convoy security, aerial reconnaissance, and Quick Reaction Force missions,” Company C 1SG Don McGuire, said. “We pretty much do the same things as the Apaches, except they go further out; we fly in the more immediate area.”

One of the other missions the Kiowas have brought to the table is the use of Scout Weapon Attack Teams (SWAT teams, also known as “pink” teams in other areas of operation), according to MAJ Kramer. He said the teams couple the precision reconnaissance and surveillance capabilities of the OH-58 with the lethality of the AH-64D.

COMPANY B, 1ST BATTALION, 207TH AVIATION REGIMENT

The “Arctic Cowboys” from the Alaska National Guard are the Task Force’s UH-60 Blackhawk element. MAJ Cheryl Anderson, the company commander, said the main mission of the Arctic Cowboys is battlefield circulation—running log packs in the Area of Operations. The company has been flying more than any other UH-60’s within the overall Band of Brothers Task Force, averaging 650 flight hours per month.

The company has also participated in numerous Air Assault missions with Task Force No Mercy and the 101st Airborne Division including Operation Swarmer and Iron Triangle.

1SG Mike Jones, the company first sergeant, said another key mission within Task Force No Mercy is conducting “No Mercy Watch,” in which snap Traffic Control Points are established from the air.

In No Mercy Watch, the Arctic Cowboys transport a team of Infantrymen from Company B, 4th Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 172nd Stryker Brigade in Blackhawk helicopters. The AH-64D’s and Blackhawks conduct a route reconnaissance of Main

Supply Route Tampa as well as suspicious houses or areas, looking for smugglers and other suspicious activity. The UH-60 aircraft then land, allow the Infantry to quickly set up a TCP within the area, and search suspicious vehicles and homes.

G 126TH AVIATION INTERMEDIATE MAINTENANCE COMPANY

The “Griffins” provide unit level maintenance for the Company B, 1st Battalion, 207th Aviation Regiment (Arctic Cowboys) and intermediate level maintenance for Apaches and Blackhawks.

The company, a National Guard unit based out of Connecticut, is made up of Soldiers from four states—Tennessee, Connecticut, Alaska, Maine—and Puerto Rico.

The company also includes a Supply Support Activities (SSA) section, which includes four Soldiers from 96th Aviation Support Battalion, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade, and receives all aircraft parts and handles the supply for the task force.

“The SSA has been critical in keeping the Task Force operational, especially way out here away from the main support hub,” MSG Kramer said.

SECOND PLATOON, COMPANY B, 634TH MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BATTALION

The “Nightmare” platoon is responsible for launching, maintaining and navigating the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, the Shadow. Detachment commander is CW2 Steve Schiffli, a Blackhawk pilot from the Minnesota National Guard who stepped into the commander’s role.

“I’m a Blackhawk pilot; I thought I’d assume an air ambulance role; none of us really expected to be doing this,” CW2 Schiffli said. “We have Soldiers from every Military Occupational Specialty background in the unit—infantry, tank mechanics, radar operators, you name it. For being a bunch of people thrown together, the Soldiers have done a great job; I couldn’t ask for anything more as a commander.”

The UAV conducts aerial reconnaissance and convoy route reconnaissance, flying at 7,000 feet above the ground, and provides photo imagery for missions. The 14-by-12-foot remote-controlled aircraft is also capable of filming missions such as Air Assaults as they happen, giving a commander the chance to view the mission’s progress in real-time. **GX**

ALL-GUARD TEAM TAKES TOP HONORS IN SOUTH AFRICA



By CPT Curtis McElroy, National Guard Marksmanship Training Unit PAO; Courtesy of ARARNG

SOUTH AFRICA—In today's reality of war, when what you know and what you've been trained to do are critical to your survival, you want that training to be nothing short of the best. When the weapon you carry is your primary tool for survival, knowing how to use it precisely and effectively in any given environment is absolutely crucial.

One of the ways the National Guard's Marksmanship Training Unit conducts such crucial and effective training is through shooting rack grade U.S. military weapons in marksmanship training events. Recently the unit sent the All-Guard International Combat Team to compete in the 32nd Combat Rifle Championships in Bloemfontein, South Africa, where they competed against 308 of the best marksmen in the world.

The All-Guard Team is comprised of the best shooters the Army and Air National Guard has to offer, with its members coming from all 54 states and territories.

As the only American service members to attend this prestigious competition, the U.S.

team dominated the international matches by winning the overall team event for the first time since it started participating in this event in 1995.

All nine finished in the top 30, with five placing in the top 10. MAJ Shannon Jordan, from the Oklahoma Army National Guard, placed first in the overall international competition. SSG Tim Trapp, Kansas Air National Guard, placed number three; SFC J.R. Treharne, Wisconsin Army National Guard, placed fifth; SFC Joseph Noe, Iowa Army National Guard, placed seventh; TSG William Bednarowski, New York Air National Guard, placed 11th; SSG Gary Varberg, North Dakota Army National Guard, placed 13th;

These events are crucial in the effort to develop effective relationships with other nations

— LTC Michael Clites

SFC Christopher Marcott, Arizona Army National Guard, placed 22nd; SGT Mark Richard, Indiana Army National Guard, placed 23rd; and SSG Tommy McGee, Louisiana Army National Guard, placed 29th in the competition.

Top man, MAJ Shannon Jordan, has been a police officer in Stillwater, OK, for 17 years. MAJ Jordan explains, "The international event allows team members to sharpen their battlefield engagement skills and develop experience no [field manual]

could teach while competing in an intense international event."

This is the same experience the National Guard Marksmanship Training Unit draws from to teach our military's Soldiers and Airmen the skills necessary to knock down a target at 400 yards and beyond. The Unit, which sponsors and trains the All-Guard Team, is located at Camp Joseph T. Robinson in North Little Rock, AR.

MAJ Jordan says, "Shooting shoulder to shoulder with the best marksmen in the world is very stressful, but it is more stressful on the battlefield if service members do not have the confidence and are not familiar enough to engage the enemy with their small arms weapons."

The overall goal of the marksmanship program within the National Guard is to increase the individual proficiency in the employment of small arms and to increase

BULLSEYE Members of the All-Guard International Combat team pose with their medals. Back Row: (left to right) CPT Jody Callahan, SSG Gary Varberg, SFC Christopher Marcott, SSG Mark Richard, SSG Joe Noe, CSM Ken Berry; Front Row: (From left to right) SSG Tim Trapp, SFC J.R. Treharne, MAJ Shannon Jordan, SSG Tommy McGee, and TSG Bill Bednarowski.

a service member's battlefield survivability. The program provides much more than that, however.

"These events are crucial in the effort to develop effective relationships with other nations to show them with action that the United States is committed to developing a worldwide effort to promote peace among the military forces," said Marksmanship Training Unit's Administration Officer, LTC Michael Clites.

With the current operational tempo of the American fighting force, it is extremely important for these team members to be able to make every shot count. This high level of competition allows team members to perfect shooting skills that they can bring back to their home units as well as to the National Guard school house. Many of the All-Guard team members bring those skills back to the Marksmanship Training Unit in order to share their expertise. The Arkansas school is at a record-setting pace this year; to date, the unit has trained nearly 2,000 service members throughout the United States.

The All-Guard team provides the Training Unit with some of the most highly skilled instructors the military has to offer— instructors who have competed against the best and proven, once again, that they are the best. **GX**

INARNG DETACHMENT 5 HOSTS WARRIOR CHALLENGE

By SFC Larry Lightburne, Det 5 Readiness NCO and Keith Kawasaki

EVANSVILLE, IN—The Indiana Army National Guard's Recruit Sustainment Detachment 5 hosted a Warrior Challenge in Evansville, IN on May 20th. Detachments 2 through 9 competed in the event, with each Detachment bringing 10 participants (eight male and two female minimum).

The Warrior Challenge consists of a drill competition, ceremony, indoor range fire, PT assessment, basic Soldier skills, and a grueling obstacle course.

The obstacle course was a mandatory team effort where all participants had to stay together, completing each phase before they could advance. The teams battled through a litter carry, low crawl in a wet ditch, running, combat rolls, a tire run, wet sand pit, rope bridge, fireman's carry, exercise station, and a dash to the finish line.

The Evansville community and other spectators were invited to watch and have some fun of their own during the Challenge. The Indiana Guard Soldiers had set up a rock climbing wall, paint ball gauntlet course, pugil stick duels, and even sumo suit wrestling.

"The obstacle course was rough," said PFC Keith Fromme, a high school senior who shipped to basic in May and will attend AIT next year. "You get water-logged at the beginning and it is hard to run being that wet."

PFC Erin Kleiman, a high school graduate who would go on to attend AIT in July, stated, "I was so tired but I had to keep going for the

team, especially since I was the squad leader and I had to lead by example."

The first-place winners in the Warrior Challenge were Detachment 3 of Delphi, IN. The team received a first-place plaque and a 40-inch Knights Templar Sword, with a plaque detailing the significance of the sword.

Second went to Detachment 8 of Southbend, IN. Detachment 8 received a second-place plaque.

Third place went to Detachment 4 out of Muncie, IN and they received a third-place plaque for their effort.

In fourth place was Detachment 6 of Scottsburg, IN. Fifth place was Detachment 7 of Indianapolis, IN. Sixth place went to Detachment 5 of Evansville, IN. Seventh place was Detachment 2 of Fort Wayne, IN. Eighth place winners were Detachment 9 of Terre Haute, IN.

A group of commanders decided to wow the crowd and landed a Blackhawk helicopter right in the middle of the obstacle course to greet the participants. Arriving in the Blackhawk was LTC Wayne Black (RSP Commander), LTC Timothy Thombleson (152 Infantry Commander), CSM Otis Pugh (RSP Command Sergeant Major), CSM Patrick Fromme (81st Troop Command Sergeant Major), and 1SG Carlson (RSP Operations NCO).

Also in attendance was the local Civil Air Patrol youth group with a booth and recruiters from team Night Hawk and team Predator, who supported the event. **GX**



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DROP ZONE

Fort Hood, TX

At Fort Hood, Texas, Soldiers from the Texas National Guard move toward an objective after being dropped by helicopters from the 36th Combat Aviation Brigade.

Photo by Phil Manson, First Army Public Affairs







THE GREAT PUSH

Rural El Salvador

Members of the New Hampshire National Guard Medical Command give a hand and a heave for a Salvadorian bus that was stuck in the mud. Heavy rains made for sticky traveling.

PHOTO BY LORI DUFF, CONCORD MONITOR, NH



Distance from New Hampshire to El Salvador: 2,286 miles





RIVER RATS

Near Bismarck, ND

NDARNG SSG Jesse Walstad, 957 Engineer Co., pilots an MKII bridge erection boat on the Missouri River near Bismarck, N.D. July 7, 2006. The NDARNG troops are practicing their training for bridge building and troop water crossing.

DoD photo by Senior MSG David H. Lipp (Released)



Length of the Missouri river: 2,315 miles



WATCHFUL EYE

Near San Diego, CA

SSG Clemente of the CAARNG stands watch on the border between San Diego and Tijuana. He is one of approximately 6,000 Guard Soldiers being deployed as part of Operation Jumpstart.

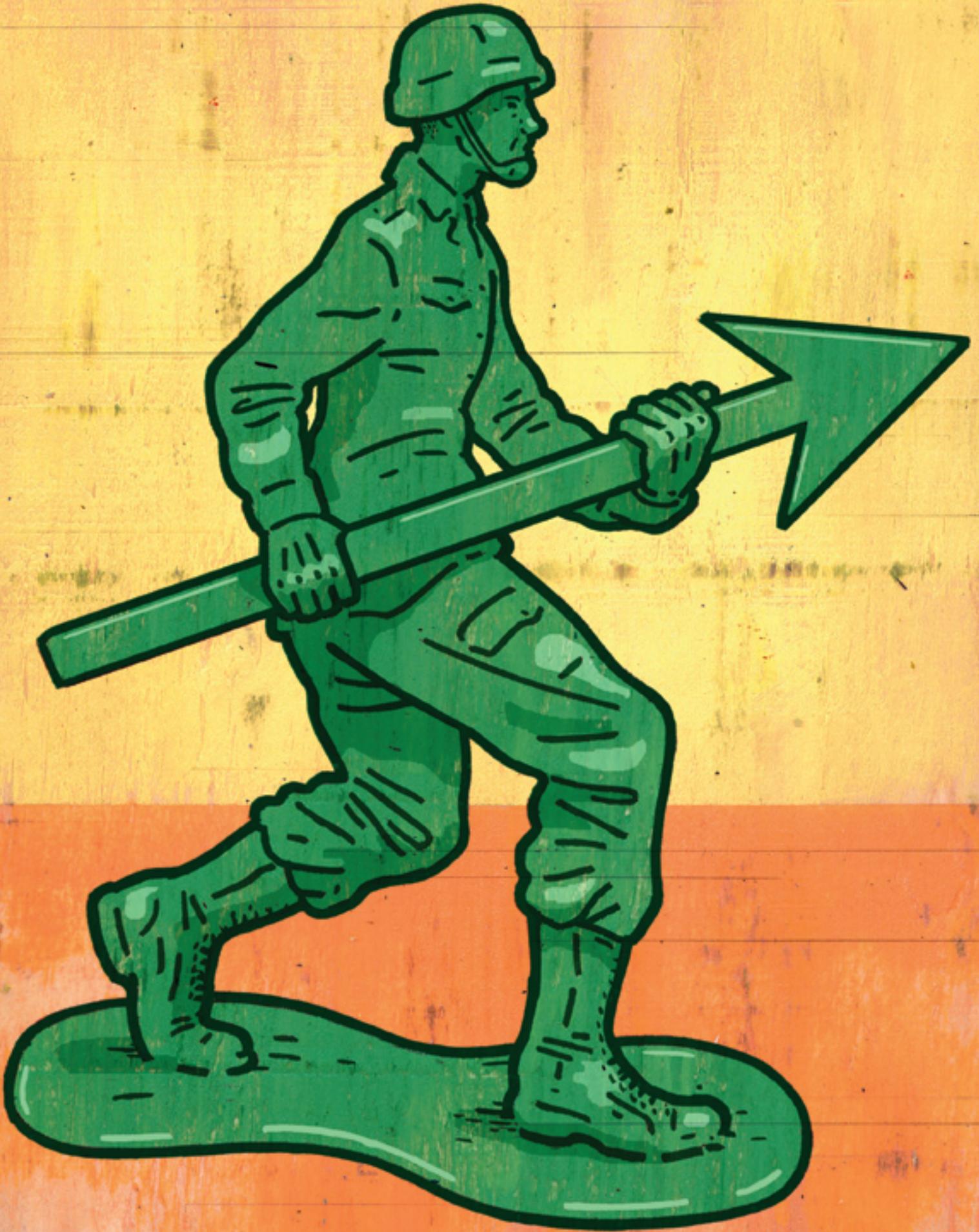
PHOTO BY CHRIS WEST



Length of U.S./Mexican border: 1,860 miles







THE WAY AHEAD

LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

By Fred W. Baker III
Illustrations by Dan Page

1SG Woodrow Carter remembers the “old Guard.”

This summer, the Oklahoma Army National Guard member sweated out his 38th annual training in 105-degree heat at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, running the operations of a multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) battery.

Short, stocky, sometimes short-tempered, but always quick with a smile, 1SG Carter has been a first sergeant longer than most of his active duty counterparts have been in the military.

He is one of the last of the 1st Battalion, 171st Field Artillery's old-timers with 38 years in service. Twenty-one of those he has served as the senior enlisted man for A Battery, located nearly a hundred miles from the nearest large city in a dusty, small southwestern Oklahoma town with a population of about 3,200.

1SG Carter has served for eleven battery commanders, seven battalion commanders and five adjutants general.

In that time, he has witnessed firsthand the transformation of the Army National Guard from a Vietnam-era, under-trained and under-equipped part-time force, to a force multiplier, fully integrated into the Total Force, thrust into the forefront of the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), homeland defense (HLD) and national disaster relief—a force that one is hard-pressed to label “part time” anymore.

“The biggest change I have seen is the way we train. Today's Guard trains harder and faster,” 1SG Carter said. “The equipment we have is more sophisticated.”

The new Guard is also recruiting a new type of Soldier, he said.

“Today's young Soldiers are more goal-oriented than the Soldiers of the past,” 1SG Carter said. “Nowadays, a young man can join the Guard and get his college paid for, earn a degree, and still fulfill his military goal.”

A testament to the Guard's growing role in the nation's defense, 1SG Carter has been activated only three times in his career—all in the past five years. The first was in 2001 when a tornado nearly wiped out the nearby town of Cordell; the second in 2002 in support of Operation Noble Eagle when his battalion was activated and sent to Fort Sill for nine months to guard the gates until a full-time, civilian security force could be hired; and the third was when the 45th Field Artillery Brigade sent Soldiers to aid relief efforts after Hurricane Katrina.

“Times have changed,” he said. “We are fighting a different war than we fought 37 years ago. But as Soldiers, we must always be ready to meet the challenge that lies ahead.”

“We are all citizens in times of peace, Soldiers in times of need. We are the Army National Guard.” >>>



We haven't seen anything yet. The National Guard has probably never been more essential to the national defense than it is today.

—LTG H Steven Blum

THE EXPANDING ROLE OF THE GUARD AND ITS MANY MISSIONS

The Army National Guard's 333,000-plus Soldiers make up 34 percent of the Army's strength, more than half of its combat power, almost seventy percent of its field artillery, and more than a third of its combat support and combat service support—according to the Army National Guard Vision 2010. It has more than 3,200 armories in 2,700 communities.

At the end of June, 82,487 Soldiers in the Army National Guard and Army Reserve were on active duty. The number including all Guard and reserve branches topped 102,000, according to the Department of Defense's official website.

From September 11, 2001, through September 2005, the Army National Guard deployed over 69 percent of its personnel in support of the GWOT, HLD, and state missions, according to the National Guard 2007 posture statement.

At one point last year, the Army National Guard contributed half of the combat brigades on the ground in Iraq.

With the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) recommendations presented in February, the ongoing GWOT, and the release of the 2007 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) in February, the landscape of

today's military and especially its reserve forces, is changing at a pace never before seen in history.

More rotations are on tap for Iraq and Afghanistan. Guard Soldiers are aiding relief efforts due to flooding in the south and northeast and fighting fires in the west. Louisiana has seen another call-up for troops to help stabilize some of its troubled neighborhoods during its rebuilding, and states across the nation have been tapped to send some 6,000 troops to beef up the U.S.-Mexico border.

But, anyone who thinks the National Guard is stretched too thin and unable to maintain its current operational tempo should talk to its top Soldier in Washington, D.C.

"We haven't seen anything yet," said LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

LTG Blum testified to the relevance and readiness of today's National Guard when he spoke to Oklahoma's top leadership at a conference in April.

"The National Guard has probably never been more essential to the national defense than it is today," said LTG Blum during a video teleconference from Iraq where he was visiting Maryland Guardmembers serving there.

LTG Blum cited the simultaneous call-ups of the Guard in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom and Hurricane Katrina disaster relief as an example of its need and ability to respond.

"The response by the Guard for Operation Katrina was unprecedented," LTG Blum said. "It was the largest military response to any natural disaster in our history. Fifty-thousand Guard men and women came from all 50 states in response. Over 17,443 lives were saved by the National Guard. More than 78,000 people were relocated by National Guard Soldiers."

At the same time, 80,000 Guard men and women were serving in Iraq, Afghanistan, and 40 other countries, as well as serving in states fighting forest fires, aiding in disaster relief for flooding, and working in various counterdrug operations. >>>



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"The National Guard had more Soldiers deployed than all of the other branches of the Department of Defense (DoD) put together," LTG Blum said. But, the Guard "still has enormous capability to do more."

