

GX[®]

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

GUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT

DEFENDING THE AMERICAN GREEN
PG. 36

>> EX HERO

DISTANT REPLAY

CDS AND DVDS COURTESY OF TUNES 4 THE TROOPS

>> INTEL

1LT TYLER JENSEN: COURAGE EARNS SILVER STAR FOR UTAH SOLDIER



>> ON THE ROAD

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH THE

SPECIAL FORCES

13 WAYS TO BUILD YOUR BODY

PG. 72



NATIONAL GUARD WARRIOR

Dale Earnhardt Jr.

DOWNLOAD
KID ROCK'S
NEW SONG
FREE.

www.NationalGuardWarrior.com

The likeness of Dale Earnhardt Jr., the #88 Chevrolet, and other related trademarks and copyrights are used with the permission of Hendrick Motorsports and JR Motorsports.



Dale Jr.

STARRING DALE EARNHARDT JR.[®], KID ROCK AND
THE HEROES OF THE NATIONAL GUARD

NATIONAL
GUARD

Hendrick
MOTORSPORTS

88

KID ROCK LMD

AÉRO FILM

VOL 5 :: ISSUE 5

FEATURES

Guarding the Environment **36**

Guard Soldiers take their skills to the ground level as they perform "green" missions.

>> GUARD LEGACY

Colorado's Centennial Soldiers **46**

Who exactly are the Jefferson Rangers and the Denver Guards?

>> ON THE ROAD

"We've Got Your Back" **58**

GX takes you behind the scenes with the Special Forces.

Experiencing Operation Fit to Fight **62**

SGT Ken does it again in part two of his Fit to Fight program.

>> GX HERO

Distant Replay **78**

High school student Kaylee Radzyminski spends her free time collecting and sending CDs and DVDs to Soldiers overseas.



36

CPT Karen Corsetti of the Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG) has enlisted the aid of oranges to help National Guard armories get rid of a typical pest—cockroaches.





DEPARTMENTS

LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP 6

California Adjutant General William H. Wade II salutes America's Army—the Army National Guard.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR 8

GX talks about our On the Road stories in this issue and what's to come.

RANTS AND RAVES 9

Your letters and comments.

RECON 10

See inspirational and thrilling photos from California, Afghanistan and Michigan.

INTEL 16

Utah Soldiers earn a Silver and a Bronze Star; the Guard fights California wildfires; New Orleans residents praise Soldiers; plus, much more.

STRENGTH MAINTENANCE 44

Get to know the first Active First graduate; an Ohio father follows his daughter into the Guard.

HOME BASE 50

Learn how to live healthier; find out if an online education is for you; get the facts on homeowners insurance; plus, much more.

FIGHTING SPIRIT 66

>> SPORTS

Read our exclusive interview with Dale Jr.; Landon Cassill's brother talks about his sports family; Vitor Meira reveals his racing strategies.

>> FITNESS

Try part three of SGT Ken's Operation Rapid Response: Dumbbells and Dynamics.

>> GEAR

Get the facts on the Bradley Fighting Vehicle, the Guard's combat transportation.

GUARD TALES 82

An Alaska Soldier earns a Bronze Star with Valor during combat.

GX: The Guard Experience (ISSN # 1559-9922) is published monthly by lostudio, LLC, 1625 Broadway, Third Floor, Nashville, TN 37203-3138. Periodicals postage paid at Nashville, TN and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to: GX: The Guard Experience, 1625 Broadway, Third Floor, Nashville TN 37203-3138.

72



68



A Salute to America's Army



We're quickly approaching the 372nd birthday of America's Army—the National Guard of the United States.

I use the term “army” both loosely as well as specifically in describing the original and longest-serving armed military force in the history of our great country. One hundred thirty-nine years, six months and one day before there was a Continental Army (later designated as the United States

Army), there was the National Guard of the United States. On December 13, 1636, the General Court of Boston, MA, authorized the organization of a militia to defend the colonies in case of an attack.

Drawn from units of Saugus, Ipswich and Newbury, MA, three regiments were formed, and thus, the colonies organized their defense and the beginning of a community-based defense force—a concept that exists today. Since that December day, the National Guard has continued to serve its states and its nation during times of war, natural and man-made disasters, rebellion and even political and social upheaval as America's Army.

Across this nation, thousands of communities—from little towns to big cities—have National Guard units that are an integral part of the fabric of our society, the bedrock of our principles, the foundation of our beliefs and the cornerstone of everything that the world finds good about America. The Soldiers and Airmen of the National Guard are the heart of the American experience and the soul of our Armed Forces—the DNA of selfless service passed down from father to son, mother to daughter, generation after generation.

The Guard is based on the simple principle first penned in the “Exercise for the Militia of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay” in 1758, that: “Every man, therefore, that wished to secure his won freedom, and thinks it his duty to defend that of his country, should, as he prides himself in being a free citizen, think it his trust honor to be a soldier citizen.”

Civilians in peace, Soldiers and Airmen in war, the National Guard has always been made of the Citizen-Soldier. From the American Revolutionary War through the War of 1812, the fight for Texas independence, the American Civil War, the Spanish-American War, World Wars I and II, the Korean War, the Vietnam

War, the Gulf War of 1991 and now the Global War on Terrorism, Americans from all walks of life—people just like you—have answered the call to step forward, bear arms and defend everything we believe in and hold dear.

From the landing at Plymouth Rock to the war against terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan, the United States has defended its way of life against all enemies, foreign and domestic. From British soldiers to the Third Reich of Nazi Germany, from Communism of post-World War II to the warlords of Somalia, Americans have consistently laid down their lives so that others may live in freedom. In every case—and without exception—these patriots have included in their numbers the National Guard. But that is not all. The National Guard demonstrates its professionalism and dedication as America's Army every day in everything we do—deeds, not words, carry the day for Guard members across the nation.

What other community-based defense force do you know that can provide forces to fight a global war on multiple fronts, provide troops to defend our very borders against illegal drugs



California Army National Guard Soldiers report for duty during the Southern California wildfires.

SSG JIM GREENHILL

and aliens, assist civilian authorities in fighting the largest wild land fire in the history of the United States, train, teach and mentor the youth of our states through programs for at-risk youth, provide forces to emerging democracies in a Partnership for Peace program of nation-building, participate in local parades and community events and yet still find time to work with communities and schools on civic action projects, visit Veterans' homes and hos-

pitals and maintain a civilian job that is vital to our economy? The National Guard, America's Army, is ALWAYS READY, ALWAYS THERE.

You are truly Americans at their best. Thank you for your sacrifice and selfless service.

William H. Wade II
Major General
The Adjutant General, California National Guard

GX Across America

Thanks to your invitations, we've been tossing our field reporter, SFC Clint Wood, all over the country. Clint has been to five states in two months!

This issue, we actually have two On the Road articles. Clint covered another muscle-fest at Fort Lewis when SGT Ken and his team slammed the 81st BCT with the Fit to Fight program (see pg. 62). Then, Clint raced down to Camp Atterbury for SFAUC with Guard Special Forces (see pg. 58).

The Special Forces community has really opened its doors to GX, and we greatly appreciate it. You can expect a continuous flow of killer coverage in upcoming issues. Big thanks to Drew for his support in setting this up. He's what we call "GX for life."

Because Clint has been traveling faster than he can write, we have several trips yet to publish. Headed your way are articles on New York's Echo Company 3rd Battalion/142nd Aviation Regiment, the ARNG SOY/NCOY Competition and the ARNG's first-ever Combatives Competition.

But keep those invitations comin'. We have two other news editors we love to throw out into the field. In fact, we just sent SPC Miko Holloran to Leapfest in Rhode Island. It had been our plan to cover this extraordinary international parachuting event for years. Finally, we got someone out there, and we're already making plans for next year!

Last, but not least, I want to hear from you. Tell me what you like—and don't like—about GX. We're working out plans for our '09 run and need your input. Has there been a past article in GX that you've absolutely loved? If so, tell me what it is and why. Do you have a favorite issue? Do you just love the mag in general? Heck, even just send me a picture of you with GX, and you could be published in a future issue! Send anything ya got directly to my inbox at Keith@GXonline.com.

Thanks!



Keith Kawasaki, Editor-in-Chief
Keith@GXonline.com



PROF. ANDREW LUBIN

GX Field Reporter SFC Clint Wood has been covering a ton of stuff since coming aboard. This photo is from his 2007 deployment to Iraq.

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.

Publisher: Mitch Powers
Founding Editor: Ed Brown
Editor-at-Large: Chris West

Editor-in-Chief: Keith Kawasaki
Design Director: Andrew Nixon

Managing Editor: Staff Sgt. Marcia Beene Dickerson
Assistant Managing Editor: Camille Breland
Guard Advisor: SSG Ken Weichert
News Editor: SPC Miko Holloran
News Editor: Christian Anderson
Field Reporter: SFC Clint Wood

Contributing Writers: Jason Hall, SSG Jim Greenhill, SFC Kevin Bemus, LTC J.M. Ortiz, Johanna Altland, Joseph Montanaro, SSG Ken Weichert, Stephanie Weichert
Contributing Illustrator: Dan Panosian
Contributing Editors: Emily McMackin, Jamie Roberts, Megan Pacella
Contributing Photographer: Dustin McNeal
Contributing Art Director: Kerri Davis
Contributing Designers: Lynne Boyer, Ben Stewart, Carrie Wakeford

Mail: GX: The Guard Experience
c/o Iostudio, LLC
1625 Broadway, Third Floor
Nashville, TN 37203
Voice: (866) 596-4558
Fax: (615) 256-6860

Email Contacts:
EDITOR editor@GXonline.com
SUBSCRIPTIONS subscriptions@GXonline.com
GENERAL INFO info@GXonline.com

Editorial Inquiry and Submissions:
editor@GXonline.com or voice:
(866) 596-4558, fax: (615) 256.6860

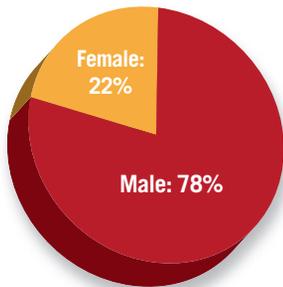
No responsibility can be accepted for manuscripts or photographs, solicited or unsolicited. All postal submissions should be accompanied by an SASE. Copyright ©2004-2008, Iostudio, LLC. All rights reserved. The views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the publisher or of the Department of Defense, the Army, the Air Force, or the National Guard Bureau. No endorsement of any advertised service or product is intended by the publisher, the Army National Guard or any government agency, and none should be inferred. GX is published 12 times a year by ioStudio, LLC, in cooperation with Hammock Inc., Nashville, Tenn.

GX magazine is **not** an official publication of the Army National Guard. Rank designations for GX staff members are displayed out of our respect for our Citizen-Soldier employees. All military employees are traditional Guard members.

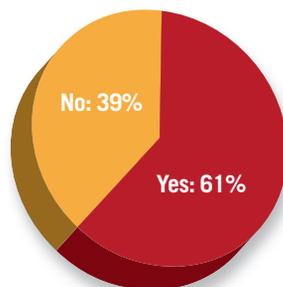
WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!
Send your questions or comments
to feedback@gxonline.com

Who's reading GX? Here's a snapshot...

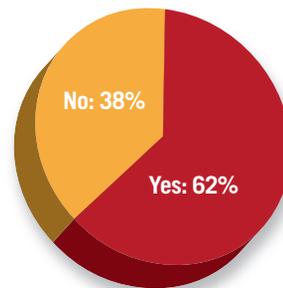
WHAT'S YOUR GENDER?



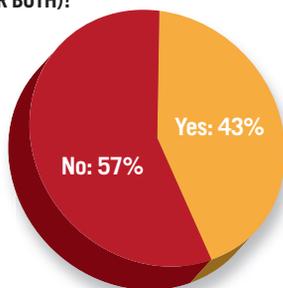
ARE YOU MARRIED?



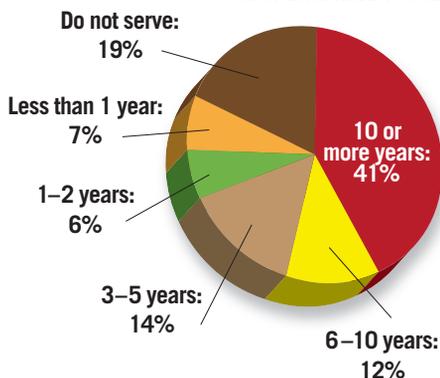
DO YOU HAVE KIDS?



HAVE YOU DEPLOYED FOR OIF OR OEF (OR BOTH)?



HOW LONG HAVE YOU SERVED?

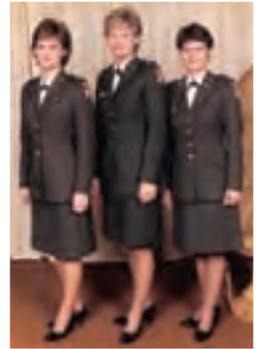


ADD YOUR INPUT AT:
WWW.GXONLINE.COM
Results courtesy of the 2008 GX Reader Survey

Dear Editor,

In the June issue, SPC Beaver did a story on three sisters enlisting. I don't know how many three-sister stories there are out there, but this is not the first.

I am, as of yesterday, LTC Joy Craft, retired. I enlisted in 1985 after my two sisters had been to basic training and returned to the Alabama National Guard. We decided together to attend OCS in 1986, were all three commissioned in 1987 and attended our QM Basic Course together at Fort Lee, VA. While we were there, my brother joined, went to basic training and also came to Fort Lee for 92Y AIT.



LTC (ret.) Joy Craft and sisters at a formal OCS event in 1987.

So there were four of us together at Fort Lee. And this is just the beginning of our story. My sister married a warrant officer who recently retired as a CW5, and I married a captain in 1992, who is now an O6 and a MACOM Administrative Officer.



LTC (ret.) Joy Craft's son, brother and sister while deployed. They recently returned from Kuwait and Iraq.

My sister, brother and I were deployed at the same time during Desert Storm. Today, I have a son who is a first lieutenant, one who is a captain, and one of my sisters' sons is a captain. One of my sisters, along with my brother and my son, were recently deployed at the same time to Kuwait and Iraq. The short story is we have a military family.

LTC (ret.) Joy Craft

PHOTOS COURTESY OF LTC (RET.) JOY CRAFT

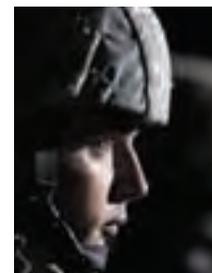
Dear Heather,

Wow—I am speechless. The magazines arrived yesterday, and what a great story. It is hard to believe; I feel like I just hang around and do stuff.

Your passion and support of men and women in uniform is deep and profound. I am honored to call you a friend.

Bob Kunkel

[Editor's note: Kunkel was the focus of the GX Hero feature in GX 5.3.]



ON THE COVER
A Guard warrior stares with resolve from the cover of darkness, ready to react during night ops training.

PHOTO BY SFC CLINT WOOD

» MUDDY WATERS

[Cedar Rapids, IA]

SSG Shad Myers, a flight engineer with Bravo Company, 2-11 General Support Aviation Battalion, Iowa Army National Guard, surveys floodwaters en route to extract damaged water pumps for the Cedar Rapids Water Utility.

Photo by SGT Jack Braden, U.S. Air Force









» FIRE SOLDIERS

[Northern California]

California Army National Guard Soldiers dismount a Chinook in support of the governor and civilian responders during wildfires in northern California. The CAARNG supported the wildfire battle with more than 1,300 personnel and 260 Soldiers and Airmen from out of state.

 Courtesy of the California National Guard







» GRAND OPENING

[**Camp Grayling, MI**]

A four-man team from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group breaches and enters a door using a linear explosive charge June 14 at Camp Grayling, MI. The team was conducting demolition training with the Republic of Serbia's 63rd Parachutist Battalion, Special Forces Brigade, as part of a State Partnership Program and military exchange with Ohio and Serbia.

 Photo by SPC Sam Beavers





Demolition Training

Soldiers from Ohio and Serbia learn from one another.

18



Leading the Way
FLARNG unit first to be led into battle by two females.

20



Bringing the Gridiron to Soldiers
Donnie Edwards supports the Troops during his USO tour.

25



Guard Supports Its Communities
National Guard units help with floods, fires and NOLA.

28



Saving a Life
Soldiers save fellow Guard member from lethal condition.

32



EVAN BAINES

Two Stars For Utah

UT SOLDIERS EARN SILVER AND BRONZE STARS FOR HEROISM

By MAJ Hank McIntire

► **DRAPER, UT**—Two Utah National Guard Soldiers, 1LT Tyler J. Jensen and CPT Chad A. Pledger, were awarded the Silver Star and Bronze Star, respectively, on June 19.

Jensen, a member of the 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Provo, received the Silver Star for his actions on Jan. 27, 2007, while deployed with I Corps Artillery (Forward) as an embedded transition team mentor to members of the Afghan National Army.

“In many ways it’s a wonderful honor, but in others it’s really hard,” Jensen said at the ceremony. “So many of my fallen friends and Soldiers are not here.”

One of those friends and Soldiers absent was 2LT Scott B. Lundell, who died in a firefight with enemy forces in Afghanistan in November 2006.

Jensen, Lundell and Pledger, who was awarded the Bronze Star, all deployed together to Afghanistan in 2006–2007 with the Utah Guard’s I Corps Artillery to be trainers and mentors to members of the Afghan National Army.

On Jan. 27, 2007, Jensen was on a combat reconnaissance patrol when an estimated 100 enemy forces ambushed his unit in Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan. In the confusion, the Afghans in the patrol were cut off from nearly all their American counterparts, and the frightened Afghani officer in charge fled. Instinctively filling the void, Jensen stepped in, took charge and led the patrol under enemy fire to rejoin the Americans. Then, when another U.S. Soldier took a small-arms round in the leg, Jensen risked his own personal safety to rescue him.

“First Lieutenant Jensen repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to save a fellow Soldier who was wounded,” reads the award citation. “His courage, superlative combat skills and tactical leadership under overwhelming direct enemy fire were instrumental in preventing the enemy from overrunning his patrol.”

“First Lieutenant Jensen repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to save a fellow Soldier who was wounded. His courage, superlative combat skills and tactical leadership under overwhelming direct enemy fire were instrumental in preventing the enemy from overrunning his patrol.” ★



1LT Tyler J. Jensen at the ceremony where he received the Silver Star on June 19 in Draper, UT.

The Silver Star is awarded for “gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force,” according to Army Regulation 600-8-22.

The decoration is the third-highest medal for valor, after the Medal

of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross. It is the first Silver Star awarded to a member of the Utah National Guard in recent memory, including Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm.

Pledger received the Bronze Star with “V” device for “exceptional gallantry and valor in the face of a determined enemy” for his actions on Nov. 26, 2006.

ILEEN KENNEDY



“You are quiet, unassuming young men. Oh, how remarkable you are! And how you grace the uniform makes us all proud.”

>> MG Brian L. Tarbet, Utah National Guard Adjutant General

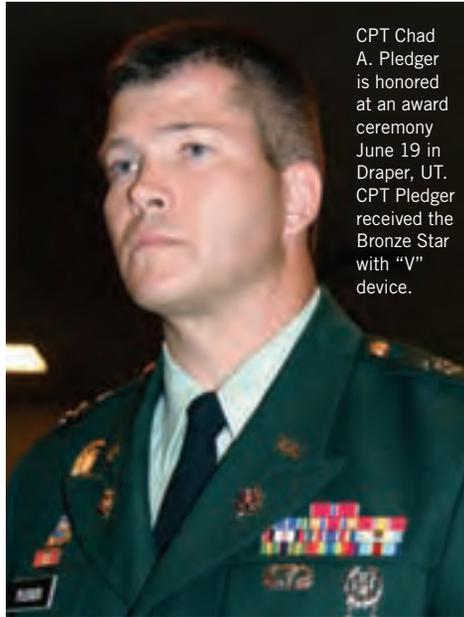
As described on the certificate signed by Secretary of the Army Pete Geren: “Pledger’s temerity and skill resulted in an effective counterattack against an entrenched enemy ambush that not only saved the lives of numerous... Soldiers, but

also enabled the recovery of a U.S. casualty.”

That casualty was Lundell. His widow, Jeanine, was on hand to see Utah Gov. Jon M. Huntsman Jr., pin the awards on her husband’s friends.

Each speaker at the ceremony spoke tenderly of Lundell and Jeanine, as well as the sacrifice of family members when their Soldiers answer their nation’s call.

“It’s [for] all the Lundells out there who have served respectably and honorably,” said Pledger, modestly acknowledging his decoration for valor. “[It’s for] all the ones who keep our nation secure.” Huntsman, who happened to be in Afghanistan visiting Utah Soldiers when Lundell was killed, spoke of



CPT Chad A. Pledger is honored at an award ceremony June 19 in Draper, UT. CPT Pledger received the Bronze Star with “V” device.

the memorial service he attended near Kabul to pay tribute to the fallen Soldier as “my most memorable event as governor.”

“It is totally inadequate for [me] to stand up here after what we have just seen,” Huntsman continued. “It’s pretty cool to be a governor, but it’s exceedingly cool to be able to pin on a Silver Star and a Bronze Star with Valor, knowing what that represents.”

In his remarks, Utah National Guard Adjutant General MG Brian L. Tarbet praised Jensen and Pledger for their courage. “You are quiet, unassuming young men,” he said. “Oh, how remarkable you are! And how you grace the uniform makes us all proud. “With such great heroes in my life,” he added, “I would be completely ungrateful if I didn’t serve.” **GX**



THE PROUD PATCH OF THE UTAH ARMY NATIONAL GUARD.

EVAN BAINES

>> ILLINOIS

About 70 Soldiers from the 631st Engineer Company were awarded the Pennsylvania Governor’s Unit Citation award on June 12 for their work in Iraq two years ago with the Pennsylvania National Guard. Formerly the 135th Engineer Company, the unit was recognized for its performance as part of the Task Force First Battalion, 110th Infantry from January 2005 to June 2006.

>> KANSAS

Fifteen Kansas Guard Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 108th Aviation deployed to Sacramento, CA, to assist local authorities in fighting wildfires in July. The unit utilized two UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters equipped with 660 gallon buckets to dump water onto the flames.

>> LOUISIANA

Company F, Forward Support Company transported a UH-1 helicopter to Lake Charles to be painted and refurbished for display at the Veterans Memorial Park. This particular helicopter flew in missions during the Vietnam War, including the Battle of La Drang.

>> MARYLAND

CSM Brian Sann replaced retired CSM David C. Corkan as the new state command sergeant major for the Maryland National Guard June 24. “CSM Sann brings an enormous level of expertise to the highest enlisted position in the state,” said BG James A. Adkins, Maryland adjutant general.

>> NORTH DAKOTA

SSG Ahinakwah Jonathan Owusu, an engineer instructor with the Ghana Armed Forces, observed engineer instruction and aviation Soldiers participating in annual training. SSG Owusu’s visit is the second half of a two-part exchange under the State Partnership Program.

>> UTAH

Travis Taylor enlisted in the Utah National Guard on July 29, while his older brother, 1LT Brent Taylor, administered the oath of enlistment via live satellite feed from Iraq. Travis is the sixth brother from the Taylor family to enlist in the National Guard.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 19



Demolition Buddies

OHIO, SERBIA TRAIN IN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

By 2LT Kimberly Snow and SPC Sam Beavers

There's more than one way to open a door.

Soldiers from the Ohio Army National Guard's Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, showed their counterparts in the Serbian 63rd Parachutist Battalion just that on June 14, while conducting joint demolitions training at Camp Grayling, a National Guard joint maneuver training center in northern Michigan.

The two countries' elite troops were training together for the second time through a unit level exchange with the National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program. The program teams National Guard states with developing democracies throughout the world to build long-term relationships and foster trust and cooperation between countries. Their first exchange was conducted nine months prior in Nis, Serbia, as the two countries celebrated their

first-year anniversary of military cooperation.

"The relationships that have been established have gone beyond me and General Ponoš [Lt. Col. Gen. Zdravko Ponoš, chief of Serbian Armed Forces]," said MG Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general. "Members of our staffs have been text messaging each other and building personal relationships. This partnership just keeps getting stronger."

The June exchanges at Camp Grayling, MI, and Columbus, OH, as with the September 2007 exchange, involved several contingents. This one also including training and operations personnel, as well as public affairs teams.

TRAINING AND OPERATIONS

The focus of the training delegation during the visit was a general officer and sergeant major orientation. The delegation traveled with Wayt to Fort McCoy, WI, where the Ohio Army National Guard's 371st Sustainment Brigade had been training for the previous two months as they prepared to deploy to Iraq in support of Operation



KNOCK, KNOCK

MSG Rod, team sergeant in Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, prepares to breach a door with a C-shape explosive charge June 14 at Camp Grayling, MI.

Iraqi Freedom.

"We wanted to show them how we do post-mobilization training, how officers and noncommissioned officers get units ready to deploy," Wayt said. "This is part of that relationship."

The delegation then went to Camp Grayling to see the pre-mobilization training of units readying for possible deployment in the 2009 training year.

"We took them out there so they could see how our NCOs run the training," Wayt said. "We also had our employer orientation out there, so they were able to see how we reach out to and educate the employers about their Soldiers, and how important they are to the National Guard."

One chief goal for Ponoš is to develop the Serbian noncommissioned officer corps, Wayt said.

And on this trip, Maj. Gen. Petar Cornakov, chief of training and doctrine for the Serbian Armed Forces, was particularly interested in observing the role of U.S. non-commissioned officers in training environments.

"The Serbs are spending a lot of time and effort in building their NCO corps," said COL Jerry Rees, director of joint operations for the Ohio National Guard. "Cornakov is leading the effort."

Part of that effort has involved studying the structure and function of several foreign militaries, as well as sending Serbian troops to other countries' noncommissioned officer academies, including Ohio's 147th Regiment, Regional Training Institute. A group of about a dozen Serbian and Hungarian noncommissioned officers attended and graduated from the Basic



A Soldier completes a jump at Camp Grayling, MI, while training as part of the State Partnership Program with Ohio and Serbia.

SPC JUDGE ALICE VALENTIN

SPC SAM BEAVERS



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

Noncommissioned Officer Course and Total Army Instructor Training Course at the Columbus-based 147th this past April.

“Part of the process of establishing their NCO corps is gaining an understanding of how we utilize NCOs as an integral part of the combat force,” Rees said. “In general, our NCOs train the force, [but] we can have PFCs training officers—we try to use the most qualified person, regardless of rank.

“Visiting our training sites and attending our NCO academies really allows them to visualize what we do. One of their NCOs even went back from BNCOC and implemented in his brigade what he’d seen and learned here,” Rees added.

The Serbian delegation also spent time with their Ohio National Guard counterparts, including Rees, to finalize preparations for a

planned Ohio National Guard visit to Belgrade in September 2008 for a large-scale joint operations exercise focused on military support to civil authorities. The training scenario will revolve around a flood—a situation with which the Ohio National Guard has much experience, assisting with Ohio flood relief operations nearly every year.

Col. Milan Mojsilovic, deputy commander for the Serbian Armed Forces Joint Operations Command, and COL Alfred C. Faber, chief of the joint staff for the Ohio National Guard, will co-direct the integrated exercise, which will involve more than 50 officers—about 25 from each country’s military, Rees said.

ELITE TROOPS TRAIN, LEARN

While the June 14 Special Forces training consisted of door-breaching techniques using various

forms and amounts of explosives, the troops conducted additional training throughout the week that focused on mission planning and weapons familiarization. The training culminated in a joint airborne operation.

About 25 U.S. and Serbian troops completed two jumps from an Ohio National Guard CH-47 Chinook cargo helicopter, June 18, at the Grayling Army Airfield. The U.S. troops had already trained on Serbian airborne techniques when they conducted a jump together during the September exchange. During this jump and the training leading up to it, Serbian Soldiers were exposed to U.S. military airborne training methods, which they learned differ significantly from their own.

Serbian Soldiers jump out of the aircraft head first, while U.S. paratroopers jump feetfirst. Also, aircraft speed is generally faster during Serbian airborne operations, said Lt. Col. Danijel Stojkovic, chief operations officer for the 63rd.

While the troops used the training—particularly the airborne operation—as an opportunity to learn from one another, it also served another purpose.

“It builds camaraderie, and it builds rapport,” said SFC Dustin (due to the sensitive nature of Special Forces Soldiers’ work, only first names will be used) of Company B. “It allows these countries to work together.”

Soldiers from both countries said they benefited from the joint training and have increased partnership between the countries. They also agree that there is still room to grow.

“They are very good guys,” Stojkovic said referring to the Company B Soldiers. “They are well-skilled, well-trained and know exactly what to do in any situation. I am looking forward to continuing our cooperation on a higher level. I believe the next step will be even better and increase our cooperation.” **GX**

>> VIRGINIA

The 237th Engineer Company returned from Iraq on July 16 after serving overseas for almost a full year. Composed of about 105 Soldiers, the unit conducted route clearance and engineer operations, route sanitation and construction support missions, and moved more than 4,000 cubic yards of dirt.

>> WYOMING

Soldiers of the Embedded Training Team were honored July 26 for their Operation Enduring Freedom deployment. Each Soldier received an encased American flag, a commemorative coin, a certificate of appreciation and a lapel insignia. MG Ed Wright, Wyoming adjutant general, also awarded the Soldiers with a Governor’s Coin on behalf of Gov. Dave Freudenthal.

>> AFGHANISTAN

MG Donald J. Goldhorn, Guam adjutant general, visited Guam’s 1st Battalion, 294th Infantry Regiment on July 13. “Let’s keep our heads in the game, so we can come home safely to our family and friends,” he said.

>> BAGHDAD, IRAQ

Two Bengal tiger cubs now have a new home in Iraq. Amid much fanfare and excitement, Hope and Riley were introduced to the Baghdad Zoo on Aug. 8. The tigers were a goodwill gesture from the North Carolina Conservators’ Center, a breeding sanctuary for endangered species. Riley and Hope will entertain more than 10,000 visitors to the zoo every weekend and 2,000 to 3,000 on weekdays.

>> SURINAME

Members of South Dakota’s 155th Engineer Company, 153rd Engineer Battalion and the 730th Medical Company landed in Suriname on July 2 to participate in Beyond the Horizon 2008 exercise. Designed to foster goodwill and improve relations between the U.S. and the government of Suriname, the humanitarian assistance exercises include installing new rain gutters and improving ceilings and cabinets for clinics and a school.



DEMOLITION MAN
MSG Rod, team sergeant in Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, teaches Soldiers from the Republic of Serbia’s 63rd Parachutist Battalion, Special Forces Brigade on how to use explosives to breach a door June 14 at Camp Grayling, MI.



EXCELLENCE IN LEADERSHIP
CSM Sally Bailey (right) salutes LTC Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr during a combat patch ceremony in Northern Iraq.

Sisters-in-Arms

FLORIDA FEMALES FIRST TO LEAD IN COMBAT

By SGT Blair Heusdens

ST. AUGUSTINE, FL—Leading a battalion into combat can be a daunting task for any officer. LTC Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr and CSM Sally Bailey took that task further last year when they became the first females from the Florida National Guard to lead troops in combat.

The two top women of the 927th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, based out of Camp Blanding, FL, returned in April from a yearlong deployment to northern Iraq. Together, they led a combined force of approximately 700 National Guard Soldiers from Florida, Virginia and Alabama, as

well as active-duty Soldiers and civilian contractors, to help sustain ground units there with supplies and logistical support.

With a collective time in service of more than 50 years, Gonzalez-Kerr and Bailey brought valuable leadership experience to the unit. They led the 927th together for a year prior to deploying and strategized how they could best demonstrate their leadership values to their Soldiers.

They admit there were many heart-to-heart and sometimes brutally honest discussions between them on issues like discipline. “We didn’t always agree,” Bailey said. “But we always worked out our differences behind closed doors

to present a united voice to the Soldiers.”

According to Bailey, the two differ in their personalities: Gonzalez-Kerr is always busy, while Bailey describes herself as “steady.” But they found a way to blend their leadership styles to work together effectively in a stressful environment to accomplish the mission.

The battalion was tasked with providing logistics support, transportation and convoy escort throughout northern Iraq. Of the five battalions in their brigade, the 927th was the only one with a multi-faceted mission.

“Part of the challenge was to integrate Army and National Guard

components together in a short period of time,” Bailey said.

The 927th was selected for one of the largest missions at the time: To rotate the Army’s 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment into Iraq and the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division (now re-flagged as 4th Brigade, 1st Armored Division), out of Iraq. This mission involved many long, dangerous convoys back and forth, carrying troops and equipment from Kuwait to Iraq.

Gonzalez-Kerr and Bailey depended on the hard work and commitment of their staff and Soldiers to accomplish the task in approximately one and a half months. The unit also credits the constant support they received from their higher headquarters, the 3rd Sustainment Brigade out of Fort Stewart, GA.

"We were quickly able to create an excellent team, so we could perform all our missions," Gonzalez-Kerr said.

It's been only in the last 50 years that women were allowed to join the Florida National Guard. Since then, Florida has led the way in integrating women into the military service, most recently training two of the first women to become Avenger crewmembers, a specialty recently opened to women.

In 2006, the Florida National Guard also deployed a search team of 11 women to accompany the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry to Iraq.

"One of my reasons for joining the Guard was their openness to receiving females," Bailey said.

Women currently make up approximately 15 percent of the Army and Air National Guard. According to Army Regulation 600-13, Army

"We were able to meet and many times exceed the expectations people had for us."

>> LTC Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr

Policy for the Assignment of Female Soldiers, "The Army's assignment policy for female Soldiers allows women to serve in any officer or enlisted specialty or position except in those specialties, positions, or units [battalion size or smaller], which are assigned a routine mission to engage in direct combat, or which collocate routinely with units assigned a direct combat mission."

Though their battalion is considered a support battalion, the lines of combat, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan, are becoming increasingly blurred.

The unit faced several attacks during their convoy missions, as well as hazards on base from indirect fire. At the time, northern Iraq had become one of the deadliest areas in the country as operations

in Baghdad forced insurgents to the north.

Bailey, who earned her Combat Action Badge on one of her first missions in Iraq, remembers how she felt when she first learned of the impending deployment. "I thought, 'This is a young man's war and here I am in my 50s.'"

Despite her reservations, Bailey and Gonzalez-Kerr earned the respect of those they served with overseas and their peers back home. They recently received an award at the 2008 National Guard Association of Florida annual conference for their deployment.

Neither Gonzalez-Kerr nor Bailey felt that being female prevented them from accomplishing their mission. Though they initially faced skepticism from some, they let their success speak for itself.

"We're all Soldiers," Gonzalez-Kerr said. "We were able to meet and many times exceed the expectations people had for us."

At the moment, the two are enjoying time at home with their families who supported them through their deployment. Both plan to continue to serve as leaders in the Florida Guard wherever they are assigned. **GX**

FIRST FLIGHT

CSM Sally Bailey (left) and LTC Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr (right) pose for a photo prior to one of the first missions of their deployment. Gonzalez-Kerr and Bailey led the 927th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion through a yearlong mission to Northern Iraq.



LTC Valeria Gonzalez-Kerr (left) and CSM Sally Bailey (right), the senior leaders of the 927th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion based at Camp Blanding, FL, pose for a photo during the 2008 National Guard Association of Florida conference in Orlando.

SGT BLAIR HEUSDEN



A GENTLE TOUCH
LTC Igor Dadirca, from the Moldovan National Army, is training to use the Remotec ANDROS, a 700-pound robot, to remove an explosive device. The training is part of the Partnership for Peace between the North Carolina National Guard and the Moldovan National Army.

Cool Under Pressure

THE GUARD'S BOMB SQUAD KEEPS IT SAFE

By Camille Breland

▶ ONE OF THE MOST dangerous aspects of war is improvised explosive devices, or IEDs—bombs that are used in unconventional ways, such as being planted along a patrol route.

These bombs and other explosives like them—known as explosive ordnance—are real threats in war zones, and today's U.S. Soldiers are up to the challenge of preventing them from detonating.

These brave Soldiers are known as 89 Deltas, Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) specialists, and GX caught up with one of them as they returned from a NATO-led deployment to Kosovo.

Thirteen members of the North Carolina Army National Guard's (NCARNG's) 430th EOD Company out of Greenville returned July 10 from a critical mission—to find and eliminate any type of explosive ordnance. SPC Jacob Payton is one

of those Soldiers, and the fact that his job is dangerous doesn't bother him. He said he just wants to "make a place safer than it already is."

And he did. The 430th successfully responded to 125 reports of unexploded ordnance, six IEDs and three cordon-and-search missions (searching a building), according to the NCARNG.

"It gives you a sense of pride that we are doing good," said Payton, a 24-year-old from Elizabeth City, NC. "The [Kosovo] locals see that we're doing good. The locals know that we are there for them."

Payton said while they were in Kosovo, he saw the country making progress in building infrastructure and keeping the peace, plus the general outlook of the population was positive.

"The people there are incredible. They are the nicest people that I've ever met. We couldn't go anywhere in that country without someone waving at us or saying, 'mirëdita'—

that means good day," Payton said.

In fact, the people of Kosovo are so grateful for America's and NATO's help that they've named streets and gymnasiums after such leaders as former President Bill Clinton and George Bush, he said.

But one of Payton's best memories from Kosovo was meeting his foreign counterparts. The 430th worked with EOD specialists from countries such as Germany, Ireland, Sweden, Finland and Poland.