"How can you call yourself the National Guard if you are not going to be the guardians of national defense?"

"The new tasks at hand for National Guard leadership are funding, manning, and resources," LTG Blum said. "DoD has pumped an additional \$800 million into the Guard since last year. But, that is a drop in the bucket compared to the total proposed \$439.3 billion Fiscal Year 2007 defense budget."

"In fact, Army and Air National Guard members provide the same level of defense as their active duty counterparts at 25 percent of the expense to the Department of Defense," according to LTG Blum.

"We are America's best defense bargain," he said.

"Under the Army's new restructuring and funding plan, \$21 billion in new monies will bring the Army National Guard from 15 'enhanced' brigades to 28 fully manned and equipped Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs)," said Marine GEN Peter Pace, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in a statement before the Senate Appropriations Committee in May.

"Consider that five years ago, the Army Reserve and National Guard were configured as a strategic reserve, to be called on once in a generation in the event of a major conflict on the scale of World War II," said GEN Pace. "They were chronically undermanned, under-

The National Guard will go to a different level. I think the National Guard in the future has to be more ready. It has to be ready for full-spectrum operations.

—LTG H Steven Blum

equipped, and under-funded. For example, of the 34 Army National Guard combat brigades on paper, only 15 were called 'enhanced' and supposedly ready for deployment. But even those brigades, year after year, were partially hollow and under-equipped and had to be augmented with people and equipment from other units before being ready to deploy."

"The new funding will help transform National Guard units into an 'operational reserve' capable of taking on a range of missions at home and abroad," GEN Pace said.

LTG Blum echoes Pace's comments; "The National Guard will go to a different level. I think the National Guard in the future has to be more ready. It has to be ready for full-spectrum operations."

"If you think you are essential today, in five years, it will rest even heavier on the National Guard," LTG Blum said.

Transforming from a strategic reserve to an operational reserve was also echoed in the QDR report released in February. In its recommendations for reconfiguring the Total Force, it states that the "Reserve Component must be operationalized, so that the select reservists and units are more accessible and more readily deployable than today.

"During the Cold War, the reserve component was used appropriately as a strategic reserve, to provide support to active component forces during major combat operations. In today's global context, this concept is less relevant," states the report.

The report recommends, among other changes, to increase Presidential access to the reserve component and to increase the period authorized for Presidential Reserve Call-up from 270 days to 365 days.

It also recommends a better focus of the reserve components' competencies for homeland defense and civil support operations. Finally, it recommends that select reserve units be developed that train more intensively and require shorter notice for deployments.

We are one service. We need to have a seamless flow to go active and back to reserve.

—Thomas Hall, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs

Even though missions could increase, National Guard Soldiers should look forward to shorter, more predictable deployments, according to Thomas Hall, the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs.

"We've got to get down shortened mobilizations," he said. "We can't sustain 18- to 24-month rotations."

"One year is the mark. We also need predictability. In a 20-year career, a Guard Soldier should expect to be activated three times for one year."

How and when Soldiers will deploy will typically be tied to the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model.

The model spreads the operational tempo across the force and adds predictability for Soldiers, families and employers, Hall testified in October 2005 before the House Committee on Government Reform. As a managed, cyclical process, ARFORGEN consists of progressive and sequential levels of increasing readiness from reset and train, to a force ready to deploy, and then to a force available to deploy. Rotation rates of active duty and reserve forces will differ, with active duty

units deploying once every three years and Army National Guard units deploying once every six years. Army Reserve units will deploy once every five years.

"The planning, resourcing, and training validation process will be synchronized so the Army can generate ready forces from both components to achieve a steady state deployment capability," Hall said.

"The Army has also developed an equipping strategy that guarantees mobilized units are equipped at 100 percent. Non-mobilized Army Reserve and Army National Guard units will be equipped with training sets, and identified Army National Guard units tapped to meet the HLD requirements will be equipped at faster rates."

Creating a seamless flow from traditional to active duty status is also top on Hall's priorities for the reserves, Hall told the Oklahoma National Guard's top leadership in April. Some units' activations have been plagued with pay problems, benefits issues, and cumbersome, redundant mobilization processes.

His office is working to "eliminate the ridiculous," Hall said.

He cited the outdated requirement to change identification card status from National Guard to Active Duty when a Soldier is activated and then back again when the Soldier redeploy. "At \$40 per card, that process totaled \$140 million per year," Hall said. The need dated back to when reserve Soldiers were offered only limited access to facilities on active-duty installations.

"We are one service. We need to have a seamless flow to go active and back to reserve," Hall said. Guard Soldiers are now issued identical ID cards as active duty Soldiers and post exchange and commissary privileges are no longer limited.

Hall said he also wants homestation mobilization without the duplicity of mobilization qualifications. "DoD has already cut the mobilization time by 20 percent," he said.

TAKING CARE OF FAMILIES

Gerda Weekley is proud that she has managed not to kill all of the grass in her yard. She's gotten her car repaired and the air conditioner fixed, all by herself.

"It never fails. As soon as your husband leaves, everything starts breaking down," she said.

Weekley's husband, John, is deployed to Iraq on a security force mission with about 150 other members of the 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery, headquartered in Lawton, Oklahoma. He has been gone since last September and in theater since December.

By night, Gerda is just another National Guard spouse, raising two children and keeping the house running while her Guard Soldier is deployed. By day, she helps other Guard spouses get through long deployments and the problems associated with them.

A former reservist, active-duty Soldier, and now a spouse of a deployed Guard Soldier, Gerda is uniquely qualified for her position as the Family Assistance Center (FAC) specialist at 1st-158th FA.

When she got the news that part of her husband's battalion was being deployed, she quit her job and applied for the FAC position so she could concentrate on helping the spouses of her husband's unit.

"I wanted to make sure that the families of my battalion were taken care of during this deployment," Gerda said.

Previously called Family Support Groups in the 80's and 90's, the Guard has seen a surge of Family Readiness Group (FRG) funds and programs become available in recent years. Family readiness planning has now been formalized within the Department of Defense. For the first time, reserve component

families are included in family readiness programs and planning at the Secretary of Defense level.

Even with Gerda's previous military experience, she admits that she was never involved in her FRG until her husband was first activated in 2003. The unit stood down and didn't deploy, but it was then that John encouraged her to get involved. She recalled, "That is when I started educating myself on how the Guard works and how to be a military spouse. I knew how to be a Soldier, but being a spouse was just as difficult."

Like many Guard spouses, Gerda was not aware of the many programs available. Unlike active duty families who live on or near military installations, Guard families can be spread out geographically over hundreds of miles for a single unit. Many have never even visited an active-duty installation and have no idea how its programs work.

"I wasn't aware of anything that was available to me," Gerda said. "Active-duty families have programs that have been in place for >>>



FAMILY RESOURCES

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One of the most complete resource sites available online is MilitaryOneSource.com. Soldiers and family members can receive up to six free counseling sessions. Family Assistance Centers, generally located at the homestation of deployed units, also have lists of local resources that provide support during deployment and after the service member returns home.

WWW.GUARDFAMILY.ORG

WWW.GFTB.ORG

WWW.GFAP.ORG

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several years to help them become acclimated to military life. These programs are available to the Guard, but are not really known because the majority of the time we are so remotely dispersed and are not located near a military installation. The Guard has helped overcome the location barriers by establishing Web sites and developing training to help prepare families for deployment.”

Two of the most recent initiatives are the Guard Family Team Building (GFTB) and the Guard Family Action Plan (GFAP).

“GFTB helps you with the transition by providing you the knowledge and the tools to make transition easier,” said Gerda. “You can learn about the National Guard, military ranks, acronyms; how the Guard fits into the military structure; how to read a Leave and Earning Statement; how to manage stress and conflict; and how to deal with deployment and reunion issues.”

The GFAP program is a grass-roots process directing actions to improve Family Programs, benefits and entitlements for the National Guard community. GFAP identifies issues of concern to Guard members and their families, determines actions necessary to resolve issues, and works to resolve the issues through the proper agencies promoting the well-being of all members of the Guard community.

I knew how to be a Soldier, but being a spouse was just as difficult.

—Gerda Weekley, Family Assistance Center specialist

Monthly premiums during the years of accumulated eligibility are 28 percent of the program cost. The government picks up the remaining 72 percent. Tier 2 covers Guard Soldiers who are not called to active duty and who otherwise do not qualify for health insurance due to unemployment or lack of employer-provided coverage. They will be

eligible to enroll in TRICARE for a 50-percent cost-sharing premium. The government will pay the remaining 50 percent. Tier 3 covers any Guard Soldier who does not fit into either of the two previous categories. The Soldier will be eligible to participate in TRICARE for an 85 percent cost share. The

government contributes 15 percent of the costs. Premiums range from \$81 per month for a Soldier only who was called to active duty for contingency operations to \$767.41 for family coverage of a Soldier who enrolls at 85 percent of the cost share.

Open enrollment began in August 2005. For more information on TRICARE eligibility, see <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/reserveselect/index.cfm>.

H.R.783 would lower the age for military retired pay eligibility from 60 to 55 for members of the Reserves and National Guard. The bill would lower the retirement age for those who have served at least twenty years to begin drawing their retirement pay at age 55. A U.S. Senate measure before Congress, an amendment to S.R. 2507, would reduce the age at which Guardsmembers can access their retirement by three months for every ninety days served on active duty since 2001.

EDUCATION, BENEFITS, PAY AND RECRUITING INCENTIVES

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas Hall has stated that 9/11 signaled the end of the traditional Guard members.

“There are no weekend warriors left. There are no more ‘one weekend a month and two weeks a year,’” Hall said.

As a result, Hall said his office has been working to level the compensation between the reserves and their active-duty counterparts.

“Guard Soldiers should have the same benefits as active duty once they are activated. There has been an inequity,” he said.

Never before has the National Guard been thrust into the public and political spotlight, fueling some long sought-after legislation that would boost Guard members’ benefits.

Topping the National Guard Association of the United States’ (NGAUS) lobbying efforts has been increased TRICARE coverage and reducing the age at which Guard Soldiers can begin collecting their retirement.

Funded in the FY 2005 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA), on October 1 Guard members became eligible to qualify for TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) under its expanded Tier 2 and 3 options. Previous funding authorized Tier 1, in which a reservist accumulates one year of TRS coverage for every 90 days of active-duty service.

The Army National Guard is in the midst of a massive restructuring. Along with the rest of our nation’s forces, Guard units are being modified from a large scale, static cold-war structure to the smaller-scale, faster-moving units which are necessary to fight the Global War on Terror. Usage of Guard forces has climbed dramatically in recent years and is not likely to decline in the foreseeable future. As Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Thomas Hall stated, “The days of one weekend a month and two weeks a year are gone.” However, as this new increased operations tempo structure of the Guard is fully implemented, it will bring with it a dramatic increase in stability and predictability for Guard Soldiers, their families and employers. The future of the Guard also includes increased benefits and support, reflecting the growing level of service being asked of its members. Finally, we can be certain that the future of the Guard holds the same noble dedication to selfless service that has been the hallmark of its 370-year history. **GX**

There are no weekend warriors left. There are no more “one weekend a month and two weeks a year.”

—Thomas Hall, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs



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One of the Army's Best Kept Secrets

By Jason West

GX had the opportunity to sit down with MSG Leland Leshner of the Title 10 (T-10) program to discuss the “best kept secret in the Army.”

GX: Could you explain the T10 program for any of our readers who are not familiar with it?

MSG Leshner: Sure, the Title 10 Program is the Federal arm, for lack of a better term, of the National Guard. Most National Guard members are under State jurisdiction, whether they are the traditional, part-time Soldiers or the Full Time National Guard (FTNG), Title 32 Active Guard Reserve, (AGR)*.

T-10 Active Guard Reserve (AGR) Soldiers are stationed at over 200 active units throughout the world, most under the command of the U.S. Army, but many are under joint commands with other services. Even though we fall under the active Army legally, we are fairly autonomous with the Chief of NGB as our higher HQ's through the Director, Army National Guard.

We are at a major command level, though we are a bureau, not a command. Even those National Guard members serving in their respective States' Joint Forces Headquarters

NGB. I have input with senior National Guard Bureau (NGB) leadership that influences their decisions that impact Soldiers at all levels of the Army National Guard, and our relationships to the active Army. The level of work here is, in and of itself, a motivator to me. It is extremely rewarding internally for me to do a job well that benefits so many. I love to do things behind the scenes, without recognition and then see how it helps others. This is a very rewarding career. I will stay in the program until I retire at 20 years of Active Federal Service, unless the Illinois Army National Guard calls me back home.

GX: Is there a particular profile for the Soldiers you're looking for in the program?

MSG Leshner: Yes, a truly professional Soldier interested in the opportunity to take care of Soldiers. We need Soldiers that pay attention to detail. We want Soldiers who are more interested in taking care of others than they are in taking care of themselves. Most of our positions worldwide are E-7 and above on the enlisted side and O-4 and above on the commissioned officer side. We can bring into the Title 10 AGR Program junior enlisted Soldiers, but the nature of our work is such that we really want seasoned, experienced

GX: What are the main reasons a Soldier would want to join the program?

MSG Leshner: First and foremost is the opportunity to serve the Nation as a Guardmember anywhere in the world as a liaison between the 54 States and Territories and the Active Component.

Then there is the nature of our business. Since work at NGB is on a different level, so too is the satisfaction in a job well done. Soldiers in the units know what they are doing is important to the security of the Nation, and they can derive satisfaction from that. It is truly where the rubber meets the road. Here at NGB, the satisfaction is more complex because the results of the work are not necessarily readily visible. Due to the maturity of our force, we know what we do, while truly behind the scenes, is important to those Soldiers in the Army and those in the MTOE NG units that support the active Army in keeping our citizens free. It is more about being satisfied with being the best stage crew than being famous actors. We make sure the show goes on. We look for solutions to the problems that arise and keep them from becoming show stoppers.

One of the other “benefits” is we no longer have our AGR work Monday through

It is extremely rewarding internally for me to do a job well that benefits so many. I love to do things behind the scenes, without recognition and then see how it helps others.—MSG Leland Leshner

do not have the same level of responsibility as most Soldiers and Airmen at the NGB level.

Most of us on T-10 that have been traditional, T-32 AGR or Active Army, say that T-10 is the best kept secret in the Army. Very few of us would volunteer to trade back to whatever we were before we became T-10.

GX: Can you tell us about your experience with the T-10 program?

MSG Leshner: I am an Illinois National Guardsman. I have been on T-10 since August 1998. Once I got here, I found a home in the Guard. I've stayed in the program for several reasons: I can actually affect changes that benefit Soldiers and their families here at

Soldiers. On the commissioned officer side, we do not have a great number of Company Grade positions, so we typically do not bring Lieutenants onboard the Program. Generally, the lowest ranking commissioned officers we access are Captains. The Title 10 AGR Program also has several Chief Warrant Officer positions, from CW2 through CW5. We access both M-Day and Title 32 National Guard, and AC Soldiers into the program. We seek the best of the best to fill our openings, again, due to the nature of the NGB mission to support the States and Territories in meeting real-world active Army missions, as needed. The nature of our mission, to support the Army, especially since 9/11/2001, is too important to entrust to mediocre performers.

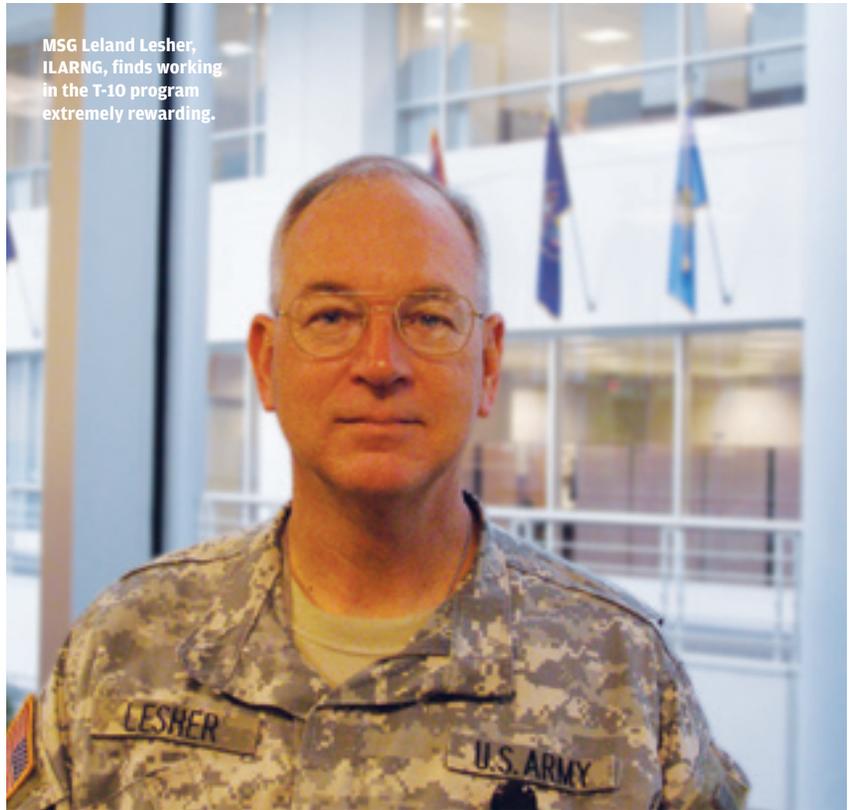
Friday and then one weekend a month and two weeks at Annual Training. Title 32 AGR Soldiers have all of that, whereas Title 10 AGR Soldiers do not. We have more family time than our Title 32 counterparts. I have been an M-Day, traditional Soldier, a Title 32 AGR Soldier, and now a Title 10 AGR Soldier. I have also been an Active Duty Marine, and I can say, without reservation, that being a T-10 AGR is the best assignment I have had in the military.

GX: Can you tell us about some of the coolest jobs available under T-10?

MSG Leshner: I would suppose the Operations Center positions are probably the “coolest”

positions we have in the Military District of Washington, (MDW). They are 24/7/365 and deal with what is going on worldwide. They are the eyes and ears of the Guard for the Chief, National Guard Bureau. Realize, though, that we have Title 10 AGR Soldiers in over 200 different units throughout the active Army. Some of those are jump status, some are with Army Rangers, and some with Special Forces units. We have T-10 AGR's working in the Pentagon, for the Secretary of Defense, for the Secretary of the Army, and in the Office of the Chief of Staff of the Army. Title 10 AGR Soldiers are everywhere the U.S. Army is. We even have several T-10 AGR's deployed in support of OIF/OEF. The rest of us are the stage crew who work hard to keep the Guard show running smoothly.

** Title 10 AGR Soldiers fall under Title 10 United States Code just like the USMC, U.S. Army, USN, and USAF. In the 54 States and Territories, Soldiers are governed by State laws and not by Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ), unless they are mobilized in support of the Active Army. Soldiers on T-10 AGR duty are under UCMJ authority of their respective Active Commands.*



MSG Leland Leshner, ILARNG, finds working in the T-10 program extremely rewarding.

Strength from Within SMC Conference 2006

By Chris West

On June 16, the leaders of the Guard recruiting and retention force came together in the scenic mountains of Keystone, Colorado. They had gathered to assess their performance for the past year, recognize the leaders in their field, discuss plans for the future and share lessons learned.

The opening session was hosted by LTC Mike Jones, Deputy Chief of Strength Maintenance, and featured an excellent roster of speakers including; LTG Clyde Vaughn, Chief of the Army National Guard, Mr. Bob Carr, Acting Deputy Undersecretary of Defense and COL Richard Guzetta, Director of Army National Guard Strength Maintenance.

There was a lot of work to accomplish at this gathering, but it was also a chance to acknowledge the past year's accomplishments. This time last year, the Guard was well below full-strength, and a commitment was made to turn recruiting around. Efforts were redoubled, new programs rolled out and substantial incentives offered.

This year's conference showed just how successful these initiatives have been in allowing the Guard to make remarkable gains toward its recruiting goals. This was accomplished during a year that saw the Guard mobilized for both foreign and domestic missions on an unprecedented scale. Despite these challenges, the Strength Maintenance team came through.

The biggest star of the show was one of these new initiatives: G-RAP or the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program. This program allows Guard Soldiers to serve as part-time Recruiting Assistants (RA). For each new recruit they help enlist, the RA earns up to \$2,000.

G-RAP has been wildly successful. On June 15, there were 60,632 Recruiting Assistants operating in all 50 States and 4 Territories. Because of their efforts, 6,345 new recruits have reported for duty. This impressive track record led LTG Blum, Chief of the National Guard to order it extended to Air Guard recruiting as well.

Despite their accomplishments, the recruiting force won't have a chance to rest on their laurels. COL Guzetta and LTG Vaughn both spoke on the need to stay motivated, focused and driven to excel. They stressed how critical it will be in the coming year to build on the current momentum. The Guard is being deployed extensively both at home and overseas and the need for good recruits remains acute. Fortunately, we have the right team for the job. **GX**



LTG Vaughn addresses the audience with words of wisdom.



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After completion of Phase I and Phase II, you will go to Camp Atterbury, Indiana, for Phase III. This pathway to a WO career is still in the pilot stage, so the only certainty will be change (for example, the addition of more Phase III sites). For training year 2006, twenty-six states have sent selected NCO's to Phase II. That means twenty-eight states have not jumped onto this pilot.

Now is a great time to get your predetermination packet into your state for training year 2007. The target deadline is October 2006. We still have thousands of openings for new technical warrant officers and hundreds of older warrant officers will soon be retiring.

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*Available opportunities as of 21 July 2006



OPERATION JUMP START

The Army National Guard Deploys to the Border

By Chris West



GX sent Departments Editor Chris West to the Border to find out what we can expect from Operation Jumpstart. He interviewed members of both the Border Patrol and the National Guard, including several Adjutant Generals and Task Force Commanders to bring you the intel.

On May 15, 2006, in a speech about Immigration Reform, President Bush declared his intention to secure our borders. The goal of this was three-fold. First, it would fulfill a homeland security mission by denying entry to potential terrorists; second, it would cut down on narcotics trafficking; and third it would help control illegal immigration.

This is no small task because the U.S./Mexico border is the busiest border in the world with the highest number of both legal and illegal crossings. The Border Patrol estimates each year, well over a million illegal aliens enter the U.S. over our southern border. The majority of these people are simply Mexicans and Central Americans who have fled the poverty of their homes in search of their own American dream. However, mixed in with this vast migration is a dangerous criminal element. These smugglers bring large quantities of narcotics into the country through the same routes used by the illegal immigrants. We must also acknowledge the possibility terrorists will seek entry to the U.S. using the same means.

THE MISSION

The job of controlling this problem falls to the U.S. Border Patrol. Over the next two years, the Border Patrol will be adding an additional 6,000 agents, developing its infrastructure, and expanding its ability to secure and process detainees. In order to assist Border Patrol agents as they make this transition, the President has deployed 6,000 volunteers from the National Guard to carry out a variety of non-law enforcement tasks. MG Charles G. Rodriguez, Adjutant General of the Texas National Guard said; "Their missions are primarily to allow Border Patrol agents to get out and do law enforcement."

These deployments will be Title 32 jobs funded at a federal level, but run by the individual states. All of them will be voluntary deploy-

This time period will include training as well as the actual mission. These deployments may or may not be tied in with their annual training depending on which state they are from. These rotational forces will maintain their current command structure and simply plug into the Border States' existing table of organization. This sort of cross-state / cross-agency operation is exactly the sort of mission the Guard excels at, both domestically and overseas.

Making things even easier is the pre-existing relationship between the Border Patrol and the National Guard. The Guard has, for years, been providing assistance in the form of Counter-Drug Task Forces. These Soldiers have been performing, on a smaller scale, the same missions they will be tasked with on Operation Jumpstart: providing support for the Border Patrol to free up more agents for active field work and law enforcement duties.

Additionally, several State-level initiatives, such as New Mexico's "Operation Centurion" and California's "Operation Gatekeeper," have provided additional support for the Border Patrol. These missions have already laid groundwork which should allow the President's plan to be carried out quickly and efficiently.

Deployed Soldiers can expect to perform a variety of duties while on the border. Most of the rotational force is currently slated for engineering projects designed to improve access and safety for the Border Patrol agents. This includes road building, fence building, installation of lighting, and environmental projects designed to reduce the impact of this work. The duration forces will have a larger variety of duties including administrative services, monitoring banks of sensors, vehicle maintenance, and finally, actual fieldwork on an Entry Identification Team (EIT). Each of these jobs filled by a Guard Soldier represents another Agent who can be in the field making arrests.

The EIT's, or spotters, are what you probably think of when you imagine our Soldiers on the border. They are usually in two to five person teams strategically placed so they can, as MG Rodriguez described, "see who's crossing when they shouldn't be, report that to the Border Patrol, and help them vector in."

This is an important point. Our Soldiers are not being sent to the

There have been concerns that the Guard is being asked to do too much . . . if so, you would expect an all-volunteer force like Operation Jumpstart to have trouble filling its ranks. Not only are Soldiers volunteering for this duty, but in some States there is a waiting list.

ments and will not affect a Soldier's eligibility for federal missions and overseas deployments.

The Soldiers will remain, at all times, within their current command structure. Although their missions will originate with the Border Patrol, they will then be passed to the Guard for completion. Core leadership will come from the individual Border States. Each State will maintain a Duration Force designed to ensure operational continuity throughout the two-year mission. These Soldiers, also volunteers, deploy for anywhere from six months to the entire two years.

LINES IN THE SAND A dual line of fencing marks the border between San Diego and Tijuana. Fencing is effective in diverting illegal traffic to areas where it is easier to make apprehensions.

The other 50 states and territories will send troops on a temporary rotational basis. These forces will deploy for approximately three weeks, depending on where they serve.

border to fight. This is not, as has been stressed by LTG Blum over and over again, a militarization of the border. Our Soldiers will have no law enforcement duties. The closest they should come to illegal immigrants is looking at them through the lens of their powerful spotter scopes. Actual interaction with suspects and the arrests themselves are the sole domain of the Border Patrol. The Guard is here to provide support only.

Some of these Soldiers, stationed in remote regions, will be armed for self-defense purposes. However, their training stresses cultural sensitivity and an awareness of the mission. They are there to secure a border shared with one of this country's most important trading partners, not defend against an enemy force. BG Kenny Montoya, Adjutant General for the New Mexico National Guard, when asked about the purpose of this cultural training said, "I want to make sure everyone realizes we're on the border with our friends and our neighbors." Although threats do exist from smugglers and other criminals,

they are minimal, and along most parts of the border, violence is rarely a problem.

In fact, the worst threat the Soldiers face will not be from bullets, but from the sun. According to MG Rodriguez, “environment is the number one danger.” A Soldier is much more likely to suffer from dehydration, heat exhaustion and other forms of exposure than any other threat. Add to that the flora and fauna of the desert, and the real danger becomes clear. As the Border Patrol puts it, “everything in the desert has fangs, thorns or stingers.”

This isn’t an impediment to the mission; in fact, in some ways it’s providing unexpected bonuses. These sorts of hazards are some of the

When groups of undocumented aliens attempt to cross the border, they will usually employ a “coyote” or guide to lead them across. These “coyotes” tend to use the same routes, depending on the sheer volume of traffic to cover their activities. These routes are known to the Border Patrol, and a variety of sensors have been strategically placed. Acoustic sensors, pressure pads, seismic sensors and cameras all collect data around the clock. When a sensor is tripped, the information is fed into a computer that analyzes the data to sort out which alerts are actual human traffic and which are false alarms.

The computer alerts a Guard Soldier on duty at HQ, and the troops swing into action. The command center utilizes a network of

This is not a militarization of the border. The closest [our Soldiers] should come to illegal immigrants is looking at them through the lens of their powerful spotter scopes. The Guard is here to provide support only.

same ones deployed Soldiers face overseas in Iraq and Afghanistan. Learning how to deal with them here at home makes this an ideal training environment. A Soldier with experience operating in a desert environment will be much more comfortable and effective if he or she is called to serve in the Global War on Terror.

Further, the tactics to deal with these dangers are the same the world over: force protection, teamwork and oversight. Here, force protection comes in the form of the Border Patrol who will provide operational security. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, certain Soldiers will be armed for self defense purposes. The second component to maintaining safety is no Soldier ever serving alone. Whether it’s the sands of Iraq or the local Armory, every Soldier travels with a battle buddy, someone to watch his or her back. Finally, every aspect of the operation is continually inspected by both Guard and Border Patrol leadership. If something is wrong, they’ll find it and fix it in short order.

The environment is a legitimate threat, but Soldiers will have the opportunity to get out of the heat and recover every day. Instead of tents and bivouac billeting, the Guard has partnered with local communities to ensure the Soldiers serving on this mission have comfortable and affordable hotels and apartments to stay in. Our Soldiers will be sleeping well in the air-conditioners’ cool breeze each night.

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

The idea of troops standing on the border with binoculars seems a little low-tech in this day and age. While the “Eyeball MK1” remains one of the most reliable tools available, this has become a high-speed 21st-century operation. The tools of the trade now include aircraft, powerful spotting scopes, sophisticated tactics; and a computer and sensor net so good, it is referred to as a “Smart Border.”

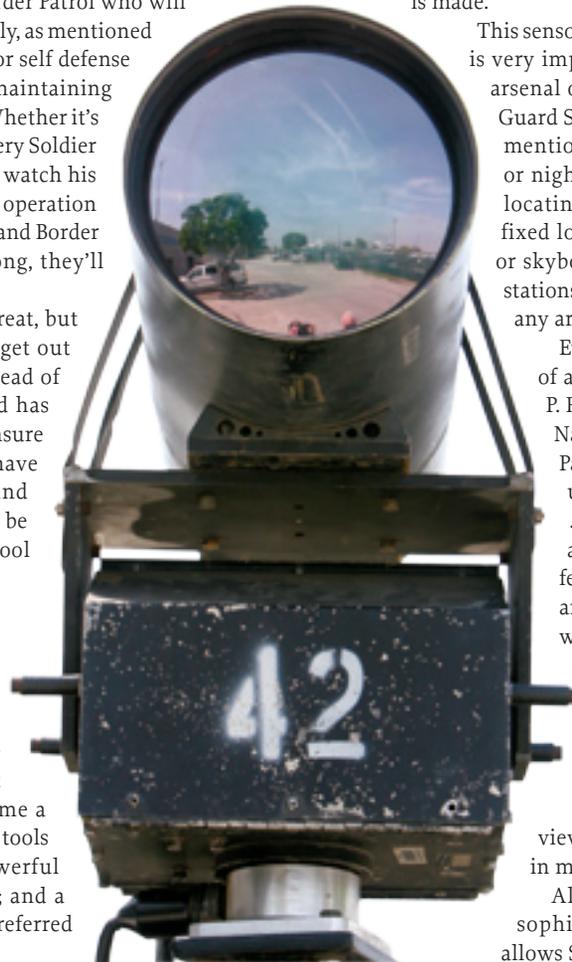
field teams, fixed scope emplacements, and even aircraft to spot the suspects and fix their position. They call the Border Patrol and help the agents vector in to make the arrest. This is an active, two-way partnership. The terrain is such that an Agent can be standing almost on top of a group of aliens without being able to see them. The Soldier, using his high-tech equipment to track the suspects, works back and forth with the Agent, literally directing every footstep until an arrest is made.

This sensor, computer, and communications network is very impressive; but it is only a small part of the arsenal of tools used by the Border Patrol and the Guard Soldiers sent to assist them. The previously mentioned spotter scopes can see for miles, day or night, and are an extremely effective tool for locating illegal traffic. They can be mounted in fixed locations or fitted onto the backs of trucks or skyboxes (mobile air-conditioned observation stations), allowing them to be deployed quickly to any area where they are needed.

Even something as simple as a fence is part of a sophisticated overall strategy. MG David P. Rataczak, Adjutant General for the Arizona National Guard, explained, “. . . the Border Patrol is focusing on building fences in the urban areas where people come across . . . and then instantly melt into the towns along the border where they are harder to ferret out. Now, those fences along the urban areas will divert them into the open desert where they are more easily apprehended.”

Additionally they employ unmanned aerial vehicles, helicopters with sophisticated observation and communications equipment, dirt bikes, and unmanned observation dirigibles known as aerostats that provide an unparalleled view of the border from an altitude measured in miles.

All of these tools are tied together by a sophisticated communications network that allows Soldiers to instantly exchange information



with HQ, Agents in the field, aircraft, local law enforcement, and any other assets brought to the mission. This network acts as a force multiplier, allowing Agents and Soldiers to be quickly placed where they are needed and can do the most good, thereby doing more with less.

THE RIGHT FORCE FOR THE JOB

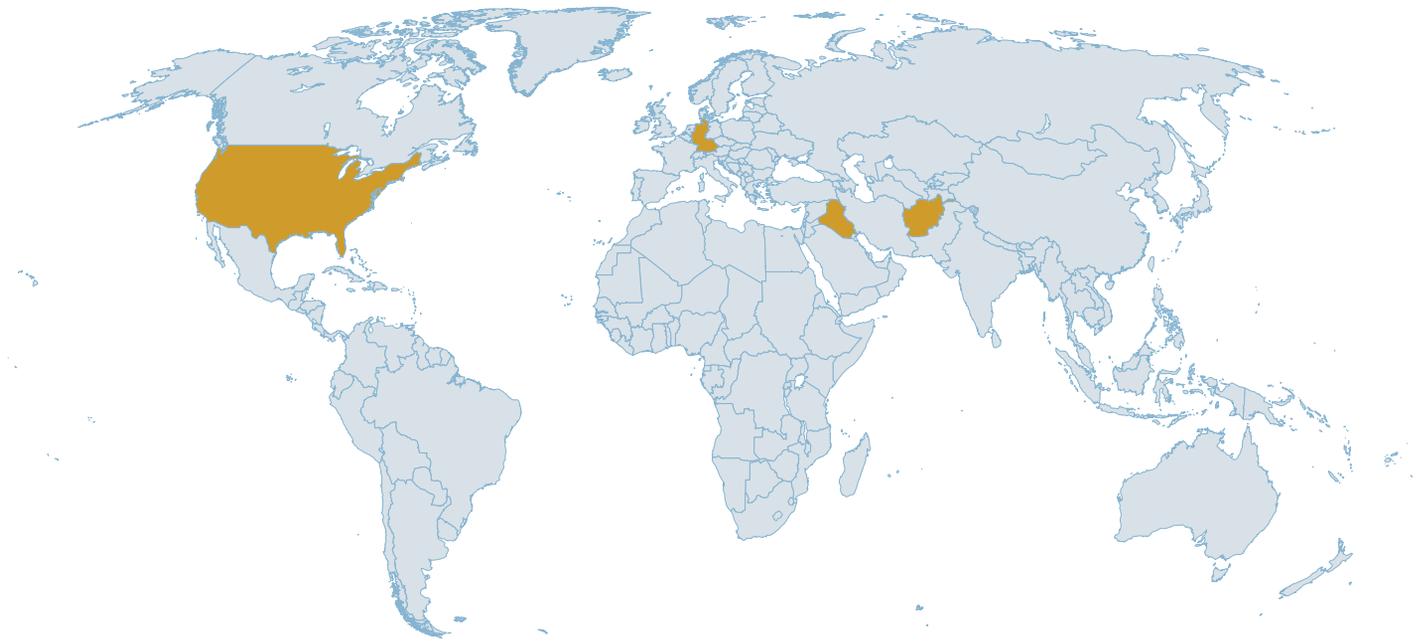
Standing up, organizing and equipping these 6,000 Soldiers to secure the border is a monumental feat of logistics. It is all the more amazing when you realize this mission must be coordinated between several federal agencies, local law enforcement, and all 54 States and Territories. The Guard members aren't worried; even though the demands being placed on them both at home and overseas are extreme, confidence is high. Admitting there were challenges to overcome, BG Montoya told us, "I think it's all about leadership and the right way to manage our resources. It's nothing we can't do and do well."

COL Ellsworth, Commander of California's Task Force Vista, said, "This is a great mission for the Guard. It capitalizes on our strength and training; it helps maintain our skills and secures our Nation's border." The Guard is perfect for this mission, it is available, ready and qualified. Moreover, the Guard's experience with domestic deployments and the inter-agency cooperation they require is unique. There have been concerns the Guard is being asked to do too much, but the evidence simply doesn't support this. If it were so, you would expect an all-volunteer force like Operation Jumpstart to have trouble filling its ranks. That hasn't been the case. Not only are Soldiers volunteering for this duty, but in some States there is a waiting list. The leadership for all four Border States is confident that it can handle this mission and still have sufficient troop strength to respond to any other missions they might be called upon to do. MG Rataczak put it best when he said, "We've got great Soldiers and Airmen; they'll get it done."

The increase in Border Patrol strength over the next two years combined with the Guard deployment is expected to produce dramatic results. Within a short time, there should be a significant downturn in illegal trafficking of narcotics and human beings. As a result of this tighter border control, it will be much more difficult for terrorists to gain the access they need to strike at us. Because of the work of these brave men and women, whether they wear Border Patrol green or Army camouflage, our communities will be safer; and we can all sleep a little better at night. **GX**



SENTINELS (top) 2LT Erik Lorenz of the NMARNG stands in front of his assigned Skybox. These mobile, air conditioned, spotting stations allow Guard Soldiers to work in relative comfort as they assist the Border Patrol. (left) SGT Zohra Legler of the CAARNG stands watch on the border in her home town of San Diego. (opposite page) This scope can see for miles, day or night. Mounted on trucks, observation booths and fixed positions, it is an invaluable tool for securing the border.



VICTORY MAP

Sharing the good news from
Guard units around the world.

Send your news to editor@gxonline.com.



UNITED STATES

RHODE ISLAND

After 17 months away from home, the 861st Engineer Company returned to a warm homecoming this past June. Working out of Ramadi, Iraq, they participated in raids on weapons caches and strong points, clearing mines and removing explosives. Members of the unit patrolled and participated in reconnaissance missions all over the Iraqi badlands.

SOUTH DAKOTA

CPT Phillip Stiles of the South Dakota National Guard, on leave from a tour in Iraq and on his way home to Rapid City on June 28, helped save the life of a man who collapsed and stopped breathing on a shuttle bus in the Dallas-

Fort Worth airport. CPT Stiles stabilized the man's head, performed CPR rescue breathing, and helped attach a mobile automatic defibrillator to the man's chest. CPT Stiles stayed with the victim until emergency services arrived.

TENNESSEE

Soldiers from the Tennessee Army National Guard's 196th Field Artillery Brigade returned home from Afghanistan in early July.

Approximately 100 Soldiers from the 196th were serving in Afghanistan for the past year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Home-stationed in Chattanooga, only the Brigade Headquarters was mobilized in April of 2005. The Headquarters unit, composed primarily of volunteers from across Tennessee, deployed to Afghanistan in July of that same year.