"We saw how they worked, they saw how we worked, and we were

"WE SAW HOW THEY WORKED, THEY SAW HOW WE WORKED, AND WE WERE ABLE TO SHOOT IDEAS OFF OF EACH OTHER."

▶▶ SPC Jacob Payton, NCARNG

able to shoot ideas off of each other," Payton explained.

In addition to learning different methods of tackling explosive ordnance, during downtime the Soldiers would chat about their cultures, military life, food or anything else that came to mind. It was these intimate moments with the foreign Soldiers that Payton will remember most.

"That was the best part of the entire deployment," he said.

BECOMING PART OF THE BOMB SQUAD

Soldiers have to volunteer to become an EOD specialist, and not everyone is selected. In addition to Basic Combat Training, EOD specialists must go through 38 weeks of Advanced Individual Training to learn the highly technical skills used to locate, identify and remove explosive ordnance. And being an EOD specialist doesn't just mean you're working abroad; these Soldiers may also be called up at home by the highest leader in the United States: the president. EOD specialists are frequently brought in to search locations where the president and other top leaders visit, often working closely with the U.S. Secret Service.

It's not unlikely for a Guard Soldier to make the transition to a civilian job with the government or a private company that requires knowledge of ordnance location and destruction.

EOD specialists also get to work with the nation's top-level technology, such as robots, bomb suits and a "gigantic monster" called the RONS. The RONS, meaning Remote Ordnance Neutralization System, is basically a large robot that can "pick up and carry away" explosives. Soldiers can safely direct the RONS from another location via remote control.

EOD specialists may risk their lives every time they embark on a mission, but saving others' lives makes it all worthwhile.

For more information about becoming an EOD specialist, visit www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com. **GX**

SPC JESSICA L. SHELDON



REMOTE CONTROL
SFC Alejandro Garza of the 166th Aviation Brigade, Fort Riley, KS, uses the onboard camera to drive the MARCbot IV observational vehicle during base defense training June 14 at West Camp Rapid, Rapid City, SD, as part of the 24th annual Golden Coyote training exercise.

MEET MARC

NEW VEHICLE TAKES ON IEDS

Story and photos by
SGT Lance Schroeder

▶ **RAPID CITY, SD** —The convoy came to a stop. The Soldiers dismounted and moved into place to pull security. Ahead, near the edge of the road, sat a possible improvised explosive device (IED) just waiting for the next vehicle to speed by.

What should the convoy commander do next?

In the past, there were only a few possible answers to this question: Call in the Explosive Ordnance Division, or send one of your own Soldiers to identify the

device. Either way, the troops' lives were in danger.

But now there is a new option—one that takes danger out of the equation.

Send in the MARCbot IV observational vehicle!

Members of the 166th Aviation Brigade out of Fort Riley, KS, conducted training on the multi-function Agile Remote Control Robot (MARCbot) IV as part of their base defense operations training lane at West Camp Rapid, during the 24th annual Golden Coyote training exercise.

"This technology allows maximum standoff, so the Soldier

outside the wire can close the gap and make a positive identification on the target," said SFC Alejandro Garza, 166th brigade IED master gunner.

Garza, an instructor on the base defense lane, placed a special emphasis on the MARCbot IV training for one specific reason. "The Soldier doesn't have to risk

his life to determine if there is an actual threat," Garza said.

Garza described the MARCbot IV as a light, portable vehicle that is basically a remote-controlled car with a camera mounted on an adaptable arm.

This allows the average Soldier to approach a potential threat and look at it, he added.

The Soldier uses a remote control unit to drive the MARCbot IV to the suspected explosive device. Once in

position, the camera and arm are manipulated to view any aspect of the target, allowing a positive identification to be made. During this process, the Soldier is positioned safely away from the potential blast zone, Garza said.

Soldiers receiving the MARCbot IV training agreed that the benefits were obvious.

"This is great training!" said SPC Roseann Deming, a member of the Army Reserve's 960th Quartermaster Company out of Sioux City, IA. "I've received a great idea of what I need to know when I get deployed in the future, and the tools I can use to stay safe."

"I know for a fact this is a life-saving tool," said Garza, a veteran of two deployments in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. "Anytime we keep Soldiers away from the 'boom,' that's a great lifesaving tool." **GX**



THE MARCbot IV OBSERVATIONAL VEHICLE USES ITS ONBOARD CAMERA TO EXAMINE A POSSIBLE IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE DURING BASE DEFENSE TRAINING JUNE 14 AT WEST CAMP RAPID, RAPID CITY, SD, AS PART OF THE 24TH ANNUAL GOLDEN COYOTE TRAINING EXERCISE.

"This technology allows maximum standoff, so the Soldier outside the wire can close the gap and make a positive identification on the target." >> SFC Alejandro Garza, 166th Aviation Brigade

Big Plans for the Guard's Future

Story and photo by SSG Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau

ST. LOUIS, MO—Leadership changes in the National Guard are historic for a reserve component that is essential to the overseas fight, according to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

Adm. Michael Mullen was addressing a record-breaking crowd of 1,500 attending the National Guard Bureau's Joint Family Program Volunteer Workshop and Youth Symposium in St. Louis, MO.

The 17th chairman of the Joint Chiefs told the audience that nominations made by the Secretary of Defense on July 16 could result in historic National Guard leadership changes.

"[LTG H Steven Blum] was nominated for a critical job," Mullen said, referring to the current chief of the National Guard Bureau's nomination to be deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command.

"First in the Guard world nominated to be deputy at one of our combatant commands, as we also nominated [Lt. Gen.] Craig McKinley to be the first four-star for our Guard Bureau," he said.

The nominations are subject to Senate confirmation.

"Those are very significant events not just for our Guard, but also for our country," Mullen said,



"because it puts two great individuals in critical positions for the future of our military, for the future of our country."

Mullen also told the crowd, "I put family support on an equal plane with individual and unit performance and sacrifice and service because we cannot do it without you."

The National Guard has played a critical role since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, Mullen said.

"I want to express my appreciation for what the Guard and the Reserves have done since 9/11," he said. "We would not be making the progress we are making in both of these wars [in Iraq and Afghanistan] without the incredible performance of the Guard and

Adm. Michael Mullen, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, speaks to 1,500 people gathered for the largest-ever National Guard Bureau Joint Family Program Volunteer Workshop and Youth Symposium in St. Louis, MO.

Reserves. We cannot move forward without the Guard and Reserves."

In a separate interview with American Forces Press Service, Mullen discussed his priorities for the National Guard.

"The top priority is to continue to deploy them in the expeditionary fashion that we have to do so that families are much readier," Mullen said. "There's an inextricable link between family readiness and military readiness." **GX**

"IT'S NOT 'THE GUARD GETS THE OLD GEAR' ANYMORE: IT'S THEY GET THE NEW GEAR, JUST LIKE THE ARMY GETS IT."

>> Adm. Michael Mullen

OTHER PRIORITIES OUTLINED BY THE NATION'S SENIOR MILITARY OFFICER:

BALANCED MISSIONS

Mullen's goal is "to create a better understanding for the balance that the Guard has between the need to deploy overseas and the demands here at home," he said. "For too long, that's been too disconnected."

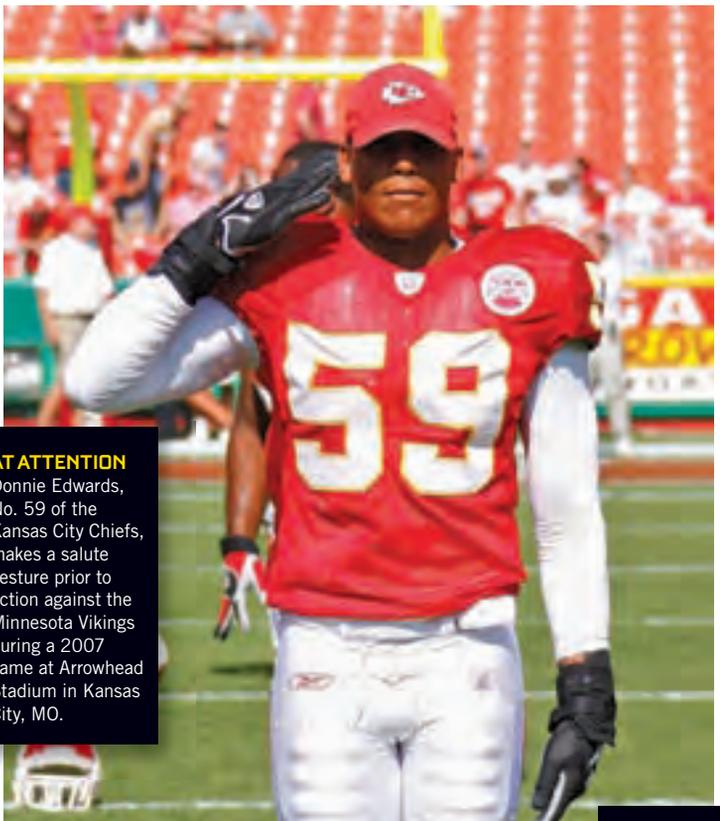
IMPROVED EQUIPMENT

"I've talked to too many governors who have only half their equipment, or they have old equipment," Mullen said. "The commitment on the part of this administration ... is that, from an equipment standpoint, from a training standpoint ... you won't be able to tell the difference. It's not 'the Guard gets the old gear' anymore: It's 'they get the new gear, just like the Army gets it.' We're in a real time of change."

Equipment improvements will be designed to meet the National Guard's dual domestic and overseas missions, the chairman said.

"We would not be making the progress we are making in both of these wars without the incredible performance of the Guard and Reserves."

>> Adm. Michael Mullen

**AT ATTENTION**

Donnie Edwards, No. 59 of the Kansas City Chiefs, makes a salute gesture prior to action against the Minnesota Vikings during a 2007 game at Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City, MO.



CAMP ROBERTS Donnie Edwards poses with other WWII "Soldiers" during a break at a reenactment at Camp Roberts.

**COMMANDER IN CHIEF**

Edwards poses with the president while on a USO tour.

Donnie Edwards Brings Gridiron to Soldiers Abroad

By Christian Anderson

WANT TO KNOW what it's like to have one of the NFL's best defensive players trying to crush every bone in your body? Well, watch former Pro Bowler and Kansas City Chiefs linebacker Donnie Edwards this fall as he continues his incredible career of slamming quarterbacks, running backs and anyone else who gets in his way.

Although a bone-crusher on the field, Donnie sets a good example off the field, assisting with charities and recently completing a United Service Organizations (USO) Tour.

"This was my second USO tour, and they are awesome," Donnie said. "Last year we went to Southwest Asia, and this year we

went to Okinawa [Japan]."

Donnie described how incredible it was to interact with the Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen he encountered, many of whom were his fans.

"It was great, and I was excited to see these guys," Donnie explained. "It was nice for them to see us, so they would know we haven't forgotten about them, even though they are living in another country halfway around the world."

Donnie realized how important the USO is when he went on his first tour in 2007.

"We went to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, and being in an environment like that was incredible," he said. "It was one of those things where you see it on the news all the time, and it's good to go

out there and see the atmosphere and environment that our men and women are living in.

"After that tour, I thought every American should see what they are doing and how they are making us safe," Donnie added. "They are protecting us and making sacrifices to protect our country."

Donnie visited the troops during his off-season, when the Chiefs were not practicing or playing games. Regardless of whether it's the regular season or off-season, Donnie still works out to stay in shape, and he feels that fitness makes people better at their jobs, whether they

are an athlete or a Soldier.

"I work out a lot, actually," Donnie laughed. "I love working out. It's what keeps me healthy and durable in the NFL."

With 1,508 tackles, Donnie is one of the NFL's best linebackers and shows no intention of slowing down anytime soon.

"I love being the tackler and not the person being tackled," he joked. "It's exhilarating when you put all your frustration and anger into a play."

"I'm a huge military supporter, and I always try to encourage my teammates and my friends to give back to our men and women in the military," Donnie added. "Just to interact with them and let them know they have your support, and [that] you are behind them is important."

Donnie jumped at the chance when asked if he would like to give a shout-out to the Soldiers.

"I'm definitely behind you 100 percent!" he exclaimed. "Be safe and get home!" **GX**

"I LOVE BEING THE TACKLER AND NOT THE PERSON BEING TACKLED. IT'S EXHILARATING WHEN YOU PUT ALL YOUR FRUSTRATION AND ANGER INTO A PLAY."

>> Donnie Edwards





CROSSING THE FINISH LINE

LTC James Hawkins, commander of the Alabama Military Academy, greets two candidates as they cross the finish line at Talladega Super Speedway.



They circled at the bottom of the 2.5-mile track in combat uniform with boots, weapons and a 35- to 40-pound rucksack to complete the 7-mile course.

7-Mile March at Talladega Superspeedway

By Norman Arnold

TALLADEGA, AL—Cars flashing by at more than 200 mph and 150,000 enthusiastic fans standing on their feet and screaming in the stands are common sights at the Talladega Superspeedway during a major NASCAR race.

Recently, the speedway stands were empty and silent, and the pace a lot slower as 173 National Guard members entered the track in full combat gear. The Soldiers are cur-

rently attending an accelerated 57-day Officer Candidate School at Fort McClellan Army National Guard Training Site.

The OCS course is conducted in three phases, and completing a 7-mile foot march in full combat gear is part of the second phase. The candidates had walked from a starting point 4.5 miles from the speedway on a sparsely traveled road. On arrival, they crossed Speedway Boulevard and entered the track infield through the north tunnel.

They circled at the bottom of the 2.5-mile track in combat uniform with boots, weapons and a 35- to 40-pound rucksack to complete the 7-mile course. This is one of three required foot marches the candidates must complete during the course, totaling 22 miles.

The Alabama Military Academy (AMA) conducts the accelerated OCS course for the Army National Guard nationwide. Candidates from 23 states, including 10 Alabamians, are attending the current course.

Since 2003, more than 2,800 new second lieutenants from 50 states and four territories have graduated from the program.

Officer candidates from the Alabama Army National Guard are Nathan P. Bryant, Madison; Valerie D. Delarosa, Enterprise; David C. Duncan, Lanett; Jason A. Garcia, Tuscaloosa and John W. Hargray, Troy.

Others are Joshua P. Ingalls, Dothan; John A. Pitts, Auburn; Patrick L. Taylor, Birmingham; Jessica A. Weltin, Mobile, and Trent S. McMillan, Canton, GA.

AMA uses the Infantry School program of instruction in the course to evaluate and develop leadership abilities of Soldiers seeking a commission in the U.S. Army and Army National Guard.



CLASS NO. **53**

Alabama Military Academy's Officer Candidate School Class No. 53 gather around the finish line at Talladega Super Speedway. The OCS class completed a 7-mile road march at the Speedway recently.



MARCHING HOME

(Left) An OCS candidate from Class No. 53 celebrates as she crosses the finish line. (Below) Two OCs make their laps around the track.

The Soldiers' physical and mental stamina are tested in a demanding, high-stress, 24-hour environment. Coping with stressful, physically and mentally demanding situations under tight time constraints is common. The candidates learn to rely on teamwork, prioritization and leadership abilities.

The current class has 23 females with the oldest being 40 years old and the youngest, 23. The oldest male in the course is 41 and the youngest is 20. In addition to the candidates, there are more than 40 staff, cadre and support personnel working with the current class.

Alabama state troopers assisted with security for the march on public roads, and medical personnel were available to assist the Soldiers if needed. **GX**





A HELPING HAND
SPC Timothy C. Berlanga, TXARNG, hands a bag of ice to a resident whose neighborhood in Raymondville, TX was severely flooded July 25 by the deluge of rain from Hurricane Dolly.

Texas Guard Assists in Massive Flood Relief

By 1st SGT Lek Mateo, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

RAYMONDVILLE, TX—Residents of the Rio Grande Valley are still feeling the effects of Hurricane Dolly after the second Atlantic hurricane of the 2008 season tore through south Texas on July 23 with damaging wind and torrential rain.

Remnants of the Category 2 hurricane could still be felt as severe flooding in several coastal cities displaced several hundred families whose homes were destroyed or made inaccessible.

Several thousand people were without electricity at the height of the storm due to downed power lines, but utility companies from all over the state worked tirelessly to restore service.

More than 800 members of the Texas Military Forces, comprising the Texas Air National Guard, Army National Guard and Texas State Guard, joined forces with local, state and federal emergency responders in a massive relief operation to help the communities recover.

The military effort, under the command of the Standing Joint Interagency Task Force, assisted the state's Texas Task Force 1 with search and rescue, food, water and ice distribution, and shelter management.

They established and manned 15 stationary food, water and ice distribution sites, known as PODS (point-of-distribution sites) around the clock, and helped man and administer seven of the Red Cross and



SERVING THE COMMUNITY
Soldiers distribute food, water and ice from a light medium tactical vehicle to a resident whose neighborhood in Raymondville, TX, was flooded by Dolly.

emergency agency shelter sites.

Task force commander Col. John Nichols, of the Texas Air National Guard's 149th Fighter Wing in San Antonio, said this is definitely a joint organization, and that he is proud to lead all three components of the Texas Military Forces involved with this mission.

"This is truly Texans helping Texans, and we are ready for this kind of contingency operation," said Nichols.

SFC Eliberto Cavazos of the Texas State Guard, and a resident of Raymondville, rode out the storm at the local high school with several members of his unit.

The retired city employee said it was great to be able to work together as a team with his counterparts in the Army and Air National Guard, and together show the community in which he lives that the Texas military forces can do the job at hand.

"We've received a lot of thanks for coming here and helping from the people in my neighborhood, and they are truly very grateful," said Cavazos. "That makes me very proud to be able to serve in uniform."

Sharon Stanton, who had been without power for three days since Hurricane Dolly struck, waited patiently for hours in her car until she reached the front of the line where several Guard Soldiers and civilian volunteers quickly loaded her car



NEIGHBOR HELPING NEIGHBOR
SPC Gilberto P. Garcia, TXARNG, helps unload relief supplies at a distribution point located in Harlingen, TX.

PFC Michael Morales, TXARNG, helps a family load food, water and ice at a distribution point located in Harlingen.



with precious water and ice.

The resident of La Feria said she knew that relief was on the way when she started seeing convoys of large green National Guard Humvees and trucks arriving in her town just hours after Dolly struck.

"The National Guard pretty much has got it together, and they know what they're doing, and that assures me that things are going to get better," Stanton said.

PFC Michael Morales of the Texas Army National Guard's 449th Aviation Support Battalion based in San Antonio has been in the service for approximately a year, and this is his first hurricane relief mission.

The private and several civilian volunteers worked at a feverish pace in the oppressive heat and humidity, loading tons of water, food and ice into what seems like endless lines of cars at a distribution site.

He acknowledged that although the mission was tough, it was nothing compared with the suffering that affected residents were going through.

"It feels good knowing that I can help distribute food and water to those [who] need it most and hopefully make their lives a little better," Morales said. **GX**

1ST SGT. LEK MATEO

California Continues Wildfire Battle

Courtesy of the California National Guard Office of Public Affairs

► **SACRAMENTO, CA**—The California National Guard (CA NG), with support from National Guard equipment and personnel from other states, continued providing rotary aircraft, fixed-wing aircraft and more than 1,560 personnel this summer to assist in extinguishing various northern California wildfires.

As *GX* went to press, there were 22 rotary-winged aircraft fighting various northern California wildfires. These included 11 aircraft from the CA NG and eight from other states. Helicopters from the CA NG consisted of one UH-Huey, three UH-60 Black Hawks, one Firehawk, one CH-47 and three OH-58 Kiowas for observation. To date, these

aircraft had dropped more than 2.5 millions gallons of water.

The CA NG provided seven C-130H with MAFFS, which are capable of dropping up to 3,000 gallons of water or retardant per mission. Two of the aircraft were from the North Carolina Air National Guard, three from the Colorado Air Force Reserve and two from the Wyoming Air National Guard. To date, MAFFS had dropped more than 849,000 gallons of retardant.

Along with aircraft, the CA NG provided personnel and equipment to support the battle against wildfires.

After receiving more than 40 hours of training, the first wave of more than 200 California Guard members began type-2 firefighting on the Sugarloaf fire in Mendocino County on July 10.

The second wave of 200 California National Guard Soldiers, referred to as Task Force Pick, reported to McClellan



Air Park where they were issued equipment and began training as fire linemen to assist Cal Fire in combating various northern California wildfires.

The primary function of these type-2 teams was to construct a fire line by hand in areas where heavy machinery cannot be used due to terrain or environmental considerations.

The CA NG also supported various fires with two advanced mobile communications and data platforms to assist with command and control in remote areas; three Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks for refueling;

and one 5,000-pound tanker.

Eight (07) Dozers from the 749th Engineer Battalion created fire lines at the GAP fire in Goleta, CA, where they planned to support Cal Fire personnel with building fire containment lines.

The California National Guard worked in support of the governor and civilian responders and will continue to be deployed in the affected area as long as needed.

The CA NG was also supporting the wildfires with more than 1,300 personnel and more than 260 Soldiers and Airmen from out of state. **GX**

'Thanks' from the Big Easy

NEW ORLEANS RESIDENTS PRAISE GUARD

By SGT Michael L. Owens,
241st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment Unit
Public Affairs Representative

► **NEW ORLEANS**—Since the formation of "Task Force Gator," a contingent of Louisiana National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who conduct operations in support of the New Orleans Police Department, many residents feel they have a newfound friend.

Ninth Ward resident Gertrude Leblanc, 72, recently moved into her rebuilt house after her home of 43 years was destroyed by floodwaters from Hurricane Katrina.

"They are my best friends," Leblanc says of the patrolling Soldiers.

Since many of her neighbors have not returned to the city, she looks forward to seeing and talking with the Soldiers on a daily basis when she sits on her porch during the day.

Throughout their shifts, the Guard members take the time to walk the streets and talk with residents about almost everything.

"My husband and I take frequent walks along the [Mississippi] river and cannot go two minutes without seeing one of the Soldiers," says Janet Baedicke, who lives in the Bywater neighborhood in the downtown area. "It

really makes you feel safe."

Baedicke and her husband live in Monroe, LA, during the week, but on weekends they enjoy coming to New Orleans where they also own a home. Baedicke has a son who left New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and she thinks that the Guard's presence helped persuade him to return after he vowed never to come back.

Another resident who is grateful for the National Guard is John Gaines. Gaines, who also lives in the Bywater neighborhood, credits the troops for being fast responders. Gaines recently had his motorcycle stolen and said that after he called 911, Guard members were the first at the scene.

"I called 911 thinking that the New Orleans police would show up, but in a matter of minutes, three military police cars were at my front door," he said. "When you

are in need, it makes you appreciate their efficiency."

BG J. Ben Soileau, commander of the Task Force, also takes the time to praise his troops.

"They are doing a great job and work very hard to accomplish the mission here," he said. Soileau took over Task Force Gator in March 2007 and has been proud of his troops since the first day he arrived.

Many residents say they enjoy having the National Guard as a part of their city. "I wish they could stay forever," Leblanc said. Many of the residents throughout New Orleans echo those words and feel they have an extra security blanket helping keep the city safe. **GX**



TASK FORCE GATOR
Patrolman SSG Carlos Paiz talks with residents Mr. and Mrs. Baedicke in a Bywater neighborhood in New Orleans on July 10, 2008.

SGT MICHAEL L. OWENS

Bustin' Drugs

GUARD HELPS POLICE COMBAT TRAFFICKING

By Air Force Tech. Sgt. Cheryl Hackley, National Guard Bureau

GREENBELT, MD—Since 1994, the National Guard Counterdrug Program has employed criminal analysts in Title 32 status in support of local, state and federal agencies' ongoing efforts to combat drug trafficking in the 13 jurisdictions of Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia.

Last year, interagency cooperation at the Washington/Baltimore High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA) led to \$30 million worth of illegal drugs seized by law enforcement.

HIDTA is not an agency, but rather a program guided through

the Office of National Drug Control Policy out of the executive office of the President.

"The purpose was to establish a coordinated effort among local, state and federal law enforcement agencies to focus on drug problems confronting a particular region," said Thomas Carr, director of the Baltimore/Washington HIDTA. "This is not a cookie-cutter program. Each HIDTA tailors the needs of its region to focus properly on its threats."

According to HIDTA's 2007 threat assessment, the serious drug threats in this area are crack, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, PCP and methamphetamine, which predominantly come from Atlanta, Los

Angeles, New York and Miami.

The National Guard is just one of the 134 participating agencies working to thwart drug trafficking and drug use. Others include the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; the Federal Bureau of Investigation; the Virginia State Police; and the Baltimore County Police Department.

"The biggest thing we provide at the HIDTA is direct support with our National Guard analysts, who are working side-by-side with law enforcement," said Air Guard LTC Preston Brown, operations support branch chief for the National Guard Bureau's counterdrug division.

When law enforcement officers begin a case, it starts with the arrest of an individual or surveillance of a certain location. Tips from citizens are one example that leads to surveillance of a person or site, explained "Mike," a detective from the Maryland State Police Drug Enforcement Division for the HIDTA group. Then, an agency representative will call the Watch Center located in the HIDTA.

"Right away we have to run

deconfliction because we don't know if we're working the same case as someone else," he said. "It's mostly for safety; we don't want to hurt each other or have a police-on-police situation."

The Watch Center is where several National Guard analysts work with other agency analysts to input data about personnel or locations involved in a narcotics or money-laundering scheme. The Deconfliction Event Information System is updated constantly to alert staff about upcoming high-risk events like the execution of a search warrant, according to HIDTA's Web site.

"While we are working the case, they are linking this person with this person, and we wouldn't know about any of it without [HIDTA's] databases, and the research they do for us," the detective stated.

Furthermore, the National Guard provides surveillance and other support to detectives in case analysis.

"If we have several people involved in a crime, analysts will go ahead and break it down,



GRADUATING TO SUCCESS

Louisiana National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program cadets patiently await the command to "take seats" at commencement exercises held at First Baptist Church in Minden, LA, on July 26.

"NO MATTER WHAT OUR GOALS WERE, WE LEARNED TO PUSH OURSELVES TO REACH THEM WHILE AT [THE YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM]." >> Jeffrey A. Venezia

LA Youth ChalleNGe Graduates 117 Cadets

By SSG Rachel A. Hall

MINDEN, LA—The Louisiana National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program conducted graduation exercises for Class 2008-1 at First Baptist in Minden recently. The program successfully graduated 117 cadets, with Jeffrey A. Venezia of Slidell leading the class as cadet of the cycle.

"My fellow cadets and I had no idea of all the mazes and obstacles that awaited us," Venezia said, "but it didn't take long for the cadre to let us know that YCP [Youth ChalleNGe Program] lives up to its name."

According to the Post-Residential Coordinator, retired MSG Ronnie H. Dollar, the Youth ChalleNGe Program has proven to be a successful tool for parents with troubled teens. The teens decide for themselves if they want to attend the program and have the opportunity to earn their GEDs along with many other acquired skills that will assist them in having a successful future.

SSG RACHEL A. HALL

go through phone records, do mapping and take aerial photographs of the areas,” Mike said.

Military technology is fast becoming mission-essential to National Guard criminal analysts at the HIDTA. Over the past few years, counterdrug leadership has worked to implement the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network (SIPRNet) system into HIDTAs across the nation to transmit classified information.

The capabilities of the SIPRNet are still being finessed within the HIDTAs as National Guard Counterdrug Soldiers and Airmen are trained to use the Department of Defense’s secure computer network.

“SIPRNet has a feature similar to Lexis/Nexis, that is, a database used to search for investigations and arrest records of individuals with questionable immigration status that may be involved in terrorism or narcotics trafficking,” Brown said. “That feature, plus access to other secure databases and forums, will really elevate the capabilities of the National Guard criminal analysts in

their support to law enforcement.”

National Guard analysts said they are proud of the work they do because they know they’re making a difference every day in the lives of law enforcement officers and helping the fight against illicit drugs in this country.

“Everything we do, whether the results come back to us or not, helps keep drugs off the street,” said SSG William, criminal analyst with the Maryland Army National Guard.

“National Guard personnel are a crucial tool for law enforcement; without them we couldn’t do a lot of what we do,” Mike said. “It’s nice to give them the ball, and they run with it while we work a case. They’re very helpful.”

“I feel privileged to be able to do something like this,” William said. “It really is a great honor.”

For more information about the HIDTA program, visit the Web site at www.hidta.org. **GX**

(EDITOR’S NOTE: Due to operational security and the safety of detectives and criminal analysts working in counterdrug missions, full names and photographs of personnel cannot be released.)

In this class, 79 cadets took the GED test while they were residents at the program. There were 31 cadets who took the ACT exam while residents at YCP, and 16 of them scored an 18 or higher.

The cadets participated in projects that included the Habitat for Humanity Building Renovation program, urban restoration projects, feeding the homeless, several highway cleanups and giving gallons of blood to the Louisiana Blood Bank. Overall, the cadets performed 6,289 hours of community service during their five-month residential phase of the program.

“I am a better person for coming to YCP, and I have been able to accomplish many things such as achieving the rank of five stars and earning my GED,” said Cadet Jasmine R. Morgan of Bastrop.

Cadets Anthony Huckaby of Baton Rouge and Brittany A. Swanner of Calhoun were awarded the American Legion High School Achievement award. This award is presented to one female and one male of each high school graduating class in the United States.

“We must look to the future, begin to set new goals and use the knowledge we have gained the minute we leave and return home,” Venezia said. “We have proven to ourselves that we can do anything—let’s prove it to the world.” **GX**



LEARNING TO LEAD

Wyoming Army National Guard PFC Troyce Guinn, left, of the 960th Brigade Support Battalion, instructs a platoon of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps cadets at the Wyoming Army National Guard’s Regional Training Institute in Guernsey, WY, during the Junior ROTC Cadet Leadership Challenge.

WYOMING SOLDIERS TAKE AIM AT HELPING TEENS

By Officer Candidate Christian Venhuizen,
Wyoming National Guard

▶ CAMP GUERNSEY, WY—The platoon stood in formation dressed in a mix of multi-colored shirts, khaki shorts, lipstick, hair gel and camouflage pants. They were ordered to change into uniforms after getting settled into their new, but temporary, military lives.

The teenagers, a mix of Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (JROTC) cadets from Wyoming, South Dakota and Colorado, were brought to the Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center in eastern Wyoming for the JROTC Cadet Leadership Challenge.

The cadets looked only slightly younger than the Wyoming Army National Guard Soldiers placed in charge, but there is a difference in experiences that comes with those few years.

“The more first-person stories and experience they can get from Soldiers, the better; they love it,” said Peter Schmotzer, a retired U.S. Army lieutenant colonel now in charge of the Natrona County High School JROTC program. He said the one-on-one interaction between his cadets and the National Guard Soldiers is key to the weeklong event.

“I like to show them the seven Army core values,” PFC Troyce Guinn said.

Guinn was a JROTC cadet at Natrona County High School before enlisting in the National Guard. This week, he’s part of cadre mentoring, supervising and counseling the high school cadets.

“They get firsthand knowledge before they ever go to training,” he said. “We teach them how to lead, how to treat your fellow Soldiers. I want them to have fun, and I want them to learn.”

For 36 years, the WYARNG has supported the JROTC program by allowing the cadets to be housed, trained and supported at Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center in eastern Wyoming. The Wyoming Guard also provides Soldiers—some older, some fresh from training—to work with the cadets. Training includes developing leadership and followership skills, rappelling, map and compass courses, and weapons simulators.

At the core of the program are cadre members like SGT Neil Tibbs, with the Wyoming Army National Guard’s Medical Command. He’s an older Soldier who has children about the same age as the cadets he’s mentoring. He said he’s volunteered as a cadre member for years because it’s a mission unlike any other in Wyoming.

“I let them know I’m in charge, but I also make myself available to come up to me at any time,” Tibbs said. “You sit down, and you talk to them, and you find out a lot of things about them. They’re pretty good kids. Sometimes they teach me something, because I have teenagers, too.” **GX**

Soldiers Save Fellow Guard Soldier's Life

Story and photo by MSG Doug Griffin

IF SGT ADAM RITCHIE had been any place other than drilling with the 2-285th Air Assault Battalion's Company C, he probably would be dead. But there were other plans for the 30-year-old Black Hawk helicopter mechanic.

While driving the short trip from the Aviation Support Facility to the 1-112th Aviation Security & Support Battalion Headquarters in Bismark, ND, Ritchie began having chest pains. Originally intended for his annual medical screening, the visit turned into something much more serious. Upon his arrival, COL Gordon Leingang, flight surgeon for the North Dakota Army National Guard (NDARNG), was immediately notified.

WORSE THAN A HEART ATTACK

Leingang, a civilian emergency trauma physician, sprang into action and quickly assessed the sergeant's condition. Ritchie's physical assessment didn't show that he was suffering from a heart attack. The pain intensified, and then, "It was like someone was pouring a pitcher of warm water inside my chest," Ritchie said.

That feeling was his blood. The largest artery in his body, the aorta, had dissected. When the aorta is dissected, it can very quickly become fatal for most who experience it. The layers of the aorta come apart, and the victim can bleed to death



internally within minutes.

"Most people that suffer an aortic dissection don't survive," said Dr. Michael Brown, a retired Guard member and cardiac surgeon in Bismarck.

Leingang called two flight medics from the next office, both of whom are paramedics and work with him in their civilian jobs. Following instructions from Leingang, they started intravenous fluids, quickly performed an electrocardiogram and "packaged" Ritchie for the ambulance.

The medics tended to Ritchie while Leingang relayed crucial information to the inbound paramedics. With informed paramedics on their way, Leingang then contacted his civilian employer, St. Alexius Emergency Trauma Center.

"During this time, my left leg, along with some of my other extremities, started to go numb or feel as if they had fallen asleep," Ritchie said. "Once we reached the hospital it was a blur of CT scans, X-rays, blood draws and injections to find out exactly what was wrong and to lower my blood pressure to a reasonable level."

GUARD SOLDIERS MOBILIZE

After hearing the news, Ritchie's

longtime friend and commander of the 1-112th Headquarters and Headquarters Company, CPT Douglas Larsen, went to visit Ritchie at the hospital, as did his former commander, CPT Jason McEvers.

Ritchie's former unit, the 164th Engineer Battalion's Company A, was called. Several of Ritchie's former unit members immediately traveled an hour and a half to St. Alexius hospital to be with him. Ritchie would later comment that the support from his fellow Guard Soldiers was "unbelievable."

"I can't thank them enough," he said.

ONE LAST CALL

Doctors believe the concussion from dangerous missions in Iraq (including two direct hits while patrolling in an RG-31) likely weakened his aorta. Ritchie said Dr. Brown told him that, "Aortic dissections just don't happen to 30-year-old guys."

"Dr. Brown ... explained that my aorta had ruptured and had partially torn loose from my heart," Ritchie said. "He also calmly informed me that I was in need of emergency surgery, and that there was a good chance I could die from it, to which I replied, 'What are my other op-

tions?' He replied that I would bleed out and die within two hours. So, at that point I knew I had no other options."

The doctor brought Ritchie a phone to call his parents. He quickly asked his parents to call his girlfriend and come to the hospital.

By this point, Leingang and Ritchie's friend, SSG Mike Carlson, had arrived. Carlson sat by Ritchie, helping him sign the paperwork and keeping him calm as he began to struggle with painful numbness throughout his body.

"I started to think about what I had told my parents, and I realized that if I was going die, I wanted to say something with a little more substance that just 'hurry up and get in the car and come down here.' So, I asked for the phone again.

"I called my folks again and basically told them that if this whole thing went south, I wanted them to know that I loved them and to tell my girlfriend, Danielle, and my kids, Devin and Madison, how much I loved them and how much I would miss them and how sorry I was that I didn't call them as well, but as you can probably see, time was of the essence."

Right after that call, Ritchie was rolled into the operating room for

a six-hour surgery. Doctors worked to repair a valve that was damaged when Ritchie's aorta tore loose, but they were battling blood quickly pumping into his chest. Every available surgeon was called in. At one point, doctors stopped Ritchie's heart for 18 minutes and put him on a bypass machine so they could repair the damage.

RECOVERING SLOWLY

"By the time I was out of surgery, the operation waiting room was packed with friends, family and an incredible number of Guard Soldiers," Ritchie said. "My mom made the comment that it was good that there weren't any other surgeries going on at that time because the waiting room was standing-room-only."

He can laugh about it now, but it wasn't funny at the time. After surgery, doctors gave Ritchie a 10 to 20 percent chance of surviving the night and were still unsure how much irreparable damage had been done. Doctors were concerned Ritchie could have a stroke. They also suspected he could lose one or both legs, and possibly his arms due to the length of time they had been deprived of blood.

"The next morning, Dr. Brown called to the ICU and stated that he wanted them to try to wake me up to assess what damage had been done both physically and mentally," Ritchie said. "Miraculously, I woke up and showed no signs of brain damage or paralysis, but it would take more time for other physical damage to show."

Ritchie has had several surgeries since the initial medical emergency. Six surgeries for his lower leg alone have worked to remedy problems after a part of the aorta traveled through his body and settled in his leg. Additional surgeries are scheduled for his aorta and leg. It's been a long, difficult recovery, but Ritchie and his family are thankful that recovery was an option. **GX**

From France to Morocco

LINGUIST BREAKS LANGUAGE BARRIER FOR FOREIGN TRAINING

By SSG Lacy L. Brown, 415th Military Intelligence Battalion Unit Public Affairs Representative

CARVILLE, LA—"If it weren't for my National Guard language training, I would have never had the opportunity to travel to Morocco to experience the different dialects of the French language," said SPC Madeline R. Ishmael of Bueche, LA.