WYOMING

In June, the Wyoming National Guard Youth Challenge Program announced two recipients of the Merrill Lynch Scholarship. To help with the cost of higher education, Merrill Lynch has provided the National Guard Youth Challenge Foundation one million dollars to be used for academic

scholarships to assist Youth Challenge graduates from across the country. Cadets Alex WhiteBird from St. Stephens, WY, and Kyle Alexy from Afton, WY, will each receive \$2,000 scholarships.

NEW JERSEY

On June 26, the New Jersey Youth Challenge Academy Student Council sponsored a blood drive in conjunction with the American Red Cross. This blood drive was an even more outstanding success than the last one. The last Challenge blood drive ended with 41 pints, and this one garnered 59 life-saving pints! To those who missed out on this drive but would like to donate, contact the Red Cross at 1-800-GIVE-LIFE.

NEBRASKA

Approximately 60 Nebraska Army National Guard Soldiers assigned to Troop A, 1-167th Cavalry, were welcomed back to Lincoln, Nebraska on June 22, after a year-long combat tour in Iraq. At the time of its January 2005 mobilization, the unit was the first Nebraska Army National Guard combat unit to deploy to a combat zone for a combat mission since World War II. While in Iraq, the Soldiers were stationed in Ramadi as part of the 2/28th Brigade

Combat Team, Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

OREGON

In late June, the Oregon National Guard recognized Platt Electric for outstanding employer support during an award ceremony at the Oregon Military Department in Salem. Platt Electric was recognized for their continued support of the Oregon National Guard by offering civilian employment opportunities to Soldiers and Airmen. Platt Electric was presented with the Employer Award of Excellence by the Career Transition Assistance Program and the Above and Beyond Award by the Employer Support of Guard and Reserve.

WASHINGTON

The Washington Army National Guard conducted a grand opening ceremony for its Spokane Readiness Center, June 13th. Construction began in June 2005. The 68,847 square-foot facility includes classrooms, food service area, locker rooms, administrative office areas, storage and maintenance training areas, and a 6,676 square-foot assembly hall. The approximate \$9.8 million dollar Readiness Center (plus \$811,500 in design costs) will be the training and mobilization site for

over 330 Washington Guard members from the 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry as well as subordinates units of the 2nd Battalion, 146th Field Artillery and 1st Battalion, 303rd Armor.

This new facility will provide local Guard units with a modern armory for the first time in nearly one hundred years. The original Spokane Armory at 2nd and McClellan was built in 1908. After nearly 70 years, the building was purchased by the city. At that time, Guard units moved out to Geiger Field facilities, where they have been based since.

The primary role of the new Readiness Center is training and operations for the National Guard, but its important civic role was given equal consideration in designing the building. Its large assembly hall, kitchen and smaller classrooms were designed to be available for public use. The specific location, adjacent to the Spokane Fire Department complex, is in part due to the Guard's role in the state's natural and man-made disaster assistance.

UTAH

Richfield-based Alpha Battery and St. George-based Bravo Battery of the Utah National Guard's Triple Deuce (2-222nd Field Artillery) arrived in Utah via charter aircraft June 22. The approximately 450 Soldiers of the 2-222nd arrived the week before at Camp Shelby, MS, from overseas to conduct demobilization processing. The Triple Deuce was activated in January 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

VIRGINIA

More than 300 Soldiers from the 116th Infantry BCT became the first troops from VA to receive the Department of Defense Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA). The PDHRA is part of the force health protection program designed to extend the range of care for Soldiers' deployment-related health concerns. It provides education, screening, assessment and access to care for a wide variety of health and readjustment questions and concerns that may not emerge until Soldiers have been home for three to six months.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The Army National Guard was a double winner at the 2004-2005 DoD Visual Information Production Awards ceremony at the Pentagon June 22.

The Army Guard's film, "The Way of the Warrior: From RSP to BCT," received top recognition in the training category as well as the Production of the Year award. The movie traced the progress of real National Guard recruits as they

Twenty-seven U.S. Soldiers, from seventeen different countries, who are serving on the front lines of the War on Terror in Afghanistan, became the newest American citizens on July 4, 2006 during a special Independence Day naturalization ceremony at Bagram Air Base.

underwent Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C.

KENTUCKY

Soldiers from the Kentucky Army National Guard's 231st Military Intelligence Company arrived in Louisville on Saturday June 10, after a year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 231st Military Intelligence Company deployed to Iraq in June 2005. While serving in the Middle East, the Soldiers of the 231st Military Intelligence Company conducted intelligence gathering operations in Western Iraq.

MICHIGAN

Two Michigan Army National Guard units returned to Michigan June 19, following a 15-month tour of duty in Iraq. Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and hundreds of families greeted the 122 Soldiers from the Saginaw-based Company B, 1st Battalion, 125th Infantry and 11 Soldiers from the Lansing-based 1st Battalion, 119th Field Artillery.

The Soldiers were called to active duty February 2005 and sent to Camp Shelby, MS, for in-processing and mission specific training. They arrived in country July 2005. While in Iraq, the Soldiers conducted patrols, raids, ambushes, searches and base defense operations.

FLORIDA

More than 200 Soldiers from the Florida Army National Guard's 53rd Separate Infantry Brigade returned to the U.S. after almost a year in Afghanistan on July 3rd, arriving at Hunter Army Airfield.



IRAQ

The Iraqi Army's 5th Division officially took charge of military operations in

northern Iraq's Diyala province from Coalition forces during a ceremony on July 3.

Army National Guard Engineers from Co. C, 505th Engineers built tables, benches, and a bookshelf for children attending a small school in Tall Afar, Iraq, and delivered them on June 29.

Coalition forces detained a senior al-Qaida in Iraq network member and three suspected terrorists during coordinated raids southwest of Baqouba June 19.

The terrorist is reportedly a senior al-Qaida cell leader throughout central Iraq, north of Baghdad. He's known to be involved in facilitating foreign terrorists throughout central Iraq and is suspected of having ties to previous attacks on Coalition and Iraqi forces.

Coalition forces secured multiple buildings and detained the known terrorist plus three suspected terrorists without incident. Troops found an AK-47 with several magazines of ammunition and destroyed them all on site.

All coalition troops left Iraq's Muthanna province at the end of July, making it the country's first province to be responsible for its own security since the fall of Saddam Hussein.



GERMANY

The 188th Army Band, a North Dakota Army National Guard unit based in Fargo, deployed to Germany for overseas training July 8-25, 2006. The band deployed to Tompkins Barracks in Schwetzingen to fill in for the United States Army Europe Band while that band's members took two weeks block leave. In Germany, the band assumed all the duties of an active duty band, providing music for military parades and ceremonies and playing concerts at on- and off-base events.



AFGHANISTAN

Twenty-seven U.S. Soldiers serving on the front lines of the war on terror in Afghanistan became the newest American citizens on the 4th of July during a special Independence Day overseas military naturalization ceremony at Bagram Air Base.

"There are Soldiers from 17 different countries who will be taking the oath of allegiance on America's 230th birthday," said Army MG Benjamin Freakley, the coalition Joint Task Force 76 commander. "Today, these fine Soldiers will be unified as Americans."



WINNING HEARTS AND MINDS

The Unsung Heroes of the Civil Affairs Team

Story and photos by Chris West

“Winning hearts and minds” is a familiar but often misunderstood phrase. Its use in the Vietnam conflict left it with far too many negative implications. That war, as it turns out, has very little to do with the phrase’s true origins.

In fact, the phrase was coined in the fifties by Field Marshall Sir Gerald Templer, then High Commissioner of Malaya (essentially a military Governor). Templer was assigned this post by Winston Churchill to put down an insurrection being staged by communist guerrillas. Templer’s use of procedures such as incentive schemes, curfews, tight control of food supplies, extensive intelligence gathering and many other, non-standard techniques in those days resulted in his successful suppression of the rebels in less than four years (they remained a minor threat until the sixties). His phrase “winning hearts and minds” referred specifically to a type of war which must be waged using methods beyond those that are strictly military. While the lessons Templer learned were largely lost on the American forces during the sixties, his solutions for dealing with asymmetrical conflicts and insurgencies are being used in Iraq today.

The conflict in Iraq is currently very much about winning the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. We owe many of our victories to date, at least in part, to information provided by the Iraqi people. The capture of Saddam Hussein, the elimination of Uday, Qusay and even Zarqawi all originated with native informants. These are the people who are on the ground every day. They know when a stranger comes to town. They most likely know why that stranger is there, and if relations with U.S. forces are good, they’ll gladly share that information with us.

It’s critical for us to understand that sheer force alone will never prevail in this conflict. It is too deeply rooted in conflicting ideologies for that to ever be successful. In order to declare victory here, we must change an entire culture from one based on intimidation, fear and tyranny to one of freedom, justice and a democratically elected government.

To “fight” this sort of war, a new type of Soldier is required. This Soldier must have all the battle skills of his brethren, but he must have the patience of Job, and the diplomatic skills of Solomon. These also talents must be



combined with an encyclopedic knowledge of Southwest Asia, its cultures, history and socio/political dynamics. Put all of this together in a group of Soldiers and what do you get? You get the 1/34th BCT’s MAJ Kulzer and his Civil Affairs Team.

These amazing Soldiers are tasked with the job of working with the Iraqi civilian populace and their leadership to ensure the success of the 1/34th’s mission. Historically, most units have had an Officer or Senior NCO serve as the S5 or Civil Military Operations. This one



person was tasked, often as a secondary duty, with the job of acting as liaison between the troops and any indigenous personnel. COL Elicerio and the 1/34th BCT aren't buying into this structure, though. They fully understand the importance of winning over the Iraqi people and have devoted extensive resources to making this happen.

The 1/34th maintains a Civil Affairs Team that operates in the area surrounding Brigade HQ. Additionally, each Battalion has its own Civil Military Operations Team (CMOT) which conducts essentially the same mission. These groups of Soldiers have their own dedicated vehicles, personnel and resources. They don't need to beg at the motor pool when they need a convoy to a local village. The leadership of the 1/34th is bound and determined to make sure these teams have whatever they need to complete their mission.

The primary task of these teams is to go outside the wire and visit with the local villages and their leaders. These visits serve two purposes. First, they allow the teams to provide a S.W.E.A.T. assessment. That acronym stands for sewer, water, education, academics and trash, the five major infrastructure factors affecting the health and well-being of any community. These assessments are then shared with various military and non-governmental organizations (NGO's) in order that these needs can be filled.

The second purpose of these visits is to simply build personal relationships. The Iraqi culture requires that time be spent face-to-face sharing chai (tea), food and cigarettes in order to establish a strong working relationship. Ritually (and literally) breaking bread with a local Sheik goes a long way toward establishing good will. Without these centuries old rituals, any partnership we established would quickly break down.

During my time in Iraq, I was fortunate enough to spend a good deal of time with various CA and CMO teams. During the four missions I was privileged to witness, the Soldiers met with no less than a dozen different Sheiks, attended two feasts in their honor, negotiated several extremely tricky issues, and accomplished more than I can possibly relate in this short article. What

follows are a few glimpses into what the CA teams consider "just another day on the job."

One of the largest and most noticeable contributions made by the teams is the development of the country's infrastructure. In the case of the Brigade CA team this usually means building schools, water tanks and water treatment plants. By building, I don't mean with their own hands. They contract local builders, infusing money into the economy and encouraging them to develop the skills and experience needed to repeat these projects on their own. Throughout the process, they provide professional advice and overall supervision, ensuring that the projects are built to the proper specifications and that no corners are cut. The results are startling.

In one case, what was once a ramshackled collection of mud brick huts is now a marvelously clean and well-built school with several classrooms, indoor plumbing, power, and all the furniture and equipment needed to teach the next generation of Iraqis reading, writing and arithmetic.

In another instance, until the CA team arrived, most of the rural villages in their area of operations stored water in open-top, rusty old 55-gallon drums that were obviously lacking in basic sanitation. The CA team hired locals to build raised and covered tanks that would keep the water clean and fresh until it was needed, thereby significantly reducing the transmission of waterborne pathogens. It is a small thing, really; but it makes a dramatic improvement in the quality of life here.

One of the biggest impacts for the area came in the form of a reverse osmosis water treatment plant. Prior to construction of this plant, the locals drew their water directly from the horribly polluted Euphrates. This plant, though small by our Western standards, would provide clean water to all the nearby villages, thereby cutting down on the large number of illnesses and the high infant mortality caused by toxic water.

Not all the work is as gratifying or straightforward as infrastructure development. One of the more challenging tasks faced by the CA teams is dispute resolution. These skilled and experienced diplomats are often called on to settle issues between villages and the military, NGO's and even other villages. This is where their encyclopedic knowledge of the area comes in handy. Understand, this is an ancient land, and what might at first appear to be dispute over the awarding of contracts could well have roots in a tribal conflict that dates back centuries. Without a detailed working knowledge of the people, factions, and their complex relationships, there is no way to successfully negotiate any dispute.

As an example, on one particularly hot day the CA team was called out into the middle of what appeared to be a blasted wasteland. In fact, that was exactly right. This area was an ammunition storage area for Saddam's Army and had been carpet bombed during the 2003 invasion. There was still a fair bit of unexploded ordnance (UXO) in the ground. Private contractors were working to clear



(opposite) MAJ Rohrer, the outgoing commander of the CA team, says good-bye to Sheik Hassan Ali as he prepares to hand over the mission to the 1/34th. (right) Even through a translator, some humor is universal. CPT Fleming, of the 1/34th Civil Affairs team, shares a laugh with a local.

the munitions, and the CA team had been called to help mediate a potential problem. A thousand-pound bomb had been located and prepped for destruction at the edge of an Iraqi wheat field. There was a good deal of concern among the contractors that the demolition of the bomb would ignite the fields and destroy the wheat, which was almost ready to harvest.

The team gathered up the contractors and the Sheiks who owned the nearby land, and we all drove out to the area in question. Once on the scene, a heated debate quickly sprang up with the Sheiks. The CA boys patiently worked through the issues and after fifteen or twenty minutes had hammered out an agreement between the Sheiks and the contractors. A situation that could have caused significant problems had been worked out, thanks to the Soldiers' consummate diplomacy.

Not all of the "winning hearts and minds" work is done by CA teams, though. In Scania, a small base approximately halfway between Baghdad and Kuwait, the medics maintain a regular clinic for the locals. Every Monday, Wednesday and Friday, they set up outside the base and treat anyone who shows up. Many of their patients are children who have been injured in household accidents. Without these dedicated medical professionals, some of these children never would have survived.

The truth is, every Soldier in today's Army is involved in Civil Affairs. Whether they are throwing Beanie Babies or food and water to kids on the side of the road, or conducting operations with an extraordinary deal of care and cultural sensitivity, every man and woman serving in theatre today is helping win the Iraqi people over.



This type of work isn't flashy or glamorous. You won't often hear about it on the evening news. There aren't any fiery explosions and there is no body count . . . just good, dedicated Soldiers working to improve the lives of others. However, just because it doesn't play well on television doesn't mean you should discount their work. The job they do is vitally important. Thanks to their work securing the cooperation and support of the Iraqi people, Freedom stands a much better chance of prevailing. **GX**

LESSON PLAN (top) A young girl recites her lessons at one of the new schools built by the CA team. Until it was completed, she attended school in a one room mud-brick hut with no plumbing or electricity.

PRECISION (bottom) CPT Fleming carefully checks the measurements on a new water tower being built by local contractors. These towers will provide the villages with clean, safe storage for their water supply.



Red Bulls History

Part IV: North Africa

By MAJ Jack Johnson, MNARNG (retired)

Allied strategy called for a three-stage, three-front attack on Axis forces in Europe: the Soviet Union was already fighting Germany on an Eastern Front, while British and American forces would attack from the south by way of the continent's "soft underbelly." The third front, invasion from the west by way of France, would require massive preparation. The Southern Front, in the meantime, required that German forces be dislodged from North Africa.

Real war began for the fledgling soldiers of the 34th on November 8, 1942, with Operation TORCH, a three-pronged series of coordinated Allied landings in French North Africa intended to cut off the escape of General Erwin Rommel's Afrika Corps after its defeat by the British at El Alamein. Elements of the 34th landed at Algiers. The operation was successful and the 34th, joining with other Allied forces, pushed eastward into Tunisia.*

Stiff opposition by reinforced German troops was encountered in Tunisia. Many of the battles were for possession of mountain passes leading eastward, and particularly fierce fighting took place in February 1943. Engagements at Faïd Pass, where an entire battalion was taken prisoner, and Fondouk Gap were costly and discouraging. A powerful German attack near Kasserine Pass inflicted heavy casualties, but Germany's failure to follow-up enabled the Allies to recover and resume their offensive.

The next Allied objective was capture of Bizerte and Tunis, crucial ports which the Germans used for bringing in reinforcements and supplies by way of Sicily. But Hill 609 (Djebel Tahent), a rugged mass of rock in a mountainous region, barred Allied Armies from these vital ports. This hill was also the last heavily fortified German position left in North Africa.

The critical task of taking Hill 609 was given to the 34th. An attack began early on April 29, 1943, when the 3rd Battalion, 135th Infantry moved to the base of the hill and captured a small village. From there the 34th began all-out assault under intense fire. After two days the bastion was finally taken, and with Hill 609 in American hands, the German Army's defense line collapsed. It was a momentous victory and fitting revenge for the division's set backs at Faïd, Fondouk and



INSTRUMENTAL The 34th ID saw their first real action of WWII during Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of North Africa. The Red Bulls were instrumental in securing Algiers and Tunisia on the northeast coast of Africa, which ultimately resulted in the German Army's surrender of the African continent.

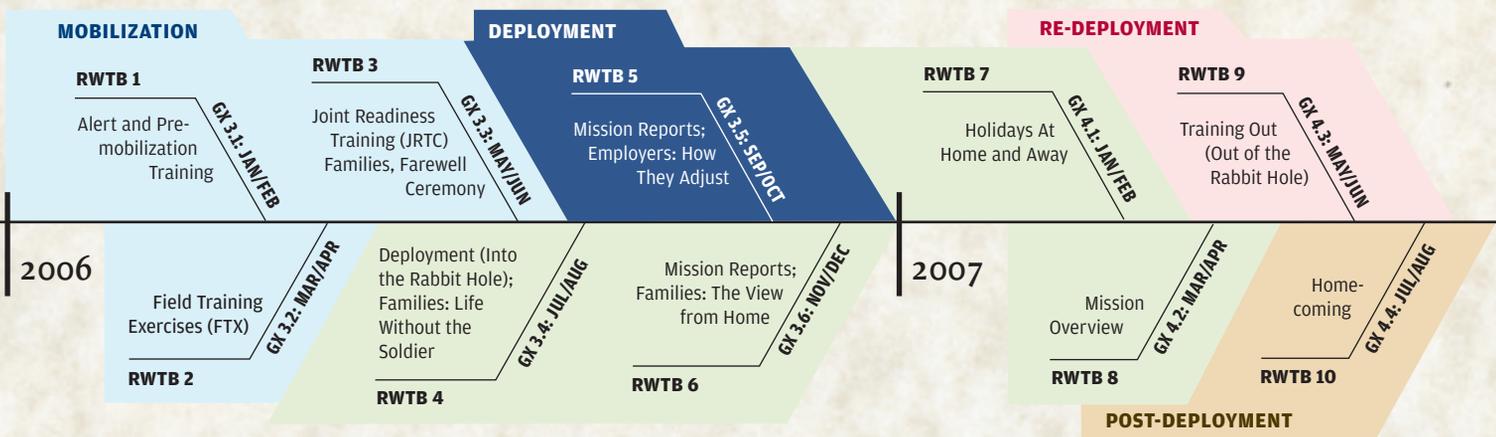
Kasserine. Two weeks later, on May 15, 1943, the enemy surrendered and the battle for North Africa was over.