In June, Ishmael, a 23-year-old linguist and human intelligence collector for the 415th Military Intelligence Battalion in Carville, LA, went on a two-week training mission to Tifnit, Morocco.

Despite sleeping in a tent in the Sahara Desert and dealing with the drastic temperature changes, Ishmael's optimistic outlook for the mission was reflected in the linguistic services she provided. Ishmael worked as a French liaison interpreter for the Marines as they trained the Moroccan Army.



PARLEZ VOUS FRANÇAIS?
French linguist interpreter SPC Madeline R. Ishmael of Bueche, LA, stands with her Moroccan counterparts in Tifnit, Morocco, on June 19.

The unit was there in support of 55 Marines and Sailors from the Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion, 4th Marine Division who trained the 7th Battalion, Brigade Infantry Mobile of the Royal Moroccan Army as part of the exercise "African Lion 2008" in peacekeeping missions to promote stability and crisis support.

"This training gave me an opportunity to be immersed in a country where French was the secondary language, and I got the chance to learn a new dialect, culture and experiences that I would not have been able to receive

had I only studied my language at my unit or in France, where the standardized version of the language is spoken," Ishmael says.

Ishmael attended the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA, where she was trained to speak, write and read French. As a linguist of the 415th Military Intelligence Battalion, she has the opportunity to stay proficient in her non-native language, which also proves helpful in her life outside the military. She recently graduated from Louisiana State University with a degree in French and says, "Because of my training in the Guard, I was able to finish my degree in two years as opposed to the four it usually takes."



WHEN IN MOROCCO
SPC Madeline R. Ishmael of Bueche, LA, enjoys an ethnic dinner during her visit to Morocco as part of the 415th Military Intelligence Battalion out of Carville, LA. Moroccan Soldiers hosted a banquet to honor Soldiers who conducted joint training in Tifnit, Morocco, on June 19.

"BECAUSE OF MY TRAINING IN THE GUARD, I WAS ABLE TO FINISH MY DEGREE IN TWO YEARS AS OPPOSED TO THE FOUR IT USUALLY TAKES."

>> SPC Madeline R. Ishmael, 415th Military Intelligence Battalion

COURTESY OF SPC MADELINE R. ISHMAEL

X Marks The Spot

SOLDIERS SHOOT FOR THE WIN IN OREGON

Photo and story by SGT Tina Villalobos, 41st IBCT Public Affairs

WARRENTON, OR—Bright sunlight rested on the backs of more than 75 shooters and threw long shadows onto wet grass, as MSG Jeffrey Arnst gave a final brief to competitors from around the state. These final moments began the Adjutant General (TAG) Combat Marksmanship Competition.

Arnst is the noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the Oregon Army National Guard (ORARNG) Small Arms Readiness Training Section (SARTS) and has spent nearly a decade as range master of the TAG match.

“In these matches, the highest score wins the match—in the case of a tie, the lowest time breaks the tie, or at the 25-meter, the highest number of bull’s-eyes or hits within the 4-centimeter circle will break the tie,” Arnst said.

The competition has two divisions: an open category for shooters who have competed at state level, and a novice category for first-time competitors.

This year’s TAG match provided a competition springboard for enthusiastic new shooters as well as seasoned experts.

Veteran competitor MSG Mike Sheperd of the ORANG’s 173rd Fighter Wing is no stranger to

winning. He has competed and won in the pistol discipline in the 2003, 2004, 2006 and 2007 TAG matches. This year, Sheperd was the overall match winner, with a combined rifle and pistol score of 431.

“I’m having fun,” Sheperd said. “You just keep showing up and practicing. The sport of shooting is an art and a skill.”

Among the newer competitors was SPC Katie Bixel of the 3670th.

“This year, it wasn’t quite as nerve-wracking, since I had a feel for what was going on,” said Bixel, who was competing in the competition for the second time. “There were some different elements that made the competition even better. We were on the Modified Record Fire Range, and we had to do laps in between shooting. That got our heart rates up and created a more realistic atmosphere.”

New shooters compete against those with similar skills. Half of the shooters on a four-shooter team must be new. There are two pistol matches and five rifle matches. Each shooter will combine his or her matches to indicate a final match score.

CPT Sharel Paradis, 821st Transportation Command, summed up her experience as a first-time shooter: “Many people are intimidated about coming out here. They shouldn’t be. Even



TAKING AIM
SPC Katie Bixel fires a round downrange.

though this is a competition, the camaraderie is fantastic and everyone is very helpful.”

“The skill and value of the SARTS team is very deep,” SSG David Senter, Joint forces Headquarters SARTS member, said. “We have a lot of really top-drawer All Guard shooters—but more than that, they’re really great trainers.”

“I’ve been with the Oregon Guard since 1988 shooting,” Senter said. “I shoot an Olympic shotgun. I’ve been sponsored by the All Guard shotgun team, competition marksmanship team since 1988. My discipline is Olympic trap shooting.”

The match uses high-tech, diverse tools to keep its competitors focused and ready. The annual

match is run by members of SARTS, Arnst said.

“We are providing an opportunity for Soldiers and Airmen to come out and train with a weapon they may take into combat with them.

“This gives our Soldiers the opportunity to ask questions and get answers that might not be available to them at the unit,” Arnst explained. “We are not in a normal unit drill atmosphere here. So, the Soldiers can enjoy camaraderie, ask questions and see what people do in other units.”

For more information, contact MSG Jeffrey Arnst at (503) 861-4095. To see all the match statistics and learn more about the match, visit: www.mil.state.or.us/SARTS/. **GX**

This year’s TAG match provided a competition springboard for enthusiastic new shooters as well as seasoned experts.



“IF THE SERGEANT MAJOR SAID WE’RE WALKING IN, THEY’D GRAB THEIR GEAR, NOTHING TO IT.”

>> SSG Steven Johnsrud, 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery Regiment

HER MAJESTY’S TROOPS

Soldiers with the British Army’s 4th Battalion, the Yorkshire Regiment, head out on a foot patrol during exercise Patriot ’08 at Fort McCoy, WI.

on Military Operations in Urban Terrain] over there is fantastic,” said British Pvt. Robert Parkinson. “We did an assault on it yesterday. We were the first assaulting team to break into the buildings, and they played music like you were in Iraq or Afghanistan. And you’ve got these pyrotechnics where it’s like an incoming round, and the pyrotechnics just explode.”

But the training itself was only one thing that Smith said he hoped his Soldiers would get out of the experience. “Quite a few of them have never been out of England in their lives,” he said. “So it’s an adventure with the traveling and seeing a different culture and working with a different nation. I think they’ll be talking about this for a long time to come.”

And that’s all part of the experience, said Johnsrud, who will be going to England in September with members of his unit to train with the British, which is something he said he is looking forward to.

“Their attitudes are absolutely amazing,” he said. “It’s truly been really great working with them. Like I said, when you’re working with dedicated and motivated professionals, it’s always a pleasure. Always. I don’t care where it is, what branch, what service, what country, people are people, good ones are good.” **GX**

The British Are Coming!

FOREIGN SOLDIERS JOIN FORCES FOR PATRIOT ’08

By SSG Jon Soucy,
National Guard Bureau

DURING EXERCISE Patriot ’08, participating Soldiers wore a variety of uniforms. While many were easily recognizable in the Army Combat Uniform and the Airman Battle Uniform, one group of Soldiers wore a uniform that was entirely different and unfamiliar to most.

Soldiers from the Georgia Army National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery Regiment hosted a company of Soldiers from the British Army’s 4th Battalion, the Yorkshire Regiment, during the exercise. The exercise was part of a Soldier swap program that the two units have taken part in the last few years.

For some of the Georgia Soldiers, it was their first time working with the British troops, and they noticed many similarities between the U.S. and British forces.

“The techniques they use are almost exactly the same as the American Army, with just slight differences,” said SSG Steven Johnsrud, who is assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery Regiment.

One of the main differences was the use of the chain of command. “Their chain of command is a little bit more rigid than ours,” said Johnsrud, who served as the training NCO liaison between the British and U.S. “Oftentimes in the American Army, the captain will say, ‘Corporal, go tell everybody this.’”

Another one of those differences was when it came to physical training. “Their PT, physical training, is different from ours in that it is heavily focused on foot marching,” said Johnsrud.

For some of the British Soldiers, the differences were most notable not in the tactics and techniques of the two armies, but the weather.

“I’m not used to the heat,” said British Sgt. Maj. Garry Smith, who trained with these Soldiers last year at Fort Stewart, GA.

Even so, the weather didn’t put a damper on things.

“The training is the same,” said Smith. “I’ve enjoyed everything. I love being in the field anyway. I could stay out in the field for weeks. I love it.”

And Smith’s Soldiers agreed. “The village [used for training

GUARDING
THE ENVIRONMENT

Defending **the** **American** **Green**

With many National Guard Soldiers deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan, it's easy to forget that our men and women in uniform have a domestic role to perform here as well. As our comrades conquer evil and defend freedom abroad, our Soldiers at home continue to remind us why the National Guard is the most important fighting force in the world. By Christian Anderson

In

the past decade, the National Guard has taken a stance on issues concerning the environment, and rightfully so. Take Hurricane Katrina for instance. Immediately after the storm cleared, Guard units from around the country converged on New Orleans and the Mississippi Coast to provide relief and assistance to the hundreds of thousands of people in need.

This is when the Guard announced to the world that it can and will be counted on in the future to protect us.

At every major disaster site across this country since Katrina, the faces of the National Guard can be clearly seen. These faces are strong and resilient, determined to finish the mission. Never before has the Guard been called upon so much and fulfilled its mission so courageously.

Whether it is a reactive or proactive mission, you can count on one thing: The Guard is working to make our environment safe and clean.

IOWA'S 71ST CIVIL SUPPORT TEAM CLEANS FLOODWATERS OF CONTAMINANTS

Boating through floodwaters looking for household cleaners and other contaminants isn't exactly the mission description for the 71st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support team. But with 58 Iowa counties affected by the massive flooding in mid-June, the Soldiers of the 71st took their expertise to the field in a slightly different, but just as important, role. The team's typical mission is to support civil authorities domestically, which includes identifying chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive agents and substances. It also assesses current and projected consequences of these threats, advises the civil authorities on their response measures and assists with appropriate requests for additional state and federal support.

"On paper, we provide assistance to police, fire and EMS, whether it's a chemical,

biological, radiological, nuclear or explosive incident," said SGT Mark Vandeventer, the 71st's Recon team member. "We don't take command of the situation; that is the civilian authorities' role. We just try to lay out options for them if something is out of their scope of capabilities."

During typical flood situations, the media will often show pictures or video clips of Soldiers working hard filling sandbags and building makeshift levees. This season, the 71st worked hard to break that stereotype, and their efforts proved invaluable to the safety of both the local civilian and wildlife populations.

"We wanted to go out and sandbag with the other Guard Soldiers, but we can't because that's outside the scope of our duties in flood support," Vandeventer said. "We had to wait for the

waters to be safe before we could go out and do our duty and take part in the cleanup."

You wouldn't think it, but that bottle of household cleaner under your sink, plus car wash soap and motor oil, can be extremely hazardous to the environment, even in small amounts.

Now imagine several household cleaner bottles per household, multiply that a few hundred times, and you are looking at a major disaster that could affect not only your drinking water and food supplies, but also potentially wipe out dozens of animal species by poisoning them.

"While patrolling along the rivers and on land, we came in contact with everything from 55-gallon drums of used oil and propane tanks, down to a quart of oil," Vandeventer added. "We had a lot of 55-gallon drums

AFTER THREE WEEKS OF
INTENSE WORK,
THE 71ST WAS ABLE TO
BOAST A RECOVERY OF OVER
80,000 SUSPECT
CONTAINERS,
WITH 362 PROVING TO
BE HAZARDOUS.



:: HAZWASTE RECOVERY: Tired and dirty, Soldiers of the 71st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support team pose for a photo by material they collected from the floodwaters.

"WHILE PATROLLING ALONG THE RIVERS AND ON LAND, WE CAME IN CONTACT WITH EVERYTHING FROM 55-GALLON DRUMS OF USED OIL AND PROPANE TANKS, DOWN TO A QUART OF OIL. WE HAD A LOT OF 55-GALLON DRUMS AND THOUSANDS OF HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE ITEMS—STUFF YOU WOULD FIND UNDER YOUR KITCHEN SINK."

SGT MARK VANDEVENTER

GUARDING
THE ENVIRONMENT



CPT Karen Corsetti of the Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG) has enlisted the aid of oranges to help get rid of a typical household pest—cockroaches.

and thousands of household hazardous waste items—stuff you would find under your kitchen sink.”

The 71st helped the civil agencies immensely, especially since it was able to mobilize immediately. Soldiers provided an amped-up buffer, so when the agencies were ready to deal with the situation, the 71st continued assistance while steadily relinquishing control to the state agencies.

“We showed up on the boats to ride with the EPA (Environmental Protection Agency), and we helped each other identify drums and cylinders lost in the floods,” Vandevanter explained. “We weren’t allowed to touch anything. We were just there to help identify these chemicals.”

The 71st decided that boats would be required to keep Soldiers safe and allow them to cover more ground in less time. Since the floodwaters were often waist-high, they could not always be sure of their footing.

So instead of risking a sprained ankle or other injury, the boats guaranteed the 71st would be active in the cleanup for as long as they were needed.

“We had 28-foot boats on the river so if we identified a chemical we could put it next to another chemical on the boat, and we would be OK until we got it back to the storage facility,” Vandevanter added. “We didn’t touch much, but we would fill up a boatload and go back to the ramp that we put it on and call the ground team. And they would come in with their trucks and haul it away to a collection site in Cedar Rapids.”

But with hundreds of miles of flooded land, the 71st could not afford to go off into the wild unknown. A set plan was established, and the team modified their original plan to fit this particular mission.

“When we were rolling out looking for abandoned containers, we had no idea what was in those containers,” Recon Team Chief Tech Sgt. Josh Ollom said. “The recon portion of this mission was similar to our primary mission, except everything was out in the environment. We weren’t making entries into buildings, but some of the same tools and our training in HAZMAT (Hazardous Material) and awareness played a big part in the flood response.”

Ollom noticed that the majority of the hazardous materials were located along the banks of the rivers near Cedar Rapids, Manchester and Des Moines, Iowa.

“Along the rivers, people have a lot of boats, so there were lots of fuels, oils, paints and a

bit of the regular stuff like Clorox and chlorine,” Ollom said. “I was out on the boat, and we came across a 5,000-gallon storage tank. Something like that, if it had chlorine or ammonia or anything like that in it, could pose a serious threat.”

After three weeks of intense work, the 71st was able to boast a recovery of more than 80,000 suspect containers, with 362 proving to be hazardous. Without the 71st, some of the chemicals may have worked their way into the environment.

GEORGIA SOLDIER USES ORANGE PEELS TO FIGHT COCKROACHES

Everybody loves a good orange now and then, and doctors have long praised the health benefits of vitamin C found in this fruit. But one Guard Soldier is using oranges in a slightly different way.

CPT Karen Corsetti of the Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG) has enlisted the aid of oranges to help get rid of a typical household pest—cockroaches.

Her Invasive Species Management Program has not only saved the Georgia National Guard boatloads of money, but her program also won the “Best Environmental Pest Control Treatment” at the National Guard Environmental Workshop in Orlando, FL, this April.

Pesticides, particularly those directed at cockroaches, have been around for decades, but many have harsh contaminants and can be dangerous if ingested or inhaled. The environmental officer, volunteer firefighter, paramedic and entomologist has found an organic pesticide to help better protect the environment, keep the Georgia armories insect-free, prevent possible health threats to Soldiers and even save a little money.

So what is Corsetti’s weapon of choice? Orange Guard: a completely safe and organic pesticide that is registered with the EPA. Orange Guard inventor Tor McPartland was looking for an alternative to conventional insecticides, which can be dangerous to humans in even trace amounts, when he

FAST FACTS

90% OF LIFE ON EARTH LIVES IN 34 HOTSPOTS: THE WORLD’S MOST BIOLOGICALLY RICH BUT MOST THREATENED PLACES.
Conservation.org

THERE ARE FEWER THAN **1,600 pandas** IN THE WILD TODAY, BUT THEY MUST SHARE THEIR HABITATS WITH HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ACROSS SOUTHWEST CHINA.
Conservation.org

RAIN FORESTS COVER ONLY **2%** OF THE Earth’s surface, BUT THEY PROVIDE HABITAT AND NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT FOR ALMOST HALF OF THE EARTH’S KNOWN LIVING SPECIES.
Arborday.org

stumbled on the benefits of orange peels in controlling insect infestations. McPartland found that using d-Limonene (orange peel extract) could be an effective organic insecticide used around humans, food and pets.

Corsetti became fully qualified to make this choice while studying insects and reptiles during college and continuing those studies for several years after her graduation. She developed her interest in entomology as a student at Georgia State University after she was asked to aid a biologist with his research.

PREVIOUSLY, THE GUARD SPENT AS MUCH AS \$40,000 AT EACH OF THE 50 ARMORIES. WITH CORSETTI’S HELP, THE NATIONAL GUARD HAS SAVED CLOSE TO \$2 MILLION, NOT TO MENTION AVOIDING POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS.

Corsetti spent time researching, identifying and illustrating spiders.

After she graduated, Corsetti was presented an opportunity that she could not pass up—studying ticks and Lyme disease. She spent three years with a biologist from GSU, gaining a vast knowledge of the pest and the ruthless disease it so often carries.

“We were studying Lyme disease at St. Catherine’s Island off the coast of Georgia,” Corsetti explained. “We would bring the ticks back to the lab and study them, but eventually the grant money ran out.”

She spent some time working on a Japanese fishing vessel off the coast of Dutch Harbor, AK, and then entered the education field as a physical education professor where she remained for 14 years until she joined the Guard in 1996.

When her boss at the National Guard Bureau tasked her with dealing with the infestation problem plaguing many armories, Corsetti looked for the best way to utilize her skills and attack the problem with appropriate resources.

“I received a mission from my boss in the National Guard Bureau because they wanted us to cut the use of pesticides by 50 percent,” Corsetti said. “And then my boss wanted to cut costs because our budget was too high. So I had a twofold mission. Since we weren’t licensed to use conventional chemicals, I went into organics, and we eliminated the middleman. So we are saving \$30,000 to \$40,000 statewide.”

Corsetti found through her inspections of various units that the real problem was maintenance and housekeeping. When an armory is dirty and improperly maintained, it becomes an environment for cockroaches and other insects.

“Previously, the Georgia Army Guard had 17 separate contractors servicing the facilities, but now we train Soldiers to handle the pest management themselves,” Corsetti explained. “My plan is centered around good cleaning, housekeeping and maintenance. What I found is that when we took care of these issues, you wouldn’t have a problem.”