The now tough, combat-hardened men of the 34th were justifiably proud of what they had accomplished, but they were acutely aware of the price they had paid: total battle casualties of the 34th in the Tunisian Campaign numbered 4,049, of which half were missing in action.

The 34th remained as a garrison force in Northeastern Tunisia until July when it was sent to Oran for another round of training. Next came Italy. **GX**

* The 34th also holds this first: the first artillery round fired by American ground forces against German troops was leveled by PFC Joseph Pisch of B Battery, 175th Field Artillery Battalion, using a British 25 pounder on November 19, 1942, at Medjez-El-Bab, Tunisia.

GX Red Bulls Coverage



CURRENT ISSUE

Red Bulls Employers Spotlight

By Keith Kawasaki

You can always focus best on the task ahead when you have a stable foundation. This is especially true for Soldiers in a combat zone. If a Soldier is plagued with worries, frantic over the safety and care of his or her family, even the best Soldiers can make fatal errors. It is imperative our Soldiers receive adequate support on the home front.

Fortunately, many employers understand this and are taking action. Following is a series of testimonies offered by Red Bulls Soldiers of the 1-167 RSTA, who were happy to brag about their bosses. Also, we speak with an outstanding Guard employer, the St. Cloud Police Department's Chief of Police, who offers a model perspective from the employer's angle.



1SG Michael V. Rigby ★ Delta FSC, 1-167 RSTA ★ Home unit: Delta FSC 250th BSB NJGX

GX: Who is your civilian employer?

MR: Ransome CAT, Bensalem, PA.
Owner: Wayne Bromley

GX: What is the nature of your job with Ransome CAT?

MR: Heavy Equipment Shop Foreman.

GX: How long have you worked at Ransome CAT?

MR: 21 ½ years.

GX: How has Ransome CAT gone above and beyond to support you and your family during deployment?

MR: My co-workers in the Bensalem branch and the owner of the company have been extremely supportive. By [Ransome CAT] keeping in touch with my family while I am away, my wife knows she has people to call if she needs help at home. By keeping some of my benefits in place, they have allowed me peace of mind for my family's future. By keeping in touch with me, sending e-mails and packages, I know I am not "out of the loop" and still a part of the team.

They held a departure luncheon for my family and me. Some of my co-workers and bosses took time out of their busy schedule to come to my official send-off ceremony and wish me well. During my holiday leave, they insisted my family and I visit them for another catered luncheon. I know when the time comes, they will also be there to support me upon re-deployment and will welcome me back.

GX: What does this support mean to you as a Soldier?

MR: I am proud that the owner of the company, my boss, and co-workers

understand my role as a Citizen-Soldier. The fact that I can serve my country and state in a time of need and still return to a job I love gives me enormous comfort and great pride. They consider my years of military experience as an asset to the company rather than an annoyance or distraction. I could not do the job I am doing in the National Guard if I did not have complete confidence in the support of my employer. That is why I stay a loyal and dedicated employee of Ransome CAT.

1SG Scot Schneider ★ B Trp 1-167 RSTA

GX: Who is your civilian employer?

SS: Omaha Airport Authority (Eppley Airfield), Omaha, NE.

GX: What is the nature of your job at the Airfield?

SS: Operations Supervisor. I monitor and coordinate daily activities around the airfield.

GX: How long have you worked at the Airfield?

SS: Six years, although I have been deployed for about three of those.

GX: How has Eppley Airfield gone above and beyond to support you and your family during this deployment?

SS: They have offered assistance of various kinds to my family while I have been away. They have called my family to make sure things were going as well as could be expected. They have provided lawn services to my wife who is allergic to grass, and they have continued to cover my family with insurance during the deployment at no cost to my family.

The first on the above list was comforting, and I was grateful they showed interest in my family's well-being. The latter shows me they will do anything possible and not just what is required by law. Eppley Airfield is a military-friendly employer. There are several retired and active Guard/Reserve service members employed within the company. They have done a fantastic job of reintegrating me into the workforce after both of my previous deployments.

GX: What does this support mean to you as a Soldier?

SS: This lets me focus on the mission. I don't have to worry about my wife and children struggling with the yard work, home maintenance or trying to figure out confusing insurance paperwork. I can rest assured my family is being taken care of while I am away. My job here is to take care of over 100 Soldiers in daily combat operations. I have plenty to think about without adding a troubling homefront. As G.K. Chesterton put it, "The true Soldier fights not because he hates what is in front of him, but because he loves what is behind him."



1SG Michael V. Rigby



FAMILY FIRST SGT Steve Kane with wife and son

SGT Steve Kane ★ HHT 1-167th Cavalry

GX: Who is your civilian employer?

SK: ConAgra Foods in Omaha, NE.

GX: What is the nature of your job with ConAgra?

SK: I am a Senior Manager of Customer Finance. Before deploying, I managed a department of seven managers and 90 staff. My teams were responsible for processing and resolving incoming payments from our customers. We resolved trade payments to and from our customers in addition to understanding and resolving short payments and other discrepancies.

GX: How long have you worked there?

SK: It will be five years in August.

GX: How has ConAgra supported you and your family during deployment?

SK: ConAgra has always been supportive of my military service. I started with the company two weeks before 9/11 and was called up for a tour on the airport security mission shortly after. Even though I had only worked there for a short time, the leadership in my department was incredibly supportive and flexible, and took the burden of covering my responsibilities without complaint. They were more concerned with supporting me and my family than how my work would get done.

Since I received my alert order for this deployment, ConAgra has been incredibly supportive. When I was first alerted, they worked with me to give me as much time off as possible so that I could spend the holidays with my family. Perhaps the biggest thing they have done is voluntarily paying me the difference between my salary and my base pay in the National Guard. The difference between the

two is fairly substantial, and without it, my wife and I would be struggling to get by. Additionally, they are still paying my healthcare benefits with our normal provider, so my wife and son are able to continue seeing their same doctors without any interruption in coverage. ConAgra is still contributing to my retirement account and 401(k), accruing vacation days, and basically giving me the same benefits I would receive if I were still there working. I also know that when I return from this deployment, they will have a job waiting for me and will be looking forward to my coming back to work.

While the company has been great as a whole, the individuals I worked with have also gone out of their way for me and my family. They threw me a very heartwarming send-off party and have helped support my wife by babysitting, having her and my son over for dinner and play dates and even giving the occasional present. I also recently received a very nice care package with DVD's, snacks, and a CD filled with pictures of the group.

GX: What does this support mean to you as a Soldier?

SK: As a husband and father of a one-year-old, knowing that my family is being taken care of financially relieves a big burden and many worries. It also allows me to focus on the mission here and my job supporting the unit leadership and its Soldiers. It doesn't ease the pain of separation, but not having to worry about some of the details at home goes a long way toward peace of mind. Knowing I have the support of my employer in this difficult time is truly a blessing for my family and me.

Great Guard Employer: St. Cloud, MN Police Department
★ **Chief of Police Dennis Ballantine**

GX: Do you have a history of military service personally?

DB: I spent four years in the Air Force right out of high school, '63-'67. I keep saying it screwed up my whole perception of the world because the recruiter promised me I'd see the world, and I saw San Antonio, TX and North Dakota. I spent most my time guarding missiles in North Dakota (laughs). Yeah, but it was a valuable experience. I enjoyed it. Since then, I've been a cop for the last 37 years.

DB: Police or fire [department] seems to be real popular, yeah. Maybe because it's the personality types. Usually a good police officer is a type A personality. And they're people who have dedicated their lives to doing public service. It's just a natural blend. I happen to think being a part of the military helps you understand what's important and what's b.s. I think they're more well-rounded because of that experience.

GX: How many folks do you have here who are in the service and are also police officers?

DB: Oh, right now, we've got four that are deployed. We must have 10 or 12. We had six gone at one time. For a department, we're about 95 officers, so that's a fairly significant impact.

GX: Are they all Guard?

DB: Guard and Reserve. Most are Guard.

GX: How does the St. Cloud Police Department handle compensation for these officers during deployment?

DB: The city has a policy that we pay the difference between the salary they would earn in the military and what they earn here. Most are officers, and they make as much or more than they make here. The city has made conscious decision that they shouldn't lose money, as far as base salary.

GX: How do you compensate for the loss of officers?

DB: That's a bigger issue. What's great is, the officers that are here are really supportive. They have to pick up more overtime. The bigger issue is getting more time off for vacation and comp. time.

GX: Do you stay in touch with Soldiers' families?

DB: We try to. Because we're not that large, it's fairly close-knit.

GX: Why do you think so many Soldiers are police officers in their civilian career?



PROUD EMPLOYER St. Cloud Chief of Police Dennis Ballantine

GX: How do you maintain the morale of your officers who are making up for the absence of those who serve?

DB: I think it's easier during a time like this—at least initially when the Iraq thing started. Like anything else, the further you get from 9-11, the further we go along, it becomes more of a burden. I think all you can do is show support by constantly talking it up. When [Soldiers] come back, we encourage them to stop back in. We never ever grumble among the troops about the fact that we're short. I think that's important—from the top, particularly. Sure, nobody likes it. Who likes it less than the people who are gone? I think really all you've got to do is set the attitude. So far, we've been very fortunate, and the people are very supportive.

Sacrifices Now Can Pay Off Later

By Johanna Altland
Grantham University

Why are more and more working adults returning to college to earn a degree? Because education pays! Research shows the more education you receive in your lifetime, the greater your earning potential becomes. In addition, you will also lower your unemployment risk and increase your opportunity for career advancement.

If you obtain a Bachelor's degree or higher in your field you can potentially:

Earn two thirds more money than a person with only some high school education. Statistics show that a degree holder typically makes more money because companies are willing to pay more to have college graduates work for them (*Bureau of Labor Statistics, Winter 2004-05 Occupational Outlook Quarterly*).

DID YOU KNOW?

- ↪ The average college student taking classes online is a working adult between the ages of 24 and 50 years old.
- ↪ Employment projections from 2004-2014 show that 6 of the 30 fastest growing occupations are computer related.
- ↪ There are over 6,900 accredited institutions of higher learning approved by the U.S. Secretary of Education in the United States.
- ↪ The unemployment rate for those who have a bachelor's degree is 3.9% versus 6.4% for those with a high school diploma.
- ↪ On average, a person with a bachelor's degree or higher earns \$40,000 more per year than someone with a high school diploma.
- ↪ Having a college degree will never hurt your career advancement, but not having one could.

Face half as much unemployment risk as a person with only some high school education. Studies completed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) show an increased demand for college graduates and predict, over the next ten years, more than 14 million job openings will be filled by workers with a bachelor's degree or higher.

Increase your opportunity for career advancement. Earning a degree may help you get promoted in your current job or get you a new job. Employers often feel college graduates are more motivated,

learn tasks more quickly, are better able to meet deadlines and have better problem solving and communication skills.

It may appear that there is too much you have to give up in order to earn your degree, such as money, time with family and friends or the potential to take on more responsibility at work. But, it is important to set your sights on the long-term payoffs: more career options, better promotion opportunities, higher earnings and lower unemployment.

STAY MOTIVATED AND REALIZE YOUR FULL POTENTIAL.

According to Winston Churchill, "Persistent effort is the true key to realizing our full potential." The journey to completing the educational goals you have set for yourself will, at times, be a long and seemingly difficult one. The key is to never give up and stay motivated.

One of the most difficult parts of online learning is staying motivated, because distance learners must take the initiative to study and complete their coursework on their own. Don't fall behind in your classes; plan ways to keep yourself energized and on task. Follow the tips below to get started:

↪ Join or create a study group

Study groups are a great way to interact with other distance learners in your class. Not only will you help each other stay on track; you will have a great pool of resources to utilize if you get stuck on a complex problem or theory.

↪ Create your own mini goals for each class

Goals give us something to work toward, something to look forward to, and something to keep us motivated along the way. Using mini goals, like reading five chapters by the end of the week, will allow you to focus on your classes and use your time wisely. Create these goals before the start of your class and utilize the syllabus and study guide to set goals that are realistic.

↪ Use positive self-talk

When you are in a stressful situation and your mind is trying to convince you that you aren't going to get things done and you aren't doing a good job, think positive thoughts, "I've never done it before. It's an opportunity to learn something new."

↪ Reward yourself

Establishing a reward system will go a long way toward keeping you motivated. Who wouldn't want a night out on the town, a new electronic gadget or a dream vacation? Set rewards that accurately reflect your accomplishments.

FIND WAYS TO BALANCE FAMILY AND SCHOOL

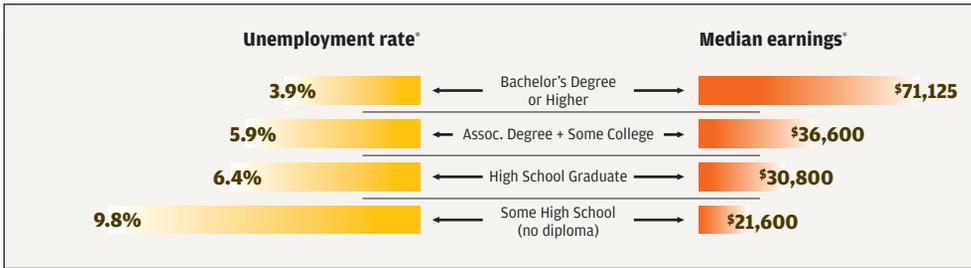
Finding time for school between family commitments, like soccer games and doctor's visits, can be difficult for working adult students. Sitting in a classroom for hours means time away from your family and studying at home means constant interruption. Follow the simple suggestions on the next page to keep peace in your household.

Persistent effort is the true key to realizing our full potential.

—Sir Winston Churchill

THE RIGHT EDUCATION PAYS

A snapshot of what to expect with and without a college education



* Figures based on 2003 estimates; source: College Board "Education Pays 2004" Trends in Higher Education Series

→ Understand that you can't do it alone

Utilize the help of your spouse, parents, relatives and friends. Don't be afraid to ask. The important people in your life will understand the benefits of earning a college degree—increased job opportunities, better pay, and lower unemployment.

→ Get organized

At the beginning of each class, mark important dates on the family calendar: due dates of papers and dates of exams. Doing this will ensure that you don't miss an important deadline and will allow you to plan ahead for any scheduling conflicts.

→ Include your family

Getting your family involved in your education will let them know that you are accomplishing something meaningful. Discuss interesting facts you have learned during dinner or during car trips. Plan family

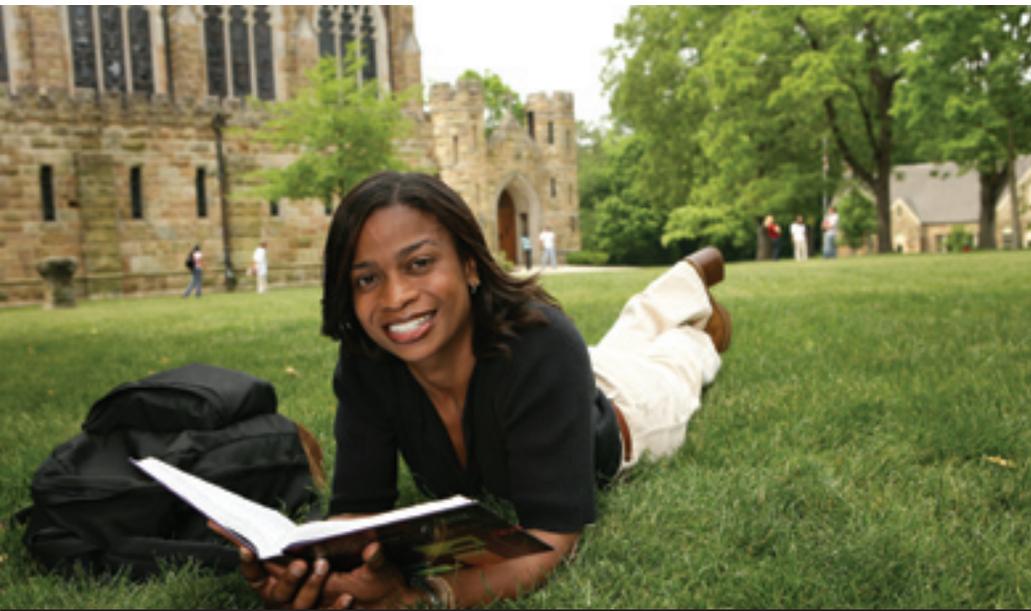
educational trips like a visit to the zoo or museum around what you are studying.

→ Study time

It can be difficult to find large chunks of time to study. Instead, focus on mini study sessions for 20-30 minutes at a time. This will break up your day, and you can fit these sessions in during lunch and during your "idle" time throughout the day. Also, set a good example for your kids by studying along side them while they complete their homework. Not only will your children learn the importance of education, you will get to spend time with them and get some work done as well.

→ Don't forget "fun" time

Set aside one evening a week to focus on your family. Play games, go for ice cream, or watch a movie together—this quality time will go a long way. **GX**



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Dealing with Post-Deployment

How Post Deployment Health Reassessment Can Help

Courtesy of NGB

The Army National Guard genuinely appreciates your dedicated service and the personal sacrifices you made while deployed in support of our great Nation. As a valued member of the Army National Guard, your continued health and well-being is our number one priority. It is with this goal in mind, that the Army National Guard, as a part of a Department of Defense force health protection program, instituted the Post Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) Program to help identify deployment-related health concerns and assist Soldiers in accessing the health and re-adjustment services to which they are entitled at no personal cost.

We are committed to providing every Soldier with the healthcare programs needed to maintain readiness, fitness and well-being throughout the deployment cycle. The PDHRA is designed to determine your healthcare needs and to remove any obstacles that may stand in the way of getting those needs met.

FAQ

What is PDHRA?

PDHRA is part of the force health-protection program. It is designed to enhance and extend the deployment-related continuum of care by providing education, screening, assessment and access to care for a wide range of questions and concerns you may have about your health after you return from deployment.

Why do we need a new program?

We have learned over the past few years that deployment health concerns may not be noticed immediately after deployment, when you completed the Post Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA). Furthermore, the Army recognizes that Soldiers focused on going home may be reluctant to report their concerns at demobilization, since going home is their top priority. Finally, readjustment issues may not emerge until a Soldier re-enters their work and family environment. After you have had time to reflect on your deployment and post-deployment experiences, you may be in a better position to identify concerns, questions, and issues you wish to discuss with a healthcare provider—and PDHRA offers you an opportunity to do so.

Who should complete the PDHRA?

All Soldiers who have returned from deployment to a combat zone since 11 September 2001 will have the opportunity to participate in PDHRA. Ideally, Soldiers will complete the program 3-6

months after their PDHA, but individuals past this window are still eligible. However, if you feel you are in need of immediate medical advice or attention, you do not have to wait to complete the PDHRA in order to access care. Please contact your healthcare provider directly if any healthcare concerns arise at any time post-deployment.

Is it a mandatory program?

PDHRA is mandatory for all current Army National Guard Soldiers. How much or how little information you disclose, of course, cannot be mandated. Obviously, Soldiers who are no longer a part of the military have the option to participate, but cannot be required to do so.

What can PDHRA do for me?

The PDHRA empowers you to take control of your health. By identifying your health and readjustment concerns early, you can resolve problems that could - if left unattended - negatively affect your deployment status, career, and life beyond deployment.

What can PDHRA do for my family?

Your family's peace of mind is an important part of your own well-being. Some family members worry about how deployments affect their loved one's health. When you complete the PDHRA, you can reassure them that any health concerns you have will receive professional care.