“Cockroaches are dirty; they can infect the respiratory system with their feces and urine, and their skeletons decay when they die,” Corsetti said. “They can contaminate food and water.”

Corsetti explained that with conventional pesticides, spraying will only keep them



CPT Karen Corsetti uses sticky traps and Orange Guard to eliminate Georgia National Guard armories of cockroaches and other insects.

“I RECEIVED A MISSION FROM MY SUPERVISOR IN THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU BECAUSE THEY WANTED US TO CUT THE USE OF PESTICIDES BY 50 PERCENT. AND THEN MY BOSS WANTED TO CUT COSTS BECAUSE OUR BUDGET WAS TOO HIGH. SO I HAD A TWOFOLD MISSION. SINCE WE WEREN’T LICENSED TO USE CONVENTIONAL CHEMICALS, I WENT INTO ORGANICS, AND WE ELIMINATED THE MIDDLEMAN. SO WE ARE SAVING \$30,000 TO \$40,000 A YEAR PER UNIT.”

CPT KAREN CORSETTI

at bay, while Orange Guard will kill them, working through the exoskeleton of the insects and suffocating them. She was well aware of the infestation problems at many armories in Georgia, and when she stumbled on the safe Orange Guard, she knew it was the right choice.

“It’s safe for the environment and safe for people to handle,” Corsetti said. “You can spray

it in the kitchen and not worry about it.”

Corsetti credits her pet iguanas for piquing her interest in organic pesticides and has based much of her independent research on reptiles.

“You can use Orange Guard around pets,” Corsetti explained. “This is the reason why I got into organic pesticides. I have a reptile rescue, and I cannot use conventional pesticides around reptiles because it will soak right

© STAN KAADY

into their skins. I have three iguanas and four turtles. I rescue them from people who aren't able to take care of them. I provide them with a safe home until I can adopt them.

"With something like Orange Guard, there is no way that an insect can build a tolerance to it," Corsetti continues. "That's the way a lot of organics work, from the outside in. People don't have an exoskeleton, and that's what makes it harmless to us.

"A lot of pesticides work on the nervous system," she added. "That's what makes them so dangerous to humans, because humans have a nervous system as well.

"Some of these pesticides can be carcinogenic if you get enough on you," Corsetti said. "But people love when we come along and spray. It smells so good!"

According to Corsetti, Orange Guard works two ways: directly and indirectly. She explained that if you spray it right on the insect, it will kill it. But you can also spray it the traditional way, since the insecticide acts as a repellent for 15 to 20 days.

Spray repellants serve only as deterrents and are not a final solution, she explained.

"All you are doing with a repellent is deterring an insect to go somewhere else," she said. "Once the chemical wears off, the insect will come back. So I began to implement sticky traps, which has eliminated a lot of spraying.

"Since using Orange Guard, I can see Soldiers love this alternative because it is safe for them to use, and they see the results," Corsetti said. "But since I have implemented the sticky pads, I don't hear as much from the Soldiers."

Cockroaches lay eggs in cocoons, so if they wander onto the sticky pads, they won't have a chance to lay eggs, Corsetti said. The Orange Guard and sticky straps seem to be a winning team, as infestation has virtually been eliminated.

With Corsetti at the helm, the National Guard has saved a lot of money and continues to look forward to those savings as long as they keep the pest treatment and management under control. The contracts that were previously outsourced to extermination companies have concluded, and each armory is responsible to uphold their maintenance and upkeep.

Corsetti saved the day keeping Georgia armories clean and Soldiers healthy, and saving the Guard some money in the process.

TACKLING LANDSLIDES IN CALIFORNIA: SOLDIERS AND AMERICAN INDIANS WORK TOGETHER

Landslides have plagued residents of California for decades, destroying communities and endangering lives. Powerful and unpredictable, these forces of nature have presented a serious problem to one American Indian tribe, threatening to change its history, culture and way of life.

But that hasn't stopped the California National Guard from helping the Hoopa Indian reservation put up a fight to protect its home. From October to December 2007, Guard Soldiers from California joined forces with members of the Hoopa tribe to tackle an engineering project: Preventing a major landslide on Bald Hill in northern California.

The Hoopa migrated to California in the early 1800s and have remained there ever since, enjoying the fertile lands and streams associated with the region. Twenty-five hundred people live on the reservation, and the Hoopa Valley has remained a cultural and historical sanctuary for these proud people—a place where they preserve their land and culture to this day.

The land management project is one of a handful conducted by the California Civil-Military Innovative Readiness Training Team (CA-IRT). Approximately 20 Soldiers and four members of the Hoopa Roads Department worked together to stabilize Bald Hill, which had eroded many times before, with one particularly disastrous slide in August 2003.

The Hoopa tribe had previously performed temporary mitigation measures, but with only limited success. The threat to the affected area of Bald Hill had increased significantly and proved to be too great a task for the tribe, since its funds, manpower and equipment were limited.

Landslides can be extremely dangerous, and these natural disasters pose an ongoing threat to many California residents. The slides result from a movement of rock, dirt and debris down a slope, due to gravity. Although many factors contribute to this geological phenomenon, landslides are essentially the Earth's way of redistributing soil.

The Hoopa Indian Reservation project, dubbed Operation Winter Eagle, began in October 2007 and produced major results before concluding Dec. 11, 2007. More than



Heavy equipment provided by the CA-IRT allowed Operation Winter Eagle to be a huge success.

BG Kevin G. Ellsworth and Tribal Chairman Lyle Marshall of the Hoopa Indian Tribe discuss the operations conducted at Bald Hill on the Hoopa Indian Reservation.



40,000 cubic yards of dirt, rock and debris were removed from the side of Bald Hill—almost 30,000 more than the Hoopa could have removed alone. The success of this project was a result of the hard work of the Soldiers and the Hoopa people.

But neither the California Soldiers nor the Hoopa Indians ever envisioned success of this magnitude until a medical officer with the CA-IRT spent some time planning logistics.

It was during a medical support mission that rLT William Mendelsohn, medical officer for the CA-IRT, became aware of the Bald Hill situation. While talking with some of the Hoopa tribe members, he learned about the area's longtime landslide problems.

"We were at the reservation performing medical support, and rLT approached them about the engineering side of the IRT doing missions up there," said MAJ Nick Ducich, California IRT Program Director and the Task Force Steel Castle Commander. "rLT Mendelsohn sought out the roads department, which had a well-developed plan on how to tackle the slide problem. They did their research, got some additional funds, and we were able to go in there and take what they had and execute."

According to Ducich, the Bald Hill situation was getting worse, threatening the Hoopa people and their reservation. The slide area had grown 300 percent since 2003.

"The reason why this project is important," he said, "is because adjacent to and at the base of Bald Hill is an emergency access route for the majority of the people north into the valley, potentially sealing off their emergency access route."

Cody Smith, a Project Engineer with Trinity Valley Consulting Engineers and a client of the Hoopa tribe, added, "North of Hoopa there is a bridge crossing—the Martin's Ferry Bridge—that was condemned and closed. And that made Pine Creek Road, the road right under the slide, the really critical transportation artery for people who lived on that side of the river."

With the bridge closed, Pine Creek Road became the Hopas' only way to go to work or get to medical facilities. If Bald Hill produced another landslide, almost a third of the tribe could be cut off from medical help and aid.

"That whole area around Bald Hill has always been an active area as far as landslides," said Kevin Orcutt, Intern Roads Director of

the Hoopa tribe. "And from my knowledge, in the past five or six years, it has gotten progressively worse—to where the timbers on the face were falling down and sliding off the hill and into the road."

The Hoopa were doing their best to keep the road clear, but their measures were more temporary than conclusive. Smith explained that there had been only cleanup efforts after

each landslide, instead of major preventive measures.

"We were spending a lot of money just to clean up the road," Smith said. "We were being reactive, not proactive."

"On top of that, it threatens their economic and cultural livelihood with the Trinity River, which is important to the tribe," Ducich added.



Billy Carpenter, a Hoopa native and Tribal Council Sergeant at Arms, offers a traditional prayer at the conclusion of Operation Winter Eagle. Carpenter, a Korean War veteran, is one of the few individuals on the reservation who still speaks the native language.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD

"THE SOLDIERS WERE EXCITED TO BE A PART OF THE PROJECT, AND THEY WERE A LITTLE DISAPPOINTED IT WAS OVER. THE TRAINING WAS ABSOLUTELY PHENOMENAL, AND THE CA-IRT PROGRAM IS UNIQUE, IN THAT SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN BOTH CAN GO IN AND TRAIN THEIR MILITARY SKILLS AND PROVIDE SOME SORT OF SUPPORT TO COMMUNITIES THAT NEED IT. THE GREAT THING IS WHILE THEY ARE HARD AT WORK, THEIR ACCOMPLISHMENTS REMAIN LONG AFTER THEY ARE GONE."

KEVIN G. ELLSWORTH

The river has played an historic part in the Hoopa Indian reservation location. It has long been a haven for fishing, and has helped feed the Hoopa and other Indian nations along its route for almost

**MORE THAN
40,000 CUBIC YARDS
OF DIRT, ROCK AND DEBRIS
WERE REMOVED FROM THE
SIDE OF BALD HILL
IN CALIFORNIA.**



two centuries. In more recent times, due to environmental changes and development in California, the Trinity River has received state protection and has even become a hot spot for kayaking and river rafting.

“The Trinity River is one of the last rivers in California that has natural salmon spawning,” Mendelsohn said. “This is their [Hoopa tribe’s] natural historic area, so they have

families that have had the same fishing holes for generations. And from a cultural standpoint, it is very important that the river stays in its natural state.”

However, the Bald Hill problem remained, and with limited manpower and resources, the Hoopa could not fix the situation any faster than it was growing.

But with the Guard’s engineering input and the heavy equipment it provided, the Hoopa’s original goal of moving 18,000 cubic yards of material nearly tripled.

“To stop a mountain from sliding into a river—when you don’t have the capability or the finances to deal with it—you start looking for any resource you can find to help you get the job done,” Lyle Marshall, chief of the Hoopa Indian tribe said.

Marshall was told that the project would cost the tribe \$4 million, so they went to the Department of Transportation and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) looking for emergency funds. Money continued to be an issue, as the cost of the project exceeded available funds.

According to Marshall, as different Guard units came to the reservation with medical and dental programs, the Bald Hill issue began to gain attention.

The Guard approached the Hoopa with an offer that was hard to refuse. Promising to match whatever equipment and manpower the Hoopa could raise, the CA-IRT and its engineering component, Task Force Steel Castle, pledged to help the Hoopa remedy the Bald Hill situation.

With earth-moving equipment and specialized machines, the team tackled Bald Hill, literally moving parts of the hill to prevent further landslides. The project, which took just over two months, would not have been possible, or as successful, without the Guard equipment. At the same time, the Hoopa tribe contributed immensely with a sound plan and great spirit.

After the project was complete, it became apparent just how much work was accomplished.

“We had a target quantity of material to be removed, which I believe was 18,000 cubic yards, and with the National Guard help, they provided men and equipment to help remove

more than we had anticipated,” Orcutt said.

After the project was completed, the team gathered on the reservation for a celebration and traditional Native American ceremony. The ceremony was a great success as the two groups enjoyed the fruits of their labor and basked in the glory of a job well done.

It showed that two groups that might not have worked together well a century ago could put the past behind them and create a friendship.

“The Soldiers were excited to be a part of the project, and they were a little disappointed it was over,” Director of California’s Joint Staff, BG Kevin G. Ellsworth said. “The training was absolutely phenomenal, and the CA-IRT program is unique, in that Soldiers and Airmen both can go in and train their military skills and provide some sort of support to communities that need it.”

“The great thing is while they are hard at work, their accomplishments remain long after they are gone.

“Everything they put in stays; it’s not like going to a regular training site where you dig a hole for the sake of digging a hole and then cover it up before you leave. What they have done is phase one, and will stand for years to come,” Ellsworth added.

SERVING AROUND THE CLOCK

Although these missions differ widely, a common thread unites them: Citizen-Soldiers helping their neighbors secure a safe and clean future. The Guard is making an effort to improve not only our safety domestically and abroad, but also to improve our environment and ensure a better tomorrow. Setting the standard for other branches, the Guard has the foresight to use its manpower to protect the things that matter and help people in need.

Leading by example has always been a tradition of the National Guard, and we can count on its Soldiers to focus on the future of our environment and work to provide us with a better tomorrow.

There are no sick days in the Guard, no excuses and sometimes the mission can be rough and tough, but the Soldiers are always there, cleaning up floods, keeping landslides at bay and protecting American citizens. **GX**

First Active First Grad Continues Family Tradition of Service

By SSG Jim Greenhill, NGB

PVT Raymond Loree has become the first Army National Guard Soldier to graduate directly into the active Army's ranks through a new program called Active First.

Loree graduated one station unit training (OSUT) at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, on Feb. 22. He enlisted on Oct. 18 through the Active First program, under which recruits commit to service in the active duty Army followed by service in the National Guard. Recruits enlist in the Army Guard and attend monthly drills until initial entry training (IET) is complete.

Following IET, Soldiers can serve up to 48 months of active duty with the option to continue an active-duty career or return to their Guard unit. Bonuses of as much as to \$60,000 can be obtained by completing the program. Loree, who enlisted for 48 months, is scheduled to receive \$40,000. Married with two young children, he said the money will help his family.

The National Guard has been tasked with enlisting 1,600 recruits through Active First during the 2008 fiscal year; 984 Soldiers had been recruited through Feb. 20, according to SFC David Hawkins, Active First lead project manager.

Loree is following a long-standing family tradition by serving in the military. His sister is serving in the Army in Afghanistan, and his cousin is in Kuwait. At least six other immediate family members, including



PVT Raymond Loree:
The Army National Guard's first Active First graduate

both parents, are either retired from the Armed Forces or currently serving. His father spent more than 18 years in the Marines, and his mother wore Air Force blue.

"It's my time to serve my country," Loree said by telephone from Fort Leonard Wood, where he completed a 20-week OSUT, emerging as a combat engineer. "Growing up as a kid, I looked up to my dad. I always wanted to serve our country. I get to keep the tradition going."

Loree said he told his family: "You guys did it for me, now I'm doing it for you guys."

The 22-year-old tried civilian life first, working as a salesman. "I went to work dreading it every morning," he said.

That changed during the rigors of basic combat training. "I feel motivated," Loree said. "It's very motivating knowing that I can get up in the morning and serve my country."

SSG Shane Carvella, one of Loree's drill sergeants, said: "He listens. He understands. He asked a lot of questions. He tries to prove himself a little more because of the weight that he has on his shoulders."

That's the weight of tradition and the weight of leading the way for Active First participants.

Loree said the rifle range, where he shot a variety of weapons besides the M-16 rifle, and obstacle courses were highlights of his training. "Dealing with the cold weather in Missouri is the hardest thing about basic," he said. **GX**

TSGT Mike R. Smith contributed to this report.

COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

Father Follows Daughter Into Ohio National Guard

By SFC Kevin Bemus
Ohio National Guard

When military recruits speak of their reasons for enlisting, many cite family pride and tradition as their strongest motivation. The desire to follow in a parent's footsteps has prompted many Soldiers to enlist in the National Guard.

For recent enlistee PVT Larry Gravius, a 39-year-old Massillon, OH

resident, family tradition was a definite factor in his decision to become a Soldier. But this time, the parent was following in the child's footsteps.

In June, Larry Gravius followed his 18-year-old daughter, PFC Gwendolyn Gravius, a 2008 graduate of Tuslaw High School, who enlisted in February. Both are proud members of 1484th Transportation Company.

"I have always wanted to serve; seeing both of my brothers serve during the current war and watching my

daughter enlist was a sign for me that it was time to join," Gravius said.

One brother, SGT Matt Gravius, is also a member of 1484th Transportation Company, while another brother, SGT Jody Gravius, is a member of the Army Reserve.

In his civilian job, Larry Gravius is employed as a supervisor for Brechbuhler Scales.

Gwendolyn Gravius enlisted as a motor transportation operator and was scheduled to ship for initial entry



LIKE DAUGHTER, LIKE FATHER: PVT Larry Gravius (right) and his 18-year-old daughter, PFC Gwendolyn Gravius.

training July 31 to Fort Leonard Wood, MO. She earned her previous promotion to the rank of E-2 private for referring her father under the "Stripes for Buddies" program.

Larry Gravius is scheduled to attend training in May at Fort Jackson, SC, and will become qualified as a food service specialist. **GX**

SFC KEVIN BEMUS

"I have always wanted to serve; seeing both of my brothers serve during the current war and watching my daughter enlist was a sign for me that it was time to join." —PVT LARRY GRAVIUS

NEW ARNG EDUCATION DIVISION

STANDS UP!



The newly formed Army National Guard (ARNG), Education, Incentives & Employment Division (NGB-EDU) will greatly enhance the Guard's ability to provide premier marketing, administration and counseling services in support of ARNG Education and Incentive programs as well as provide clear pathways to civilian employment. In order to realize these goals, the division is assembling a dynamic staff of professionals.

If you are interested in becoming a part of this team and are an E5–E7 or O2–O4, visit the ARNG's Human Capital Management Division at Guard Knowledge Online, gko.ngb.army.mil and submit an application.

Duty locations include the ARNG Readiness Center in Arlington, Virginia and the Professional Education Center in North Little Rock, Arkansas.