5 STEPS TO GET STARTED

1 3-6 months after you complete the Post Deployment Health Assessment (PDHA), you become eligible for the PDHRA program.

2 Your Commander will direct you to begin one of four ways:

- ★ Complete your portion of the DD Form 2900 on a tablet PC during your unit's battle assembly.
- ★ Complete your portion of the DD Form 2900 online using your AKO login.
- ★ Receive a call from the PDHRA Call Center asking you to complete your PDHRA screening.
- ★ Place a call to the PDHRA Call Center (1-888-PDHRA-99) to complete your portion of the DD Form 2900 over the phone.

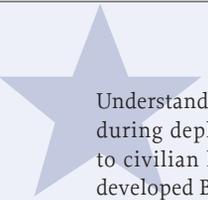
3 Once you have completed your portion of the DD Form 2900, you will begin the PDHRA screening. If you participate in PDHRA during your unit's battle assembly, you will sit down with a Physician's Assistant or a Nurse Practitioner for a face-to-face screening. If you complete your portion of the DD Form 2900 online or over the phone, the healthcare provider screening will conduct the screening over the phone.

4 If you indicate health concerns that require further evaluation, the healthcare provider will ensure that you are provided with contact information for the most convenient VA facility, Military Treatment facility, or TRICARE provider. They will also complete a PDHRA-specific Line of Duty (LOD) DA Form 2173 to ensure that you are not billed for this evaluation appointment.

5 Once your PDHRA assessment is completed, you will be provided a copy of your DD Form 2900 and your DA Form 2173 if one was generated. Copies of these documents will also be placed in your Medical Record. After completing your PDHRA screening, you will have all of the information and documentation you need to address your deployment-related health concerns.



www.virtualarmory.com/mobiledeploy



Understanding that many coping skills Soldiers must develop during deployment may cause difficulties once they return to civilian life, the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research developed Battlemind II Training to assist with the transition. If you can relate to any or all of the points below, you may well benefit from services provided by PDHRA.

BUDDIES (COHESION) VS. WITHDRAWAL

Cohesion in combat results in bonds with fellow Soldiers that will last a lifetime. But back home, re-establishing bonds with friends and family that have changed takes time.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

Felt close to buddies over there but now feel alone?

ACCOUNTABILITY VS. CONTROLLING

Accountability at home means the small details are no longer important; family decisions and personal space are best shared.

Battlemind Check:

Still having trouble letting others share in making decisions?

TARGETED VS. INAPPROPRIATE AGGRESSION

Targeted aggressiveness: in combat, the enemy is the target; back home there are no enemies.

Battlemind Check:

Getting into fights or heated arguments?

TACTICAL AWARENESS VS. HYPERVIGILANCE

Tactical awareness in combat requires alertness and sustained attention; at home, it takes time to learn to relax.

Battlemind Check:

Drinking to calm down or help you sleep?

LETHALLY ARMED VS. "LOCK & LOAD" AT HOME

In combat, it's dangerous to be unarmed; at home, it's dangerous to be armed.

Battlemind Check:

Threatened someone with a weapon?

EMOTIONAL CONTROL VS. DETACHMENT

Emotional control in combat is necessary; at home, limiting your emotions leads to relationship failures.

Battlemind Check:

Can you show only anger or detachment?

MISSION OPSEC VS. SECRETIVENESS

OPSEC: "need to know" now includes friends and family.

Battlemind Check:

Haven't discussed deployment with those closest to you?

INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY VS. GUILT

Responsibility in combat involves making life and death decisions in the heat of battle; at home, it is learning from these decisions without second guessing.

Battlemind Check:

Still feeling guilt about things that happened in combat?

NON-DEFENSIVE VS. AGGRESSIVE DRIVING

Combat driving is necessary to avoid danger in the combat zone, but is dangerous at home.

Battlemind Check:

Chasing adrenaline highs by driving fast?

DISCIPLINE & ORDERING VS. CONFLICT

Giving and following orders involves a clear chain of command which does not exist within families and friends.

Battlemind Check (self and buddy):

Have ongoing conflicts over decisions?

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For full details, visit www.battlemind.org

National Guard Announces TRICARE Reserve Select

By MAJ Liz Kirby and Ms. Sue Pinto



The National Guard is concerned about the well-being of its Servicemembers and their families, which is why the new TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) program is being initiated. The program will now help these individuals receive the healthcare they deserve by allowing every member of the Selected Reserve the option to purchase health coverage from TRICARE.

TRS was originally authorized in NDAA 05 as a premium-based TRICARE Standard-like benefit for National Guard members who supported a contingency operation. NDAA 06 provides enhancements to the original TRS and allows ALL National Guard members in the Selected Reserve to purchase TRICARE Standard coverage. TRS will be implemented during Summer 2006 as a three-tiered benefit with separate qualification requirements and premium rates for each tier.

Selected reserve members must work with their service personnel offices to determine which one of three TRS tiers they qualify for. They must have their eligibility verified by their service personnel office and complete the Department of Defense Form 2895, "Agreement to Serve in the Selected Reserve for TRICARE Reserve Select" before they can submit their application to purchase TRS coverage. See your MILPO for more information about how to sign up for TRS. Only qualified selected reserve members may submit an enrollment form with first month's premium payment to purchase coverage.

1 TIER

National Guard member may purchase **one full year** of TRS Tier 1 coverage **for each 90-day period of continuous active duty for contingency.**

COST: 28% of Total Premium *

**Member Only = \$81.00/mo.
Member+Family = \$253.00/mo.**

(Prices based on 2006 figures)

2 TIER

National Guard member may purchase Tier 2 if they agree to remain a member of the Selected Reserve and **meet one of the following criteria:**

- ★ National Guard member is receiving unemployment compensation
- ★ National Guard member is not eligible for an employer-sponsored health plan
- ★ National Guard member is self-employed

COST: 50% of Total Premium *

**Member Only = \$145.29/mo.
Member+Family = \$451.42/mo.**

(Prices based on 2006 figures)

TIER 3

National Guard members may purchase Tier 3 if they agree to remain a member of the Selected Reserve and **do not qualify or have not elected to purchase TRS Tier 1 or Tier 2** health care coverage (Tier 3 is for all others).

COST: 85% of Total Premium *

**Member Only = \$247.00/mo.
Member+Family = \$767.41/mo.**

(Prices based on 2006 figures)

For more information, visit:

www.defenselink.mil/ra
www.tricare.osd.mil

*The total cost of the Department of Defense (DoD) premium as determined by the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs (ASD H/A).

How to Avoid Identity Theft

Courtesy of USAA

With one unfortunate incident, 26.5 million U.S. veterans had their personal information compromised, and it could just as easily happen to anyone of us. The USAA Educational Foundation (www.usaaedfoundation.org) offers the tips below to help military members protect themselves from identity theft and detect if they've been a victim.

Nothing you can do will guarantee protection against identity theft in all circumstances. However, you can minimize your risk by managing personal information with care and caution.



10 TIPS TO PREVENT ID THEFT



HOW TO DETECT ID THEFT

If you are a victim of identity theft, you can minimize damage to your name, finances, and credit history by detecting it early. To do so, you should begin taking the following steps immediately.

MONITOR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Carefully monitor every statement from your bank, credit card company, and other financial institutions. Review transactions carefully for unexplained charges or withdrawals, and dispute anything that looks suspicious. This is the most common way victims discover misuse of their identity.

REVIEW YOUR CREDIT REPORT

Order your credit report from any of the three credit reporting agencies at least once each year, and review it carefully. Make sure all personal information is correct, such as names, addresses, and phone numbers. Make sure all listed accounts are yours. Check inquiries on your report to see if they look suspicious or seem excessive.

EXAMINE YOUR MAIL

Scrutinize your mail for signs of identity theft. Have you received credit cards for which you did not apply? Are bills or bank account statements missing? Have you failed to receive new credit cards as expected when current cards are about to expire? Have you received letters from debt collectors or businesses about merchandise or services you did not purchase?

If any of these situations arise, follow up quickly with creditors. An identity thief may be tampering with your accounts.

- 1 Memorize your Social Security number. Never carry your Social Security card in your wallet or purse.
- 2 Store your wallet or purse in a secure location while at work or public places such as fitness centers.
- 3 Buy a cross-cut shredder. Use it as a secure means of disposal for documents with personal or financial information—such as unsolicited credit card applications, credit receipts or utility bills.
- 4 Memorize your PINs. Do not write them down unless you must. Never keep them with their cards, and do not share them with anyone. If possible, do not use the same PIN for multiple cards or services.
- 5 Do not provide personal information over the phone, e-mail or Internet unless the recipient is a known and trusted source.
- 6 Make sure the Web site uses encryption technology to safeguard your information. Most Web sites provide some acknowledgement that they are using encryption to transfer financial information. This acknowledgement may appear as a yellow padlock symbol in the status bar of your browser or a pop-up window indicating an encrypted or secured site.
- 7 Call the credit reporting agencies at (888) 5OPTOUT or (888) 567-8688 to remove your name from all mailing lists the agencies supply to direct marketers.
- 8 Deposit checks directly to your bank account. Do not mail checks from your home mailbox if it is unsecured.
- 9 Do not have unnecessary personal information, such as Social Security or driver's license numbers, printed on personal checks.
- 10 Do business with responsible companies that take steps to protect their customers from identity theft.

The USAA Educational Foundation, a nonprofit organization, does not endorse or promote any commercial product, service, or supplier.



www.usaaedfoundation.org

AIRBORNE ASSAULTS

ARNG Fights Wildfires by Air



WHERE THERE'S SMOKE
Wildfires rage across the
ridgeline at Rivera Mesa
in New Mexico.

By Chris West

Each year, wildfires threaten lives, destroy homes and cause millions of dollars in property damage throughout the United States. In 2005 approximately 8.7 million acres were consumed by wildfire, and unfortunately, 2006 is shaping up to be even worse. So far this year, there have been almost twice as many fires as this time last year. That's an additional million acres of forest burned to ash.

The Army National Guard, as part of its domestic mission, provides ongoing support to both State and Federal agencies in combatting this threat. This support takes many forms, including Soldiers with shovels and mattocks on the ground, supply and logistic support, and

fires. These missions are tasked to them each day by the agency with operational command over that particular fire. Typically, these will be the Forest Service, the National Park Service or the Bureau of Land Management.

Placing Guard Soldiers under the command of these agencies makes a lot of sense once you meet the folks running the show. These are professional firefighters whose bearing and attitude are those of hardened combat veterans. Each one is educated in the latest scientific methods for fire prevention and firefighting. They have, over the course of many fires, mobilized and coordinated assets from multiple private and government agencies. They have what it takes to pull together a diverse group of individuals to respond quickly to

We are talking about flying conditions that, at their worst, can be described with terms like “fire tornado”. These men treat it like it was just another ho-hum day at the office. Ice water in the veins is apparently a job requirement.

even C-130 aircraft that drop fire retardants. Inevitably though, the first Soldiers called up to fight a wildfire are the helicopter crews. These aerial firefighters use buckets suspended under their aircraft to deliver water onto a fire with pinpoint accuracy. Their mobility, rapid response and can-do attitude have made them an indispensable asset to the groups they are sent to assist.

The crews are tasked with a variety of missions. Their ability to quickly access remote terrain makes them ideal for transporting fire crews and supplies, evacuating casualties and of course, putting out

an emergency. However, their greatest recommendation is their fierce dedication to safety. They do this dangerous job every year, and they are very good at making sure everyone comes home at the end of the day.

A good deal of technology goes into keeping the aerial firefighting crews safe. The first and most obvious is their clothing. Flight suits, gloves, boots and flight helmets are all made of Nomex and other fire-proof materials. In addition to this clothing, each crew carries with it a fire shelter. These high tech tents are for an absolute worst-case

scenario in which a crew is down and cannot escape an oncoming fire. By taking cover in these shelters, the crews can maintain their own breathable air supply and are protected from the radiant heat of a fire.

Additional safety technology is seen in the tight air traffic control that prevents collisions in the swirling smoke. It's in the communications network that allows ground crews to communicate directly with their airborne teammates as well as their mission commanders. It's in the weather monitoring, the spotter planes, the computer models of fire behavior and much more. Fighting wildfires has most definitely moved into the 21st century.

Perhaps the most impressive technology are the aircraft themselves. The aircraft used to fight fires come in two varieties: fixed wing and helicopters. The fixed wing aircraft range from single-engine planes similar to agricultural sprayers to huge Air Guard C-130's that disperse enormous amounts of chemical fire retardants.

The National Guard utilizes two of its most reliable and stable rotary platforms for firefighting: the UH-60 Blackhawk and the CH-47 Chinook. These two helicopters are able to quickly access remote regions to deliver firefighting ground crews and supplies as well as evacuate casualties and deliver water directly on target.

This last task is accomplished through the use of a clever device known as a Bambi Bucket. This collapsible bucket is suspended underneath a helicopter and lowered into almost any available water source. The water is then flown to the target and released by means of a drain placed at the bottom of the flexible bucket. These drains are specially shaped to disperse the water in a pattern designed to extinguish as much of the fire as possible.

The great advantage of the Bambi Bucket is it allows helicopter crews to pull water from sources close to a fire. Streams, ponds and even swimming pools can be used. The only requirement is the water be at least a foot deep. This cuts down dramatically on travel time to and from the fire. Considering the Blackhawk can carry over 900 gallons of water and the Chinook almost 2,000 on each of these short trips, it's easy to see their value.

Of course, this all sounds too good to be true, and to a certain degree, it is. The gear works as advertised, but in the end, it's the crews that must make the difference. Make no mistake; this is hard, dangerous work that can be done safely only by serious professionals.

CW5 Andy Anderson, a Blackhawk pilot for the New Mexico Guard, describes a nightmarish flying environment of swirling winds and non-existent visibility. Of course, he tells the story the way most people describe rush hour traffic, just another day.

When a wildfire burns, it super-heats the surrounding air which quickly rises. This creates a vacuum at ground level that draws in cooler air. As a result, flying near a fire can get pretty exciting.

Thermals caused by these convection currents can easily slap a helicopter around. This would be challenging enough for any pilot, but don't forget: there are 900 gallons of water suspended underneath the Blackhawk. While the Bambi Buckets are great fire-fighting tools, being suspended at the end of a long line makes them inherently vulnerable to snags on trees, power lines and other obstacles.

But wait, there's more. As the Chief pointed out, the smoke above a wildfire is thick and often completely opaque. Combined with the brutal winds, visibility can suddenly drop to nothing. It actually gets so bad that parts of the helicopter have to be sprayed with high visibility fluorescent orange paint to make it easier for other aircraft to see them and avoid collisions.

If that weren't enough, the crews often work brutal hours. According to GEN Montoya, the Adjutant General of New Mexico, during a recent week, his Blackhawk fire-fighting crews each logged around fifty hours of flight time. Flight time . . . that's time in the air only; that doesn't take into account all of the work the crews have to do on the ground. Pre-flight checks, briefings, maintenance, planning and a million other details have to be completed.

Despite this fierce operational tempo and its fatigue-inducing schedules, the crews have to remain sharp. This is hard flying in some of the most difficult conditions imaginable; it requires meticulous attention to safety, procedure and detail. Fortunately, that's exactly

how these Soldiers have been training their entire Guard careers.

It all sounds pretty rough, and not everyone is cut out for this work; but the pros on Chief Anderson's team approach it with a studied nonchalance. They treat this mission like it's just another day in the air. Their casual professionalism is stunning. We are talking about flying conditions that, at their worst, can be described with terms like "fire tornado." These Soldiers treat it like it was just another ho-hum day at the office. Ice water in the veins is apparently a job requirement.

These helicopters and their crews are important tools for controlling wildfires. As Guard assets, they are available on extremely short notice. They provide high-speed firefighting in remote areas with accurate water drops, allowing targeting of smaller flare-ups. They deliver ground crews directly to the locations where they can do the most good. By providing this assistance, the National Guard is helping the Forestry Service, the States and the various other agencies fulfill their mission: to save homes and lives. **GX**



UNSUNG HERO SSG Ian Weiger performs routine maintenance on the tail rotor of a Blackhawk.



RACE TO THE FINISH (top right) Greg Biffle in the #16 National Guard car finished fourth in the 3M Performance 400 race at Michigan International Speedway.

(PHOTO BY TODD WARSHAW/GETTY IMAGES FOR NASCAR)

(left, top to bottom) Company G of the 140th Aviation Regiment placed their sticker on the #16 race car during the Infineon Race in California in June; SGT Brandon Wright of Company G, a flight engineer for the 140th Aviation Regiment of the California Army National Guard, works at the back of a Chinook during the flight that safely carried Greg Biffle's race team from Oakland, California, to Infineon Raceway before the race in June. The Chinook crew consisted of PIC W2 Joseph Rosamond, co-pilot MAJ Nader Araj, and flight engineers SSG Edward Moe and Wright; Doug Richert, Crew Chief (right), and members of the pit crew exit the Chinook on their way to the race. (PHOTOS ON LEFT BY KATHY WILLIAMS)

The Rain Can't Stop a Top 5 Finish

Courtesy Roush Racing Inc.

Greg Biffle and the National Guard team arrived in Michigan for the July 18th 3M Performance 400 with what they felt would be the car to beat. Friday's qualifying started Biffle in tenth place, on the outside of row five. After topping the time charts during both of Saturday's practices, Biffle felt confident about his chances at the race. When the green flag dropped that Sunday, Biffle immediately began to pick up positions. By lap 3, he had picked up four spots and was running in the sixth position when the first caution of the afternoon came out. Biffle and the team opted not to pit and took the restart on lap 7 from the sixth position.

The second caution of the day came out on lap 10 for rain. Biffle reported that the car was loose in turns one and two but opted to stay out to maintain track position. A caution on lap 22, however, allowed him to pit for four tires, fuel and a wedge adjustment. Biffle returned to the track in the 15th position as several teams opted not to pit.

Another caution on lap 31 allowed him to gain some track position by staying out. He restarted in the seventh position on lap 36. Biffle had picked up one position when another caution for rain came out on lap 54. He pitted for four tires, fuel and a wedge

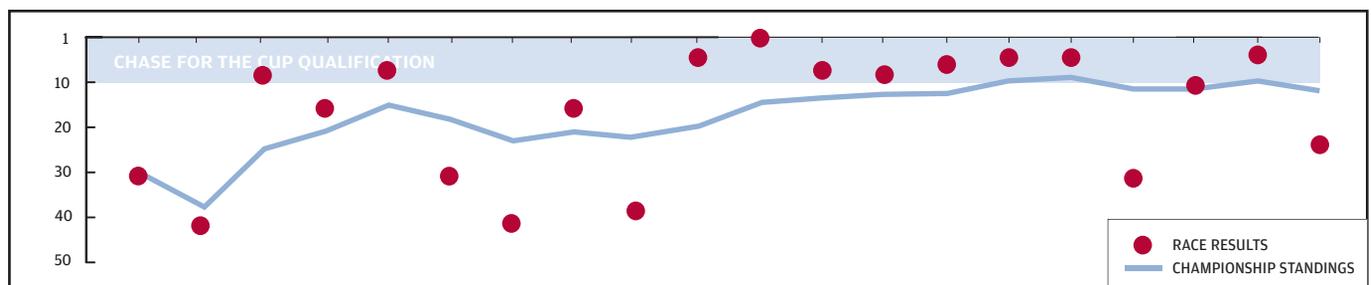
adjustment. The crew sent him back out in the fifth position for the restart on lap 59.