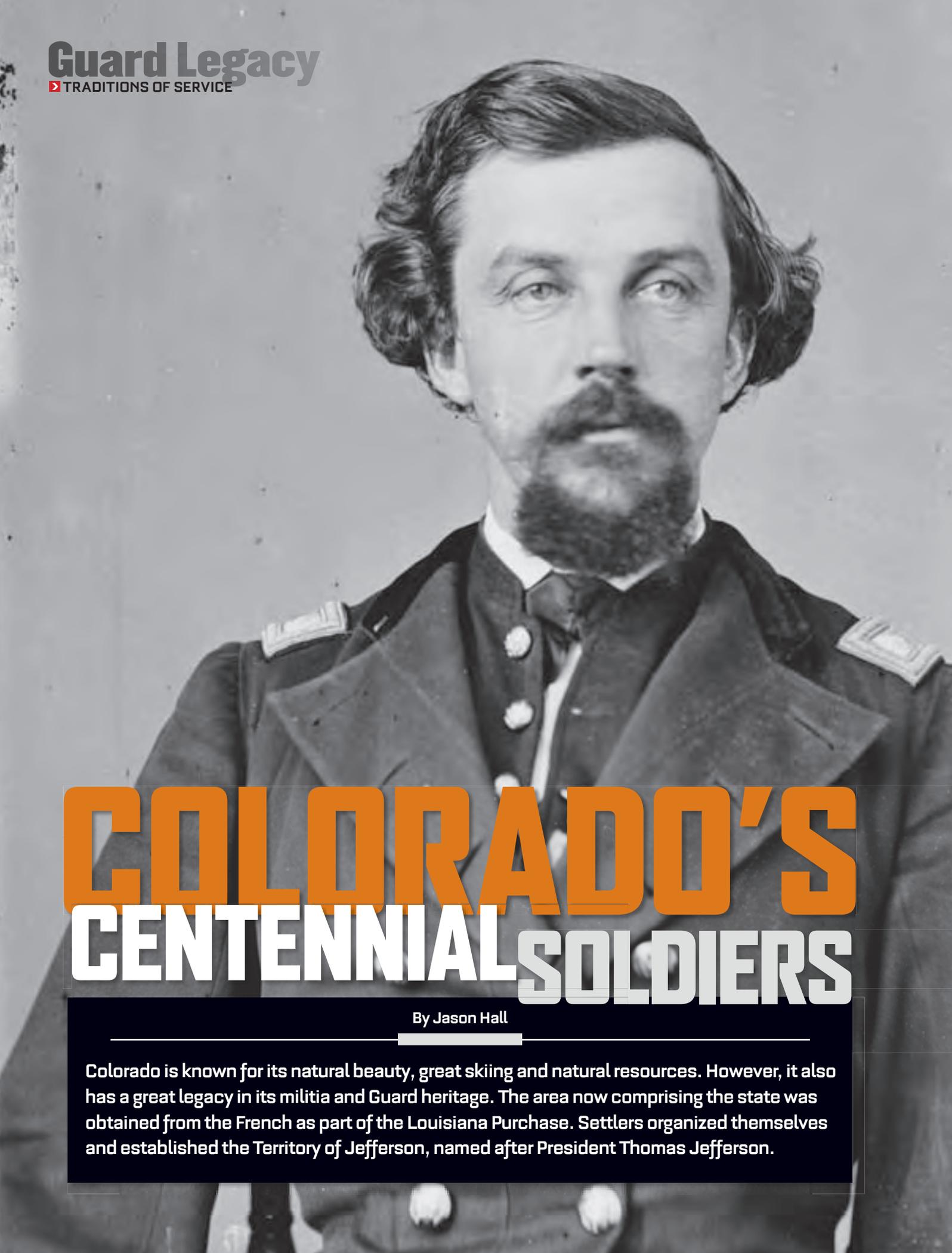
Most new employees will be hired on a one-year conditional basis in an Active Duty for Operational Support (ADOS) status. AGR Tours may also be available.

DON'T MISS THIS UNPRECEDENTED OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE!

INTERESTED? CONTACT US!

LTC Diana Craun in VA | 703-607-9781 | diana.craun@us.army.mil
MAJ Troy Gipps in AR | 501-212-4962 | troy.gipps@us.army.mil





COLORADO'S CENTENNIAL SOLDIERS

By Jason Hall

Colorado is known for its natural beauty, great skiing and natural resources. However, it also has a great legacy in its militia and Guard heritage. The area now comprising the state was obtained from the French as part of the Louisiana Purchase. Settlers organized themselves and established the Territory of Jefferson, named after President Thomas Jefferson.

A

As with any new territory, the subject of military defense was paramount. In January 1860, the First General Assembly of the Jefferson Territory authorized the formation of two militia companies. These companies became known as the “Jefferson Rangers” and the “Denver Guards.”

The new territory failed to gain federal recognition immediately. However, turmoil in the eastern states would have an effect on the birth of a new western state.

Following the election of Abraham Lincoln as president in November 1860, several southern states seceded from the Union to create the Confederate States of America. The federal government sought to increase the power of the free states compared with that of the slave states. On Feb. 26, 1861, outgoing President James Buchanan signed an act of Congress establishing the free Territory of Colorado.

William Gilpin, the first governor of the Territory of Colorado, organized the militia into the “1st Colorado Volunteers” for the sole purpose of protecting the territory from possible invasion by Confederate forces. The Colorado militiamen didn’t have long to wait to defend their land against southern invaders.

In March 1862, the Confederates began moving up across New Mexico and through Sante Fe, hoping to capture the rich gold fields of Colorado to replenish the Confederate government’s depleted treasury. Once Colorado had been taken, the Confederates would turn west and link up with the militia force under the command of Brigham Young in Utah, and with this combined force, take the entire western seaboard.

Unfortunately for the Confederates, Colorado Soldiers stood in their way.

A Fierce Force

On March 23, 1862, a force of Texas Confederates was intercepted by MAJ John

M. Chivington and the 1st Colorado Volunteers at La Glorietta Pass, NM. For three days, they fought in what historians would later call the “Gettysburg of the West.” The 1st Volunteers defeated the invasion force and dealt a decisive blow to the Confederate’s scheme to conquer the West.

Two years later, in the fall of 1864, the Colorado militia was called upon to protect its citizens from hostile Ute, Sioux, Cheyenne, Arapahoe, Kiowa, Comanche and Apache tribes. John M. Chivington, the hero of La Glorietta Pass, was now colonel of the 3rd Regiment Colorado Volunteer Cavalry. Chivington would tarnish his reputation at the Battle of Sand Creek, regarded as one of the most nightmarish scenes in history.

The battle, often referred to as the Sand Creek Massacre, occurred when COL Chivington’s cavalry attacked a settlement of Cheyenne and Arapahos. The tribes’ warriors were away hunting, leaving only elderly men, women and children in the camp. The cavalymen destroyed the village, killing approximately 200 Native Americans.

On April 28, 2007, the National Park Service dedicated the battlefield as the Sand Creek Massacre National Historic Site, nearly 142 years after the massacre.

During the rest of the Civil War and after, the men of the Colorado militia would continue to battle Native American tribes.

On Aug. 1, 1876, 28 days after the Centennial of the United States, President Ulysses S. Grant admitted Colorado to the Union as the 38th state, earning it the nickname of the “Centennial State.”

In 1894, the Colorado state militia was activated to protect the rights, safety and property of Colorado citizens during the coal miner strikes. Sporadic civil unrest from coal miner strikes flared for more than 30 years from 1894 to 1927. Whenever this occurred, the men of the Colorado militia would be called upon to restore order.

Into the Philippines

The Colorado militia was mobilized on April 27, 1898, for service in the Spanish-American War. The 1st Colorado Infantry Regiment was part of the force sent to the Philippines to liberate the island nation from the Spanish. The Colorado Soldiers fought in numerous battles and played a key role in the capture of Manila.

After the Spanish withdrew from the Philippines, an uneasy alliance was formed between the U.S. occupation forces

and the Filipinos. When an American colonial government was established, the Filipinos decided they did not want to live under American rule and began the “Philippine Insurrection.”

During the Insurrection, a member of the 1st Colorado, LTC William R. Grove, armed with only a pistol, charged a heavily defended enemy position and either killed or captured the entire force. For his actions, LTC Grove received the Medal of Honor, the only Guard Soldier from Colorado ever to receive our country’s highest honor.

Establishing the Guard

With the passage of the Militia Act of 1903, the Colorado militia, like all other state militias, was renamed and reorganized as the Colorado National Guard. The subsequent passage of the National Defense Act of 1916 on June 3, 1916, authorized the president to mobilize the individual state National Guard for federal service. Only 15 days after he received this power, President Woodrow Wilson ordered a call-up of the Guard to respond to the threat of possible attacks by Pancho Villa and his renegade force on the states bordering Mexico. Colorado Guard Soldiers were sent to the border and conducted patrols until February 1917.

The Coloradoans did not rest long, as the call to service would again sound two months later when the United States declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917.

Overseas Again ... and Again

By August 1917, the entire Colorado National Guard was mobilized and reported for federal service. The Guard saw an overhaul of its old regimental numbering system. The old state regimental designations were replaced with a three-number system, and state’s names were dropped from each unit.

The 1st Colorado Infantry was redesignated as the 157th Infantry



PROUD HERITAGE: SSG Timothy Gloston, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, stands at parade rest with the battalion’s colors during a combat patch ceremony Nov. 3, 2006, at Hardened Aircraft Shelter 7 at LSA Anaconda, Iraq. SSG Gloston and about 500 Soldiers with 2nd Battalion earned the 36th Infantry Division’s T-patch while deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Regiment. The 157th joined Guard units from California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and New Mexico to form the 40th Division. The Division sailed for France on July 29, 1918. Colorado’s 168th Field Artillery Regiment merged with the 148th Field Artillery of the 41st Division, and it arrived in France on Feb. 8, 1918.

The men of Colorado fought bravely in several battles during the war. One of the more unusual units was Battery A, which was made up almost entirely of students, faculty and alumni of Colorado State University. They helped win the war, with a little help from their unofficial school mascot—an English bulldog named Peanuts that accompanied them.

In the post-war years, the Colorado National Guard was called upon several times to respond to natural emergencies, including a plague of locusts in eastern Colorado in 1937.

Then WWII erupted, and it was time to pack again in 1941. Colorado Soldiers fought in both the Pacific and European theaters. Colorado’s 157th Infantry was attached to the 45th Division. The 157th fought in the amphibious landings at both Sicily and Anzio. They battled their way across Italy and into Germany, where they helped liberate the infamous Nazi concentration camp, Dachau. It is believed that the first American Soldier to actually reach Dachau was PFC John Degro, lead scout of I Company, 3rd Battalion, 157th Infantry.

Meanwhile, Colorado’s 168th Artillery Regiment, attached to the 24th Division, was fighting the Japanese in Dutch New Guinea, Luzon and the Philippines. Also taking the fight to the enemy was Colorado’s Army aviation unit, the 120th Observation Squadron. After the war, the 120th reorganized into the nation’s first Air National Guard unit in June 1946.

A Variety of Missions

The Colorado National Guard received the call for the Korean War and later for the Berlin Crisis of 1961, but they did not deploy overseas for either operation. The members of the Colorado Army National Guard would not see combat again until the first Persian Gulf War. However, the 120th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Colorado Air National Guard, flew combat missions during Vietnam.

The ’90s would see a dramatic increase in deployment of the Colorado Guard. During the Persian Gulf War, the 1158th Transportation Detachment was the first Army National Guard unit in Saudi Arabia, arriving on Sept. 9, 1990. Eight Colorado units would serve in theater from September 1990 to May 29, 1991. From Jan. 10 to June 20, 1995, personnel of the 19th Special Forces would be sent to Haiti for Operation Maintain Democracy.

In January 1996, the 104th Public Affairs Company deployed to Germany and then Bosnia, as part of Operation Joint Guard. More than 100 members of the Colorado Guard (the 220th Military Police Company and the 89th Troop Command) assisted local law enforcement authorities following the Columbine High School shootings of April 20, 1999.

Modern Times

The 1022nd Medical Detachment was sent to Bosnia in February 2001. It would return to the States in September 2001 following the terrorist attacks of 9/11. In October 2001, more than 400 Colorado Guard members were mobilized for airport security. The Coloradoans not only answered the call, they also volunteered for service, with approximately 150 of them stepping forward to provide security for the 2002 Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City, UT.

Several units of the Colorado Guard have been deployed to both Afghanistan and Iraq. In November 2002, elements of the 19th Special Forces were mobilized and deployed to Afghanistan as part of Operation Enduring Freedom, and would later serve in Iraq. In January 2003, the 220th Military Police Company and the 109th Medical Company were both deployed to Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Flying Black Hawk and Chinook helicopters, Colorado Army National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment deployed to Iraq in September 2006 through August 2007, as part of Task Force Mustang. These and other deployed Colorado units are helping to preserve democracy in foreign lands and to ensure national security here at home.

On Friday, June 27, 2008, the Soldiers of Colorado’s 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces celebrated their return home from their recent deployment to Iraq. The unit achieved something that is unfortunately uncommon in this conflict—zero unit deaths. The commander of the 5th Battalion, LTC Kenneth Chavez, stated that, “Our greatest accomplishment is that we brought every single Soldier back alive.” **GX**

3

When planning a healthy lifestyle, focus on these

Simple Steps:

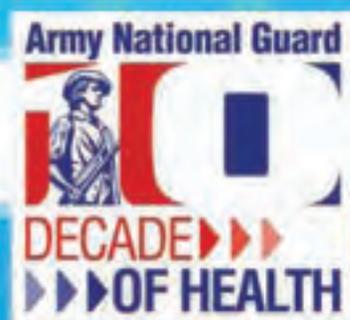
ARNG
Lighten Up!

Nutrition and Healthy Eating--
At home and in the field



Weight Management--
Active lifestyle and caloric balance

Behavior Change--
Good habits and firm commitment



www.decadeofhealth.com

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



Lighten Up!

THE ARNG WEIGH TO BETTER HEALTH

By LTC J. M. Ortiz

Several years ago, SGM Keith Scott and his wife, Denise, returned from a vacation cruise, looked in their mirror and asked, "What happened to us?" After years of paying little attention to what they ate, they no longer recognized themselves. They tried following dietary advice they heard on various TV talk shows featuring top weight loss experts, but still could not seem to get ahead.

Finally, they enrolled in a commercial program that increased the number of meals they consumed daily, and allowed food that was nutritious and also contributed to maintaining their muscle mass. Through this program, the couple lost between 30 and 40 pounds and have maintained their healthy weight loss.

While this story may not apply directly to you, there are likely parts you can relate to in some manner. A similar story can be seen today in our society as a whole: We are failing as a culture

to take care of ourselves from a preventive health perspective, and our tendencies to overeat and not exercise are starting to have epidemic consequences.

Our society should ask itself: How did we become a nation where more than 60 percent of our citizens are now either overweight or obese, and 25 percent of Americans don't exercise at all? Healthcare costs are also out of control, with health-related expenditures estimated to become 20 percent of our total Gross National Product by the year 2020—while only about 5 percent of our health budget is currently spent on preventive health measures.

This is despite having more than 133 million Americans with at least one chronic disease. Clearly our current health system is approaching a crisis stage where the cost of continuing on this

60%
of Americans are either
overweight or obese

25%
of Americans
don't exercise

path will be unsustainable.

The Army National Guard (ARNG) cannot continue to accept the traditional expectations of fixing medical and dental prob-

lems at the mobilization platform. Nor can we continue to wait until our Soldiers are broken before providing health support if we intend to sustain ourselves as an operational force. The ARNG must be more proactive in health maintenance in order to be able to meet the call of our nation and our communities.

The Director of the ARNG, LTG Clyde A. Vaughn, strongly supports the Decade of Health, the ARNG's proactive and innovative approach to health promotion. (For more information, visit www.DecadeofHealth.com.) He understands the importance of medical readiness in our Brigade Combat Teams and the clear need to invest in the



Put fruits and vegetables first in your healthy eating plan.

“front end” of health for our most critical asset, the human combat system.

In addition, it’s not just the warfighter who needs to maintain a healthy weight, but as an organization, everybody in supporting roles also needs to do their part in maximizing their ability to contribute to the Global War on Terrorism or support domestic operations.

We all know the usual “diet and exercise” mantra for losing weight and have heard time and again about the benefits of weight loss, yet many still struggle with it. One ARNG civilian wrestled for years with weight gain. He had worsening sleep apnea, fatigue and asthma until finally he consulted a physician specialist.

The physician took the time to explain the relationship between his medical problems and his weight, and provided a thoughtful consultation on the importance of weight loss. After doing some self-motivated research, he enrolled in a weight loss program that forced him to assess his current activity and dietary habits.

After a few months, the results of his healthy weight management journey yielded not only a 33-pound weight loss, but also resulted in an amazing increase in stamina, better results on his continuous positive airway pressure (CPAP) machine (used for sleep apnea treatment) and discontinuation of the use of inhalers to treat his asthma. After observing the impact of his patient’s progress, his regular physician was also subsequently able to take him off his blood pressure medication and one of his cholesterol medications.

Certainly, weight management can be more complex and challenging for some people than others. For example, there may be significant behavioral and psychosocial factors to consider, such as stress, family dynamics, social customs and peer influences. Such complex issues may

require taking a more multidisciplinary approach and may need the expertise of dietitians, nutritionists, behavioral experts or physical fitness specialists as well.

However, there are a few simple steps that can kick start you and give you a solid foundation for better health. Below are a few:

7 Simple Steps

Write it Down: Writing down your eating and exercise habits or triggers is the first step toward creating an operations order for a healthier lifestyle. Document your Body Mass Index (BMI) as a general gauge of your current health and as a means to document health improvements.

Put Fruit and Salad Front and Center:

Three cups of fruits and three cups of vegetables daily are low-calorie density sources of high nutrition that may also help decrease your appetite and fight certain diseases.

Hydrate Smartly: Deliberately increasing one’s water intake based on thirst (e.g. drinking eight glasses of water daily) may be beneficial to most people under “normal” circumstances. However, caution should be practiced in other situations, particularly during exercise under challenging environmental conditions (e.g. during a long run on a hot day).

No Meal is a Bad Deal: Don’t skip breakfast. Shoot for three meals and a healthy snack daily, tailored to your own metabolism and needs.

Calorie Cutting—Start Small: Smaller and healthier portions, eliminating or minimizing sweetened drinks, and drinking a maximum of 1-2 alcoholic drinks daily may be the first critical

steps to losing weight and maintaining such losses.

Schedule Fun Exercise: Exercise does not have to be extreme, and integrating family, friends or music into your workout schedule may also improve your quality of life.

Ignore the Hype: Looking for a “magic pill” for weight management is a losing proposition when fundamental lifestyle changes and behavior shifts are typically the underlying sources of successful weight management.

It’s interesting to note that many of the challenges people have with weight management are more behavioral, attitudinal and cultural in nature than anything else. As with many complex issues, it is best to keep it simple when developing an overall healthy lifestyle plan.

Start with the “7 Simple Steps” outlined here, develop a plan tailored to your own goals and consult a health or behavioral specialist, if necessary. You may be surprised to see just how much having a positive attitude, involving your family and friends and focusing on your overall progress can make the difference in accomplishing what many naysayers are too quick to view as impossible.

The ARNG “Lighten Up!” Campaign promotes healthy weight management in 2008 and beyond. ARNG leaders and health providers are encouraged to take advantage of the resources and tools provided on the Decade of Health Web site at www.DecadeofHealth.com.

Taking simple steps now to promote healthier habits and lifestyles of our units, Soldiers, Families and communities is key to our future success in sustaining medical readiness. The ARNG is a foundation of many of our communities and must take the lead in fighting the excess weight epidemic in order to be “Always Ready, Always There ... and Always Healthy.” **GX**

Benefits of Healthy Weight Management:

- Decreases the risk for heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, diabetes, osteoarthritis, gallbladder disease and some cancers (including breast and colon cancers).
- Improves physical and mental well-being.



Quick Quiz: Are You Ready for Online Learning?