After two more cautions, the National Guard/Charter crew sent Biffle back out in the third position for the restart on lap 84. Biffle dropped back to fifth before making his way back through the frontrunners to the second position behind leader Carl Edwards. During a caution on lap 111 for debris, Biffle brought the National Guard/Charter Ford to pit road for what would be his final pit stop of the day. He took on four tires, fuel, a wedge adjustment and an air pressure adjustment and returned to the track in the fourth position for the restart on lap 116.

By lap 122, the final caution for rain came out and Biffle was in the fourth position. NASCAR called the race shortly after and Biffle was credited with a fourth place finish at Michigan International Speedway.

"I think I had a car I could win with here and it just breaks my heart that it rained," said Biffle. "If it would have stayed green for a two-tire run green flag cycle, I think I could have had a pretty good lead and maybe another win. It was a good points day for us though." **GX**

THE SEASON SO FAR

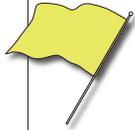


Catch the Wave

Everyone knows what a checkered flag is, but what do all the other flags used in NASCAR races mean?



GREEN The track is clear and cars may proceed at speed. This flag is used to signal the beginning of the race and any restarts.



YELLOW (CAUTION) The track is not clear. Slow down and hold your position behind the pace car. This flag is used to signal an accident, debris caused by contact or mechanical failure, or weather-related issues.



RED The track is unsafe and there is a situation that requires immediate attention. Cars must go to a designated location and stop.



BLUE WITH YELLOW STRIPE A faster car or a group of leaders is approaching from behind. This flag does not make it mandatory for slower cars to move over for the leader of the race, but is simply a strong suggestion. This flag gets a workout at tracks like Bristol and Martinsville, where traffic becomes a major factor.



BLACK The most dreaded of the flags, the driver must come into the pits immediately for consultation. Normally, this flag is waved at a driver either because he has a mechanical problem or has broken a rule.



BLACK WITH WHITE CROSS Cars that refuse to acknowledge the black flag are shown this flag, which means NASCAR will no longer score them until they come into the pits for consultation.



GREEN AND WHITE CHECKERED Introduced in 2004 to prevent races from ending under caution, this flag is used if there is a yellow flag in the last few laps of a race. Once this flag is waved, the race is restarted with two laps remaining. If another caution occurs, the race ends.



WHITE Once the race leader nears the podium, this flag is waved indicating there is one lap remaining in the race.



CHECKERED You definitely want to be the first driver to see this flag. It means the leader has crossed the finish line and the race is over.

AIR PRESSURE

With the advent of radial tires with stiffer sidewalls, changing air pressure in the tires is another setup tool akin to adjusting spring rates in the vehicle's suspension. An increase in air pressure raises the "spring rate" in the tire itself and changes the vehicle's handling characteristics. If his race vehicle was "tight" coming off a corner, a driver might request a slight air pressure increase in the right rear tire to "loosen it up."

CAMBER

Camber addresses the angle at which a tire makes contact with the track surface. "Positive camber" indicates the angle of the tire is tilted away from the vehicle's centerline, while "negative camber" indicates the tire is tilted toward the centerline. A typical oval track setup would have positive camber in the left front and negative camber in the right front to help the vehicle make left-hand turns.

DOWNFORCE

The air pressure over the surfaces of a race vehicle creates "downforce," or weight, on that area. In order to increase corner speeds, teams strive to create downforce increases tire grip. The tradeoff for increased corner speeds from greater downforce is increased drag that slows straightaway speeds.

MARBLES

(Also referred to as "loose stuff.") Bits of rubber that have been shaved off tires and dirt and gravel blown to the outside of a corner by the wind created by passing vehicles comprise the "marbles" that are often blamed by drivers for causing them to lose control.

PUSH

(Also referred to as "tight" or "understeer.") "Push" occurs when the front tires of a vehicle will not turn crisply in a corner. When this condition occurs, the driver must get out of the throttle until the front tires grip the race track again.

RESTRICTOR PLATE

This device limits the power output of the motor and hence slows both the acceleration and the overall top speeds obtainable by the race car. Following a devastating crash in 1987 in which several spectators were injured, NASCAR NEXTEL Cup instituted restrictor plates at Daytona International Speedway and Talladega Superspeedway.

SAFER BARRIER

The Steel and Foam Energy Reduction (SAFER) barrier, is a new technology that absorbs a crash along more of the wall, preventing cars from bouncing back into the track.

Racing Cheat Sheet

Confused by all the jargon thrown around on raceday? Here are a few racing terms to put you in the know.

DRAFTING

The practice of two or more cars, while racing, to run nose-to-tail, almost touching is called drafting. The lead car, by displacing the air in front of it, creates a vacuum between its rear end and the nose of the following car, actually pulling the second car along with it.

GROOVE

Groove is the slang term for the best route around a racetrack, the most efficient or quickest way around the track for a particular driver. The "high groove" takes a car closer to the outside wall for most of a lap, while the "low groove" takes a car closer to the apron than the outside wall. Road racers use the term "line." Drivers search for a fast groove, and it has been known to change depending on track and weather conditions.

HAPPY HOUR

Slang term for the last official practice session held before an event is happy hour. It usually takes place the day before the race and after all qualifying and support races have been staged.

LOOSE

(Also referred to as "free" or "oversteer.") A condition created when the back end of the vehicle wants to overtake the front end when it is either entering or exiting a turn. In qualifying mode, teams walk a fine line creating a setup that "frees the vehicle up" as much as possible without causing the driver to lose control.

LUCKY DOG

Lucky Dog is the driver that is one lap down closest to the leader during a NASCAR race when a caution is called. This driver then moves to the end of the line of the cars that are on the lead lap. This rule was instituted to prevent drivers from racing back to the start line when a caution was called.

SILLY SEASON

Slang for the period that begins during the latter part of the current season, wherein some teams announce driver, crew and/or sponsor changes.

TRACK BAR

(Also referred to as a "Panhard bar.") This bar positions the vehicle's rear end housing from left-to-right-under it. In calibrating the vehicle's "suspension geometry," raising or lowering the track bar changes the rear roll center and determines how well it will travel through the corners. During races, this adjustment is done through the rear window using an extended ratchet. Typically, lowering the track bar will "tighten" the vehicle and raising the track bar will "loosen" it.

VICTORY LANE

Sometimes called the "winner's circle." The spot on each racetrack's infield where the race winner parks for the celebration—a place we hope to see the #16 Army National Guard car.

WEDGE ADJUSTMENT

Refers to the relationship from corner-to-corner of the weight of the race vehicle. Increasing the weight on any corner of the vehicle affects the weight of the other three corners in direct proportion. Weight adjustments are made by turning "weight jacking screws" mounted on each corner with a ratchet. A typical adjustment for a "loose" car would be to increase the weight of the left rear corner of the vehicle, which increases the weight of the right front. A typical adjustment for a "tight" vehicle would be to increase the weight of the right rear corner, which increases the weight of the left front.

GLIDING AROUND THE TRACK #16 National Guard car driver Greg Biffle, zooming around the track during practice for the NASCAR Nextel Cup Series Pennsylvania 500 this past July at Pocono Raceway.





Two Guard Anglers Qualify for Championship

Story and Photos by Kathy R. Williams, Through Our Lens; Special NGB Correspondent

Two of the four FLW Tour National Guard pro bass fishing team members have qualified for the Tour championship after the final season tournament at Lake Champlain June 21–24. Western pro Tim Klinger of Boulder City, Nevada, finished 13th in the point standings, while teammate Ramie Colson, Jr., of Cadiz, Kentucky, finished 33rd after the upper New York state bass fishing event.

Klinger said, "This is my first FLW championship and I'm excited. I've been dreaming about this since 1996. I've watched it on TV and now I'm going to it."

Klinger, who finished 65th after fishing two days in the Lake Champlain tourney, had a ten-bass limit of 28 pounds, 10 ounces. He said, "Day one was a great day. I caught lots of fish and was in 38th place with 16 pounds, 5 ounces." Klinger caught more than 30 fish on Wednesday, having his first five bass by 7:45 a.m., culling throughout the day. He continued, "On the second day, the wind picked up, and I chose to fish just one area." His second day stringer weighed 12 pounds, 5 ounces. Klinger fished shallow most of the tournament. He used a frog on top of the water for the large mouth bass and flipped a black and blue Yamamoto jig throughout the day.

Colson had a two-day ten-bass stringer weighing 25 pounds, 7 ounces. He finished in 118th place in the tourney, keeping him in contention for the championship. Colson said, "This was my worst tournament of the year, but I'm not disappointed. I lost a couple of fish—they came unbuttoned. I'm just glad I made it to the championship." Colson finished the regular season in 33rd place in the point standings.

Rookie teammate Derek Jones of Chicago had a two-day total of nine fish weighing 23 pounds, 9 ounces. Jonathan Newton of Rogersville, Alabama, had a two-day 10-bass limit weighing 22 pounds, 5 ounces.

The FLW Tour championship is scheduled for August 2–5 at Logan Martin Lake in Birmingham, Alabama. Forty-eight pro anglers will compete for a total purse of \$1,500,000. First place for the professional angler is \$500,000. **GX**



WELL DONE KLINGER AND COLSON

(top) Tim Klinger fishing at the final season tournament at Lake Champlain. (bottom left) Tim Klinger finished 13th in the point standings. (bottom right) Ramie Colson Jr. finished 33rd after the NY state bass fishing event.

For more information, go to

www.flwoutdoors.com

or call **270-252-1000**.



GET YOUR PULSE RACING.

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Watch Greg Biffle and the No. 16 Ford roar into the 2005 NEXTEL Cup season. As a member of the Army National Guard team, Greg represents the men and women who serve their country and community with great distinction. In the Army National Guard, YOU CAN!



YOU CAN

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National Guard used by permission of the National Guard Bureau. Roush Racing and Greg Biffle's name and/or likeness used by authority of Roush Racing, Livonia, Michigan.

The 2006 National Guard Great Race competitors crossed the finish line July 8 in San Rafael, California, after a time and endurance rally-race of vintage automobiles traveling 4,100 miles in 14 days. Thirteen-year-old navigator Sawyer Stone and his grandfather and driver David Reeder earned the first place award of \$100,000, completing the multi-state rally with a score of 2:05.40 in their 1916 Hudson Speedster. Sawyer is the youngest Grand Champion in Great Race history.

Great Racers compete against the clock in this rally with each competing team having its own unique start time. Teams begin each leg in one-minute intervals until all one hundred teams have left the starting point. This way, there is not a “free for all” on the roads with 100 competing automobiles. Each morning the racers are given a packet of course instructions for the day’s race.

There are hidden checkpoints in which race officials clock competitors’ times for each leg of the day’s race. Teams are off the clock for scheduled stops including lunch, bathroom breaks, and fuel stops. There are built-in penalty caps for breakdowns within each race leg.

Small towns across America welcomed the Great Racers for lunch stops, breaks, and final stops for the day. Cheering fans lined the venue streets with cheerleaders, bands, local vintage cars, concessions, and leisure activities when the Great Racers rolled onto main streets. Spare car parts, repairs, and hospitality were extended in every town the Great Race visited.

Two National Guard teams competed in the 2006 Great Race. SGT Justin Schiferl and SPC Ryan McDonald finished highest among the Guard racers in 51st place with a time of 8:15.75. The team competed in Schiferl’s 1946 black Chevrolet sedan. SPC Shauna Rohbock and SPC Mike Kohn finished in 54th place with a time of 8:32.15 in a 1941 Buick. Rohbock, a 2006 Olympic silver medalist in the two-seat women’s bobsled and Kohn, a 2002 Olympic bronze medalist in the four-seat men’s bobsled, found themselves up against a different type of competition than the winter games they have mastered in the past.

Rohbock said, “The best part of the race is all the people that I’ve met. This is very different from the Olympics—there’s nothing physical; it’s mental, concentration. I’ve mainly watched the speedometer throughout the race.” Rohbock says the race requires intense concentration and focus on the car’s speedometer in order to keep their constant pace and speed.

Rohbock’s navigator in the car, Kohn, said, “This has been a great experience—really cool. It’s been a nice event to stop in the

towns and say hello. And the camaraderie among the participants is awesome. This has been a once-in-a-lifetime experience.”

Schiferl and McDonald met for the first time a couple of days before the race. The two competed as a team and had three “aces” or perfect scores, during the race.

Schiferl said, “I’ve never done a race like this before. My dad took time off work to help me get the car ready. We worked sixteen-hour days—it was a big crunch.” said Schiferl.

Teammate and navigator McDonald, who is a member of the National Snowboarding Team, said, “I am really glad I had the opportunity to race—it’s been a really great experience.” McDonald says you really have to stay on your toes to navigate. He said, “You have to be quick-thinking and decisive. You have to make decisions and then act on them, and the clock is just ticking away. We made wrong turns and missed directions, but that’s part of the fun in it.”

One hundred teams of drivers and navigators started the 4,100-mile drive in the vintage cars on June 24 on Ben Franklin Parkway in Philadelphia. In this competition, a score of zero is a perfect score. There are several classes of competition including an X-Cup competition for students competing for college scholarships. The teams and support crews stopped each night during the race, including stops in York and Washington, Pennsylvania; Dublin, Ohio; Indianapolis, Indiana; St. Louis and Springfield, Missouri; Wichita, Kansas; Pueblo and Durango, Colorado; Page, Arizona; Tonopah, Nevada; Placerville, California; before crossing the finish line in San Rafael, California.

The Great Race is managed and operated by Great Race Sports, Inc. and Rally Partners, Inc. Rally Partners owns and operates road rally competitions including Great Race events for classic automobiles and alternative fuel and technology vehicles—focused on bringing experiential automotive events to consumers both nationally and internationally through Great Race events. Rally Partners, Inc., is a group of 14 businessmen including Jack Roush, one of NASCAR’s leading team owners and Corky Coker, CEO of Coker Tire. Now in its 25th year, the Great Race keeps the spirit of adventure and independence alive through family entertainment and community events in more than 900 cities, logging more than 9 million competitive road-rally miles on North American highways. **GX**

2006 Great Race

Story and Photo by Kathy R. Williams
Through Our Lens, Special NGB Correspondent



For more information, visit
www.greatrace.com

RECEIVED

SSG Ken Weichert,

Just wanted to say that I have been enjoying your articles in the GX magazine that I receive here at home. I am a Staff Sergeant in the Virginia Army National Guard. I am 46 years old with 12 1/2 years of prior service in the U.S. Navy.

I passed the most recent APFT that we had last month but am certainly eager to improve my performance. I desire this not only for my own benefit but also to be an example to the men in my unit. I especially want to be in the best possible shape as we may be deploying sometime within the next year or so.

With my busy schedule I find the toughest challenge is disciplining myself to set aside time to train. I have been running at my civilian work place during lunch time. I laid out a course that is approximately 1.6 miles in length. I have been running this for the past 6 weeks (3 times a week).

My questions:

- 1) Is it all right to run during the day when the temperature is above 85 degrees?
- 2) Is it okay to increase my running to 5 times a week? Or should I stay at 3 times per week?

Thank you for your time in considering these questions. I will be looking forward to hearing from you.

Respectfully,
SSG Jeff Hughes

START Fitness™

OPERATION HEAVY OR NOT

WEIGHT TRAINING AND BODY-RESISTANCE EXERCISES

Part 2 of 3
By SSG Ken Weichert



SSG Hughes,

Hello. Thanks for the compliment, SSG! Over the past year and a half, Stephanie and I have received a lot of positive remarks about our START Fitness articles in GX Magazine, and online in GX Intel. Many Soldiers have mentioned how their APFT scores have improved immensely through the consistent use of our fitness programs. Some simply cannot wait to tell us how great they feel after seeing the results. I think that your inquiry is a perfect opening for Part 2 of 3 of "Operation Heavy or Not."

We've got lower body answers.

We opened Part 1 of our newest weight training and body-resistance exercise series with a chest and arms combination called "Muscle Exploitation Day." In this issue we will target the lower body.

First let's review the three HEAVY OR NOT RULES from Part 1 of the series:

1. Weight training alone will not help you get a better score on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT).
2. High weights and a low amount of repetitions = Bulk Up
3. Low weights and a high amount of repetitions = Sculpt Down (Refer to GX 3.4 for more details, pages 72 and 73)

As we get older, our joints take more time to recover. I am approaching the age of 40, and there are days when I too sometimes feel the pressure in my joints as the result of intense training. Feel free to run more than three times per week provided you monitor your joints closely. I switch from street to treadmill running in order to spare my leg joints from strain due to constant jarring on hard surfaces. I also like to substitute trail for street running whenever I can. The trails are often softer than pavement. Always remember to provide yourself an adequate amount of rest and recovery time each week.

ILLUSTRATION BY SEAMAS GALLAGHER, NICOLE SYLVESTER

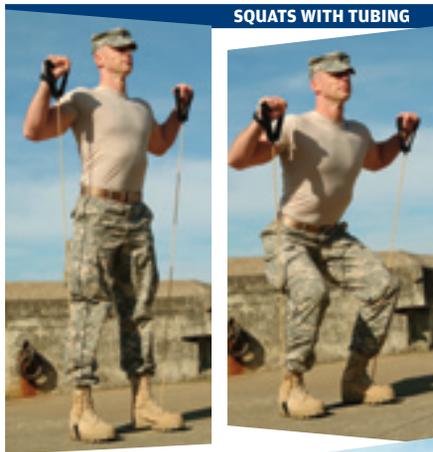
HOOAH! askthetrainer@startfitness.com
Let us hear from you.



SGT KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT



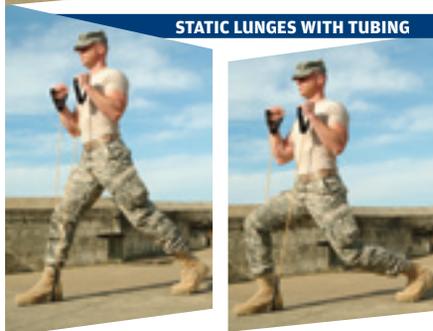
SSG Ken Weichert, six-time Soldier of the Year and veteran of both Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, began the START Fitness™ program in 1997. Now partnered with his wife Stephanie, Strategic Director of START Fitness and a certified personal trainer, the Weicherts are conquering the fitness industry.



SQUATS WITH TUBING



STEP-UPS WITH TUBING



STATIC LUNGES WITH TUBING

SAFETY NOTE: It is best to have someone spot you during weight training exercises.

FOR SPECIFIC APFT PREPARATION EXERCISES, please refer to START Fitness in GX issues 2.6, 3.1 and 3.2 in www.gxonline.com past issues. Remember that low weight and high repetition will provide you a sculpting result while high weight and low repetition will provide you a mass building result.

SPECIAL REMARKS: We encourage you to request additional information by emailing us at askthetrainer@startfitness.com or 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.

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

Quadriceps and Gastrocnemius

Let's do some exercises to help you build strength in your leg joints.

QUADRICEPS are a group of four muscles that sit on the anterior or front aspect of the thigh. **GASTROCNEMIUS** is the largest, most prominent muscle of the calf of the leg, the action of which extends the foot and bends the knee.

1. **Warm-up** (6-Minutes Jump Rope and 30 Side-Straddle-Hops "Jumping Jacks")
2. **A few rotation exercises and leg stretches**
3. **Squats with tubing**

I like to start with a body resistance and tubing combination exercise in order to keep uniformed pressure on my connective tissue.

START POSITION: Grasp the handles of the Xertube, raise your hands head high, elbows bent, palms forward, both feet evenly on the tubing hip-width apart. Stand erect with a neutral spine.

ACTION: Slowly lower your body, with your hips moving back as if sitting on a chair. Maintain your weight directly over the heels or mid-foot. Lower to approximately 90 degrees of knee flexion. Pause, then slowly return to the start position. If lumbar curvature cannot be maintained, lower less than 90 degrees without causing discomfort in your knee joints. Warning: Do not let your knees bend beyond your toe line.

BRING IT ON! Try extending your arms straight in front of you while lowering yourself to the 90° point with your palms down and arms level with your shoulders. Bend your elbows and return your palms to the Start Position as you raise your body. Now you've added upper body resistance!

BULK UP - 3 sets of 8 repetitions each with Heavy resistance

SCULPT DOWN - 3 sets of 15-30 repetitions each with Light to Moderate resistance

4. **Squats with Dumbbells or a Barbell**
5. **Flutter Kick** (1 Minute)
6. **Crunches** (30 repetitions)
7. **Step-ups with tubing**

START POSITION: Grasp the handles of the Xertube, raise your hands shoulder high, elbows bent, palms inward, starting with your left foot on a step with your left knee bent, and your right leg straight while positioned on the ground. Place your left or upward foot on top of the tubing evenly while standing hip-width apart while your upper body is upright.

ACTION: Slowly raise your body by straightening your left leg until your body is erect without your right foot touching the step. Pause, then slowly return to the start position. Switch feet when you have completed your required set of repetitions and continue with opposite foot placement. Warning: If using tubing for this exercise, turn your body slightly to the right if using your left leg, or to the left if using the right leg. If not using tubing, refer to START Fitness in GX 2.3 for specific instructions.

BRING IT ON! After this exercise I like doing a bunch of "Tubing Jacks." I step off the step and perform Jumping Jacks while still holding on to the tubing. Now, you've added upper body resistance and some cardiovascular endurance!

BULK UP - 3 sets of 8 repetitions each with Heavy resistance

SCULPT DOWN - 3 sets of 15-30 repetitions each with Light to Moderate

8. **Static Lunges with tubing**

START POSITION: Grasp the handles of the Xertube, raise your hands shoulder high, elbows bent, palms inward, starting with your left leg on the ground straight in front of you with your left knee slightly bent. Place your right leg straight behind you, balancing on the ball of your right foot on the ground. Place the tubing evenly under your left foot while your upper body is upright.

ACTION: Slowly lower your body, both knees bending until your forward leg achieves 90 degrees of knee flexion. Maintain your balance in the center. Pause, then slowly return to the starting position. Warning: Do not let your forward knee bend beyond your toe line. Bring your shoulders back a bit in order to correct your posture.

BRING IT ON! Try adding a Plyometric quality to the exercise by jumping straight in the air during the action movement (Very Advanced). As your feet briefly leave the ground and receive the impact while returning to the start position, your legs must endure negative resistance. Warning: Watch your form closely while attempting these movements!

BULK UP - 3 sets of 8 repetitions each with high resistance

SCULPT DOWN - 3 sets of 15-30 repetitions each with Light to Moderate resistance

9. **Lunges with Dumbbells**
10. **Calf Raises with Dumbbells**
11. **Crunches** (3 Minutes)
12. **Aerobics** (5 Minutes Treadmill or Elliptical Machines)

REPEAT CYCLE TWICE MORE

TOTAL TRAINING TIME = 75 MINUTES (Depending on Repetitions per set and Rest Periods)

DO NOT PERFORM THIS FITNESS PLAN FOR ANOTHER 36-48 HOURS (Recovery Time)

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.



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These days, a short stroll through any U.S. Army barracks in the world will reveal a bewildering array of televisions, DVD players, stereo systems, satellite dishes, computers and the latest gaming systems. Portable gaming systems in particular tend to show up in the strangest places. Their extreme portability, ease of use and rugged construction make it easy to drop one of these systems in a pocket and take it anywhere. It is not an uncommon sight to see a group of Soldiers waiting for a C-130 flight huddled together over their handheld game systems, wirelessly networked, playing a nice round of golf at St. Andrews.

But which system to buy? There are two powerhouses on the market: the Nintendo DS and the Sony PSP. Each system has much to recommend it, so to help you choose the best platform for your gaming needs, we've put both systems through their paces. Never ones to slack, we have gone that extra mile and not only played these

games until our fingers were numb, but we also stress tested them under extreme conditions.

The Sony PSP was dropped in the Elder Brother's backpack as he shipped out for Iraq to cover the 1/34th BCT. It saw heavy use in theatre where it was exposed to shock, vibration, sand, heat and one really nasty incident involving a goat (I don't want to talk about it).

During the same time period, the Nintendo DS went through an even more rigorous testing cycle. The DS saw so much use that Mrs. Younger Brother started referring to it as the "other woman." It was destined to reside in the cavernous hell that is the Younger Brother's briefcase. This capacious valise carries more electronic gear than a Signal Intelligence company, and all of it rattles around in there unprotected. It bounces, smacks and rattles around like some abattoir for condemned gadgets.

Handhelds Go To War

PSP™ vs. Nintendo DS™

By the Brothers West



SONY PSP™ (PLAYSTATION® PORTABLE)

THE GOOD:

The PSP has one really big strength: it's sexy. The sleek black lozenge holds an incredibly bright and colorful screen that is a sheer pleasure to look at. Pull this system out, and you are sure to have someone looking over your shoulder in short order. It plays very much like a PlayStation 2, right down to a similar control scheme that includes an analog thumb pad. The games are almost direct ports of your PS2 favorites. They lack only a little content here and there.

The system uses a standard Sony memory stick to provide expandable memory, so it can easily be used as a storage device as well. The ability to play MP3's and movies is an additional bonus that makes this system really stand out.

THE BAD:

Unfortunately, the availability of movies for this system is about to become extremely limited. The much ballyhooed UMD format (the small CD-like discs used by the PSP) has been all but abandoned by Hollywood.

NINTENDO DS™ (DUAL SCREEN)

THE GOOD:

The DS is an easy-to-use system with an innovative control system involving a touch screen and a microphone in addition to the standard Nintendo control pad. The tilting second screen makes it easy to find a comfortable viewing angle while protecting the screens when it is closed.

Nintendo DS offers an enormous game library that includes updated versions of classics, all the latest sports games, and even old Game Boy® Advanced games. Best of all, these games are readily available at PX's around the globe. The newer games can easily be networked with other DS consoles whether they are "across the room or around the world."

THE BAD:

There isn't a whole lot not to like about the DS, but not to worry, we found a couple of things. The screen lacks brightness and color depth, there is no easy way to expand the systems memory or capabilities, and it just won't fit well in a standard size pocket.

PSP continued

The sound system is good, but fairly quiet. It can be hard to hear a game or a movie in an airplane or other noisy environments.

While the system itself is fairly rugged, the exposed screen is extremely vulnerable to scratching. When our system got back from Iraq, the screen looked like it had been on the losing end of a tussle with a particularly irritable wildcat. Additionally, the game cartridges themselves are designed to trap sand and dirt between the sleeve and the vulnerable disc surface.

While the game library provides excellent quality titles, its selection is somewhat limited, offering far fewer games than the DS. To make matters worse, it's almost impossible to find PSP games in overseas PX's. DS, no problem, but PSP games are pretty much a special order item.

THE UGLY:

The PSP is available on Amazon.com for \$199.00 and Madden NFL '07 sells for about \$40.

NINTENDO DS continued

The biggest complaint we had, though, is that this system looks and feels very much like a kid's toy. This impression is reinforced by the selection of games. Instead of Metal Gear Solid, you are going to be playing Mario Brothers. The big sports titles are available and the ports to the DS work well, but if you want explosions and violence in your gaming, don't look here.

THE UGLY:

The Nintendo DS retails for \$137.00 on Amazon.com while a top-of-the-line game like Madden NFL '07 sells for about \$30.



THE VERDICT

The PSP is very pretty and provides a lot of options. It's aimed toward a more adult market and is by far the best looking of the two systems.

The DS offers a huge library of games and a design that will, in our opinion, hold up better over the course of a long deployment.

Both systems have a lot to recommend them, and ultimately your decision should be based on which system you are more comfortable with. However, for our money, we'll stick with the DS. The PSP is gorgeous, but the vulnerability of the screen and the game cartridges are just too much to ignore. These, combined with the lower cost, mean that the DS is, to our thinking, the better system to have in your pocket for a long deployment. **GX**

Michele Canchola: Readiness Champion

By Keith Kawasaki

"My husband spent about 17 years in the Army National Guard, and I'd never been in an armory," said Michele Canchola, 263rd AAMDC Family Readiness Group (FRG) Coordinator.

Always two or three hours away from the nearest armory while working a full-time job and being a mother of three, the armory wasn't exactly on Michele Canchola's radar. That is until one day her husband, MAJ Timothy Canchola (South Carolina Army National Guard), asked her and the kids to attend a Christmas event. The family arrived several hours early, and Canchola found herself helping with paperwork in the armory office.

At the end of the day, the commander asked to see her.

Believing she'd royally messed up something, Canchola nervously made her way to the commander's office.

"He asked, 'I wonder if you'll take the Headquarters' battery family program' (it didn't exist)," recounts Canchola. "There was no family program. He didn't know a lot about [FRG's] and I didn't either. I actually wanted to pray about it for a couple weeks."

COL Lynn D. Fisher was the acting commander of the 2-263rd Air Defense Artillery Battalion in late 2000. With a keen eye to the future

The "Family of One" grew again under the guidance and leadership of MG Harry Burchstead, Jr. (Commanding General of the 263rd). "I'd love for the nation to see we have a Commanding General at the two-star level who totally owns the mission of FRG. He has taken it to the next level. It's in his command philosophy."

Like a great C-130, under COL Fisher's guidance, Canchola was able to get the FRG off the ground. Now, reporting directly to MG Burchstead, Canchola is taking the effort of the group to a higher stratosphere. "We have a standard in FRG: the most important person in FRG is the commander."

"For the first three years, we had no deployments. Then all of a sudden, we had three units deploying at one time—I thought I was so unqualified," said Canchola.

Fortunately, when Canchola was establishing her FRG, she took notes on each mistake. Canchola and FRG leadership added solutions and better practices, and created a guide from which new leaders could learn. COL Eddie Goff, Deputy Commander of the 59th Troop Command who was experiencing heavy deployments, asked Canchola to lead a seminar based on the lessons she had learned.

Having a commanding general who passionately believes in his Soldiers and families, and sees FRG as a means to take care of them, has made all the difference.—Michelle Canchola

and knowing FRG could be a combat multiplier, COL Fisher was determined to ensure the readiness of his Soldiers and the families of the 263rd. He found an invaluable aid in Michele Canchola.

"COL Fisher said the number one focus had to be readiness," said Canchola. "Soldiers and families needed to be personally ready; financially ready, legally ready—every month we talk about a different kind of readiness focus. A lot of groups get lost in the fundraising. We adopted our number one readiness methodology [to be] communication—talking to families and Soldiers through a newsletter."

"[COL Fisher] had great vision," adds Canchola. After about three months of it working out, he expanded the HQ FRG to a concerted FRG in all four of his batteries and called it a "Family of One." In August, the 263rd Army Air and Missile Defense Command (AAMDC) Deputy Commanding General, BG Butch Kirven, came to the battalion with a request: that the successful FRG be expanded brigade-wide.

What does all this mean? The 263rd AAMDC FRG became one massive FRG throughout the brigade headquarters and both battalions. Their first brigade newsletter hit mailboxes on 9/11/01. "The 9-11," emphasizes Canchola. The concerted approach multiplied volunteer resources and decreased geographical barriers. This made a big difference for families whose Soldiers were assigned to the brigade headquarters two hours away while the family resided ten minutes from one of the battalion batteries.

"My role has been warrior spirit," stated Canchola. "When I first started [the] FRG, I was failing at it miserably. I really didn't know what I was doing wrong. Through hard knocks and lessons learned from COL Fisher, who was a mentor, and then following under the wise leadership of BG Kirven . . . we hit the ground running."

"I might have been the one teaching, but I learned so much from those dedicated Troop Command volunteers, some of whom were building FRG airplanes while they flew them," said Canchola.

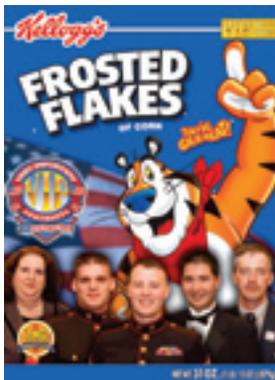
COL Goff scheduled more training throughout Troop Command and began teaching them with Canchola. Under COL Goff's dedicated leadership, training was opened to all brigades, and the "Family of One" FRG approach expanded statewide.

Early in her FRG career, Canchola attended an NGAUS conference where the adjutant general of Florida (MG Ron Harrison, retired) explained how each Guard Soldier has unique talents beyond his or her MOS. This story sparked a new vision in Canchola.

"I started seeing this in all people, in volunteers and what they brought to the table." Canchola taps into the individual skills of those around her, bringing greater success to each goal. This has led to not only her FRG becoming a state model, but also to establishing a non-profit organization.

"We created a second entity—[the] 263rd Regiment Scholarship and Family Care Association," explained Canchola. "We started out in our own ADA community; and now statewide, those dollars are available as emergency funds for any Soldier and family member in South Carolina. We've granted a little over \$40,000."

Readiness is still at the forefront of Canchola's mission, though she and her team still need cash to keep the train rolling. This is why they established the Annual 263rd ADA Golf Tournament, their only fundraiser. Having just completed its fifth tournament this spring, the event attracted 100 golfers, and sponsorships from Blue Ridge Electric Co-op, Coca-Cola, Wal-Mart of Anderson, Anderson County, Pickens County, and many more. The FRG now has the financial strength to cover all communications and





the Frosted Flakes cereal box—complete with Tony the Tiger rising above the group, declaring “They’re Grrreat!” Standing with Canchola is Marine CPL Jeffrey Caraway, Air Force spouse Robert Davison, Marine SGT Clinton Firstbrook, and Chris Zaehringer, son of a retired Air Force officer. Each recipient received \$1,000 and a trip to the D.C. awards ceremony.

“She has gone above and beyond,” said SSG Brent D. Cobb, a recruiter for the South Carolina Army National Guard. SSG Cobb nominated Canchola for the GX Hero recognition. “She’s a real go-getter. She is doing great things for the families and the overall state readiness.”

Asked why she volunteers, Canchola responds that her answer would be the same as all family volunteers: “This is ‘our’ unit, these are our Soldiers.”

“My favorite saying in the whole world about 263rd ADA Soldiers,” adds Canchola, “is ‘they are simply awesome.’”

Amid her FRG work, Canchola still manages her full-time career at Value Options TRICARE and her responsibilities as a wife and mother. This tremendous juggling act requires a great deal of balance and dedication—one that she continually works at.

“Having a commanding general who passionately believes in his Soldiers and families and sees FRG as a means to take care of them has made all the difference in being able to volunteer and in the success we’ve had,” said Canchola. “The Commander really is the most important person in FRG.”

Looking ahead, Canchola sees great things for FRG’s nationwide. “We have an amazing leader at NGB, COL Tony Baker. [H]e has completely reformed his office’s outcomes, bringing outstanding readiness standards to the table.”

Asked what FRG practices she would recommend, Canchola borrows from COL Fisher’s first lesson: “Maintain a rigid state of flexibility.” She adds, “Never neglect the single Soldier in family readiness—they must be ready, too.” And, “Keep readiness the main thing. Deployed or non-deployed, that is FRG. Finally, and most importantly, pray everyday for God’s will to be done for His families, Soldiers, military leaders—for His ‘Family of One.’” **GX**

care packages for the rest of the year. This is important to a group that mailed over 20,000 newsletters and flyers in 2005.

Canchola is quick to point out she does not accomplish all this on her own. Almost every sentence she utters begins with “we.” Canchola has a rotating roster of volunteers, very similar to little task forces. Canchola started with a philosophy that as much as every family member is part of the National Guard, each is a member of FRG; and she abandons the typical structure of presidents and secretaries. Instead, groups gather to work on specific projects. She finds this more effective than having mass meetings with general objectives. Task force projects vary from a newsletter team, an events team, a telephone support team, a golf tournament team, and more. Also, incredible outcomes have resulted from tapping community members wanting to support the Guard, employers, and Guard retirees.

Canchola’s efforts have not gone unnoticed. In 2002, just a year after getting the FRG off the ground, her unit received the Department of Defense Reserve Family Readiness Award for the best readiness standards in the nation for the National Guard.

Most recently, Canchola was the recipient of the National Military Family Association’s Very Important Patriot (VIP) Award. The VIP award recognizes five volunteers selected from all seven uniform branches worldwide whose service directly improves the quality of life in their military communities.

Kellogg’s is a primary sponsor of the VIP award and put Canchola, along with the four other recipients, on the face of

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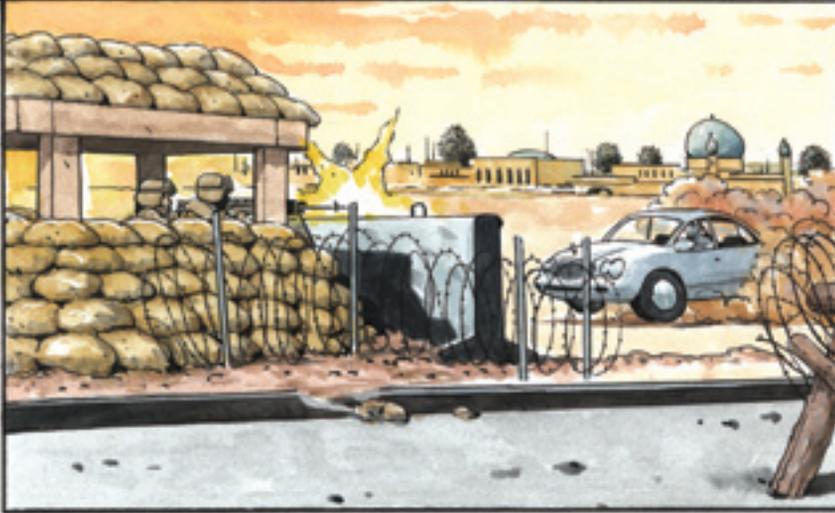
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1ST BATTALION, 153D INF., U.S. ARMY WAS
STARTLED BY THE EXPLOSION. CONCERNED FOR
HIS TROOPS, SSG HAINES COLLECTED UP HIS
TEAM AND CHARGED TOWARD THE CHECKPOINT.



SSG HAINES FANNED OUT HIS SQUAD TO ESTABLISH A
HASTY PERIMETER. REALIZING THE DRIVER WAS ON FIRE
BUT STILL ALIVE, SSG HAINES DOVE INTO THE BURNING
VEHICLE, COMPLETELY DISREGARDING HIS OWN SAFETY.



SSG HAINES PULLED THE IRAQI CIVILIAN OUT OF
THE INFERNO, CARRIED HIM SOME FIFTY YARDS
FROM THE BLAZING VEHICLE AND IMMEDIATELY AD-
MINISTERED MEDICAL AID UNTIL MEDICS ARRIVED.



RETURNING TO HIS TROOPS, SSG HAINES EXTENDED THE PERIM-
ETER AND AIDED IN SECURING THE AREA, SHOWING OUTSTANDING
COMBAT LEADERSHIP IN THE FINEST TRADITIONS OF SERVICE.



FOR HIS HEROIC ACTIONS ON MAY 6, 2004,
STAFF SERGEANT CURTIS H. HAINES WAS
AWARDED THE SOLDIER'S MEDAL, OUR
NATION'S HIGHEST AWARD FOR NON-COMBAT
RELATED BRAVERY. A GREAT SOURCE OF PRIDE
FOR HIM AND HIS ENTIRE UNIT, ARKANSAS
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