By Johanna Altland, Grantham University

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

My access to technology is best described as:

Great. I have regular Internet access, a computer and an email account. (4 points)

Ok. I sometimes have access to a computer and the Internet, and I have an email account. (2 points)

Terrible. I don't have access to a computer with Internet or an email address. (1 point)

My technology skills are:

Excellent. I can use email, Web browsers, word-processing software and can download files and create attachments. I like trying to solve technology problems on my own and don't become frustrated easily. (4 points)

Average. I can use email, Web browsers and word-processing software. I get discouraged when

trying to solve technology problems on my own. (2 points)

Beginner. I have used email, Web browsers and word-processing software, but I quit trying when things don't work the way they should. (1 point)

Face-to-face communication:

Isn't necessary for me. I feel that a quality learning experience can take place without face-to-face interaction. (4 points)

Is somewhat important to me. I wonder about my ability to learn without being able to see the instructor or other students. (2 points)

Is absolutely essential to me. I can't learn unless I can interact in person with the instructor and other students. (1 point)

When I need help with a complex issue or with coursework:

I feel comfortable asking questions and asking for help when I need it. (4 points)

I hesitate to ask questions of the instructor, but I will ask for help if I need it. (2 points)

I don't like to ask questions or ask for help. (1 point)

The amount of uninterrupted time I have to devote to learning is:

Greater than 12 hours per week and fits in with my schedule during the day or night. (4 points)

About 8-10 hours per week, primarily at night. (2 points)

Definitely less than 8 hours per week and at erratic times that I cannot always guarantee. (1 point)

I would describe my personal style as:

Self-motivated, disciplined and highly organized. (4 points)

Motivated, but I need help remembering assignments and due dates. (2 points)

A procrastinator. I am disorganized and need someone to motivate me. (1 point)

My reading and writing abilities are:

Excellent. I relish the time I have to read and write, and I am confident in my skills. (4 points)

Average. I read well, but I'm not great at expressing myself and my ideas in a written format. (2 points)

Poor. I don't like reading and look for classes without a lot of writing assignments. (1 point)

My critical thinking skills are:

Excellent. I can easily analyze materials and formulate opinions about what I've learned. (4 points)

Average. I can sometimes analyze materials and form opinions, but I struggle to really understand what I've just learned. (2 points)

Poor. Analyzing material and expressing my thoughts are not things I do well. (1 point)

When it comes to learning:

I look forward to learning new things and mastering new technologies. (4 points)

I am cautious about new technologies, but I enjoy learning and discussing them. (2 points)

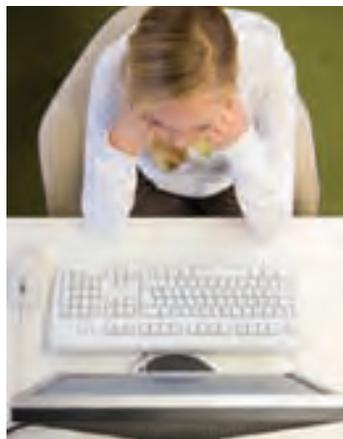
I learn a new technology only when I absolutely have to, and then, I learn just enough to get by. (1 point)

I am interested in taking an online course because:

It fits in well with my lifestyle and needs. I've taken online classes before, and they worked well for me. (4 points)

I'm curious about online learning, and it might fit in well with my schedule and resources. (2 points)

I need a degree to get a promotion or new position. (1 point) **GX**



IF YOUR SCORE IS:

24-40 points – Great! Based on your responses, you are a good candidate for online learning. You have an excellent combination of study skills, equipment and the personal attributes necessary to succeed in an online course.

11-23 points – Good! Your responses indicate that you may be a good candidate for online learning. It might be a good idea to make some adjustments to your personal schedule and become comfortable with technology, but online learning would still be a good choice for you.

10 points – Online learning is not a good fit for every student, and your skills and interests may not fit in with a non-traditional learning environment. If you still want to take an online class to see how it goes, consider taking a subject that you really enjoy, so you'll be more motivated to do the assignments and participate in class discussions.



9 Ways TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY

Sometimes we reach the end of the day and are still swamped with work to finish, which makes tackling college coursework a seemingly impossible task. In some cases, poor time management might be the cause, but there are more factors than the clock that keep us from finishing our daily tasks. If you constantly feel like there aren't enough hours in the day, increase your productivity by following the steps below:

1. What time of day are you most productive? You've heard the phrase, "I'm not a morning person." Although it could be an excuse for laziness around sunrise, the phrase may also have some truth behind it. Some people work better late at night, mid-afternoon or early in the morning. Find out when your productivity is at its peak, and try to accomplish some of your major tasks and/or assignments during that time period.

2. Take a break. Sometimes you need to re-energize yourself. Working around the clock will drain you and can actually be a counterproductive method of time management. Take a quick walk, go outside and enjoy the sunshine or get up to use the bathroom. Do something to take you away from the work that currently occupies you and give your mind a moment to refresh.

3. Tell other people about your goals. Having other

people ask you about your progress will compel you to work harder. When more people know your plans, you're more likely to complete them.

4. Rid yourself of distractions. When studying and completing assignments, especially those that are time-sensitive, make yourself concentrate. It can be tempting to surf the Internet, answer your cell phone or keep the television on, but save all of those distractions for the much-needed break you'll take in a few hours.

5. Learn keyboard shortcuts. Think about the amount of work you do on your computer. Most of us, whether we are students or professionals, couldn't complete our daily tasks without a computer and Internet access. Knowing keyboard shortcuts for different programs may shave only seconds off of one command, but cumulatively, they could save you hours.

6. Eat whole grains. Simply put, eating foods that are high in sugar like candy bars and soda can cause a quick energy gain, resulting in a quick energy crash. Consuming whole grains

that have complex carbohydrates will provide an even level of blood-glucose, keeping you alert longer.

7. Design and organize your study space. It is important to design your space in a way that you feel comfortable and inspired. Whether it involves adding greenery to the room, painting the walls a soothing color or putting pictures of your loved ones on your desk, being comfortable in the area you spend a lot of time in is key to productivity. Put everything where it belongs, so you can save time and energy searching for the items you need.

8. "Practice information dieting." Take in the information that you need to know for the moment and nothing more. Don't allow yourself to check or respond to your email every time you receive new messages, check the stats of your Web site every two seconds or read several different newspapers a day. Save yourself the time and the mental energy to complete important coursework and projects.

9. List your tasks. You can never go wrong with creating a to-do list. Listing the things you need to do will not only help you remember, it will also help you prioritize. Plus, the more items you cross off your list, the more motivated you'll be to keep working.

The steps above will help you find more time in your day to study and complete coursework. Remaining productive and focused will allow you to achieve your goal of earning your degree faster than you expected. **GX**



Got it Covered? Homeowners Should Double-Check

5 Insurance Assumptions You Don't Want to Make

By Joseph Montanaro, USAA Financial Planning Services

BE READY FOR ANYTHING. Expect the unexpected. Those phrases may sound like lessons from basic training, but they apply just as well to property insurance coverage. And at least one recent study shows that Americans aren't as prepared as they should be to prevent a financial disaster.

A 2007 survey by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) found that a large percentage of U.S. homeowners are unclear about what their insurance actually covers. Most standard homeowners insurance policies protect against a wide range of losses, but not every scenario is claim-worthy. In fact, some causes of severe home damage are typically not covered.

Even when insurance does pay, how much you're reimbursed depends on the type of coverage you have. By skipping over the details and assuming you're fully protected, you may be leaving yourself open to a financial catastrophe.

Here are five of the most commonly misunderstood areas about homeowners insurance. Take a few minutes to review your policy and assess your risk. In most cases, buying more complete coverage adds relatively little to your overall insurance costs and could save you a massive expense down the road.

FLOODING FIASCOS

According to the NAIC study, about a third of all U.S. homeowners

mistakenly believe their insurance covers flood damage. That widespread misunderstanding was never more apparent than when thousands of homeowners along the Gulf Coast (including some service members at a major Air Force Base in Mississippi) were devastated by flooding from Hurricane Katrina.

"In areas especially prone to floods, mortgage lenders may require homeowners to purchase flood coverage through the National Flood Insurance Program," said Kathy Conyers, director of flood operations for insurer USAA. "But that doesn't mean you should dismiss the possibility of flooding if you live in a lower-risk area. Floods can happen anywhere."

Unusually heavy rains, snowmelt and even failures of man-made infrastructure can cause flooding in otherwise arid environments. You can purchase NFIP coverage through your insurance company representative. Policies are available in three forms: dwelling (most homes), general property (apartments and businesses) and condominiums.

STARTLING SEWER STENCH

If there's anything worse than having floodwaters drench your floors, it's having raw sewage invade your home. It can happen when the community sewer system backs up due to overuse or failing infrastructure. Since the origin of this ghastly incident is outside the home, it's not usually covered by the standard insurance policy.

While the likelihood of a sewer

backup is higher in older neighborhoods with outdated infrastructure, backups have been known to occur in new communities as well. When it does happen, the cleanup process can be messy, difficult and expensive.

The good news is that it's easy to protect against this loss with additional coverage from your current insurance provider. The coverage is inexpensive, usually just \$20-\$40 per year.

MOLD TAKING HOLD

Mold in the home is another pesky intruder that's commonly misunderstood by homeowners. It's often an after-effect of major water damage, but mold can also grow inconspicuously in any place moisture is high—near leaky pipes, neglected roofing or air condition-

ers, or even as a result of a humid climate. Again, the cleanup and associated expenses are usually not covered by standard homeowners insurance policies.

"Supplemental mold insurance is available in a small number of states, but the best defense against mold is prevention," said Mick Noland, a USAA product manager for homeowners, renters, fire and Valuable Personal Property (VPP) insurance products.

Noland recommends taking proactive steps to prevent water damage from happening in the first place. Keep an eye out for damp walls or carpets; repair water leaks promptly; replace rubber washing machine hoses with steel braided hoses; and turn off water and drain pipes when

A 2007 survey by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) found that a large percentage of U.S. homeowners are unclear about what their insurance actually covers.

leaving home for an extended time. Finally, if you're stationed near the coast or in an especially humid area, consider purchasing a dehumidifier to reduce the level of moisture in your home.

QUAKING IN YOUR BOOTS

California holds the distinction of being America's most populous state and counts a large contingent of military personnel among its residents. It's also the earthquake capital of the nation. Yet about 35 percent of the people NAIC surveyed didn't know that their normal



Coverage Confusion

A study by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners revealed that many homeowners think the standard insurance policy covers more than it does. Among their mistakes:

33% of homeowners believe that flood damage is covered.

68% think vehicles such as cars, boats and motorcycles stolen from or damaged on their property are covered.

51% think damages from a break in the waterline on their property supplying water to their home are covered.

37% think damages due to a break in the sewer line on their property that connects to their municipal sewer system are covered.

35% think damages from earthquakes are covered.

34% think damages from mold are covered.

31% think damages from termites or other infestation are covered.

22% think pets stolen from or injured on their property are covered.

homeowners insurance doesn't cover earthquake damage.

Like flood insurance, earthquake insurance can be purchased separately. But even in the most vulnerable areas, coverage is optional. California operates its own statewide program, the California Earthquake Authority, while in other states supplemental policies are available through some private insurers.

Californians may be the most at risk, but earthquakes have been reported in all 50 states and are threats (by scientific standards) in Oregon and Washington, as well as

along the New Madrid seismic zone, including Missouri, Tennessee, Arkansas and Mississippi.

PAYOUT PUZZLEMENT

Just as important as understanding what your insurance covers is knowing how you're covered. That is, how (and how much) will the insurance company reimburse you for a covered claim? In this regard, there are two primary types of homeowners' policies. One pays the full "replacement cost" of your property; the other pays only "actual cash value," or what the

property is worth after depreciation.

USAA's Noland provided a simple example. Imagine that you paid \$2,000 for a big-screen TV that was destroyed in a hurricane several years later. With replacement cost coverage, the insurer would pay for you to buy a new \$2,000 TV. But with cash value coverage, you'd only receive what the TV was worth today, which would be much less.

"Now consider if the storm damage extended to items throughout your entire home—the difference in your claim settlement could be enormous," Noland said.

Most major insurance companies include replacement cost coverage in their standard homeowners policies. However, cash value coverage is still available as a way to reduce your premiums. Make sure you know what you're getting.

No matter where you live or what your budget, it pays to remember that not all insurance policies are the same. If you're shopping for a good deal, always read the fine print to compare apples to apples. By assessing your risk and obtaining adequate coverage, you'll be one step closer to true financial readiness. **GX**

The Volunteers' Volunteer

AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT THE NATIONAL GUARD JOINT FAMILY PROGRAM



By Staff Sgt. Marcia Beene Dickerson

VOLUNTEER. The word conjures up many ideas, but as a National Guard member, I understand that it is one of our treasured hallmarks. The *Merriam-Webster* dictionary defines volunteer as “one who enters into military service voluntarily.” The second definition is “a person who voluntarily undertakes or expresses a willingness to undertake a service.”

The spirit of volunteerism is what drives National Guard members to protect our communities, states and country. And it's that same spirit that drives our families, friends and others to volunteer to help us.

Chances are that as a member of the National Guard, your unit has a Family Readiness Group (FRG). Most FRGs are made up of the spouses, parents, siblings, extended family members and friends of members of the unit. For these volunteers, the idea of serving is tied together with the strong desire to support members of the National Guard.

The National Guard Bureau office of Joint Family Programs (NGB-JFP) has many missions. However, one very important one is helping the hundreds of FRGs as

well as the thousands of volunteers who support us.

One person in the NGB-JFP who helps volunteers is Mrs. Paula Sumrall, the National Volunteer Coordinator. I recently had the pleasure of talking with the always energetic Mrs. Sumrall regarding her work with FRGs and other volunteers.

GX: As the National Volunteer Coordinator for the National Guard Joint Family Program office, what is your focus?

MRS. SUMRALL: My primary focus is to establish management policy and guidance in accordance with DoD (Department of Defense) directives. Recruitment, supervision, recognition, logistical support and use of volunteers in all of the states and territories constitute my major responsibilities. Evaluation and statistical support is also one of my responsibilities, and Assistant National Guard Volunteer Coordinator Deanna Cole is in charge of this function.

GX: Approximately how many volunteers are there across the nation?

MRS. SUMRALL: We have around 10,000 statutory volunteers with assigned job responsibilities (e.g., FRG leader, FRG secretary, etc.); however, we believe that there are as many as 25,000 volunteers who do not have assigned jobs and volunteer strictly on an “as needed” basis.

GX: What types of training programs are offered to volunteers?

MRS. SUMRALL: Our Family Readiness Assistants (FRAs) coordinate most of the training at the

state level. They assess the needs of the various groups in their area and coordinate the type of training, depending on the current status of the military units, whether they are at the pre/post-deployment level or are currently deployed. Webinars are offered frequently to allow those who cannot attend FRG meetings and/or trainings to receive training. Our annual Joint Family Program Conference provides break-out sessions for volunteers at every level of their personal volunteer expertise. If someone is interested in training in their state, they should contact the State Family Program Director (SFPD) or Wing Family Program

Coordinator (WFPC) to learn about scheduled events.

GX: Describe a National Guard volunteer.

MRS. SUMRALL: Unlike the active components of our military, Guard volunteers are not exclusively spouses. Many parents, grandparents and siblings of our Guard members are volunteers. Adult children of some of our more “seasoned” Guard members are also strong supporters.

Our youth have their own volunteer program as well. Retirees and community members who do not have family members in the Guard also make up our volunteer corps.





It would be impossible to paint a picture of a typical National Guard volunteer except to say that they are patriotic Americans, proud of their loved ones and fellow citizens, and they recognize that their contribution in support of our Guard is a blessing to our Soldiers and Airmen, as well as to themselves. As LTG Blum often says, "When you call out the Guard, you call out America."

Our volunteers are "America" ... from large metropolitan areas, rural communities, schools, places of worship and businesses, and we come together to serve.

GX: How can someone become a National Guard volunteer?

MRS. SUMRALL: Go to an FRG meeting if your loved one is part of that unit. Contact your local Army National Guard armory or Air National Guard base if you are not affiliated with the Guard, and they will put you in contact with the SFPD or WFPC. We are always looking for new volunteers and potential friends. For more information, visit www.guardfamily.org.

Without the support of these very important and willing volunteers, some of the uniqueness of the National Guard would be lost. So just as the volunteers of the National Guard are needed, so too are the volunteers for the National Guard. **GX**

Volunteer Recognized For Her Efforts

By South Dakota National Guard
Public Affairs Office

Tammy Chase of Sisseton, SD, received the prestigious AMVETS Past National Commander (PNC) John S. Lorec "National Guard Volunteer of the Year" award at the recent National Guard Family Program conference in St. Louis, MO.

This national award recognizes volunteers for exceptional service to National Guard members and their family members as well as to their community. Chase was also awarded \$1,000 for her unit's Family Readiness Group (FRG).

"Her record speaks for itself," said CWO Lynn Wright, Family Readiness Assistant at Joint Forces Headquarters in Rapid City. "She's a truly dedicated and committed volunteer."

For 11 years, Chase has been an integral part of the South Dakota National Guard's Family Program since becoming the FRG leader for A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 147th Field Artillery, in 1997.

"Tammy's not afraid to tackle a job and keeps coming up with new ideas to generate support," Wright said. "She is always looking for the best way to help the families."

Chase distinguished herself over the years by improving her education and providing leadership and training to others within the National Guard and her community.

"Her selection just shows the caliber of people we have in this state, dedicated families and great talent," Wright added.

Chase currently serves as the FRG leader for Detachment 1, Headquarters and Headquarters Section, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery.

Chase was cited for her efforts throughout the past year which include:

- * Served as unit's Family Readiness Group leader, maintaining the telephone tree, publishing newsletters and organizing events.
- * Maintained the unit sponsorship program by contacting families and welcoming them to the unit.
- * Conducted Family Program presentation to unit families.
- * Organized two family events.
- * Provided baked goods to Soldiers at monthly drills.
- * Created, published and mailed the battalion quarterly newsletter to about 500 families.
- * Staffed the family information station at the unit's annual Soldier Readiness Processing Exercise.
- * Organized a pre-mobilization planning meeting for FRG chairpersons and military leaders to develop a plan of action to ensure families are prepared for possible deployment in 2009. **GX**

"She's a truly dedicated and committed volunteer." —CWO Lynn Wright



COL Marty Wong (left), Director, NGB-JFP, and Paula Sumrall (right), the National Volunteer Coordinator, plan volunteer training.

"It would be impossible to paint a picture of a typical National Guard volunteer except to say that they are patriotic Americans, proud of their loved ones and fellow citizens ..."

—Mrs. Paula Sumrall

GETTY IMAGES

BEHIND THE SCENES WITH **SPECIAL FORCES**

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SFC CLINT WOOD

“WE’VE GOT YOUR BACK”

A Soldier who’s leading a stack appears. He’s decked out with Kevlar, Interceptor Body Armor and goggles. I fire three well-aimed rounds into his chest and run. Seconds later, as I’m sprinting into a large open room with rounds whizzing by, I feel a sharp pain near my left pinkie finger.

I have just been shot—not by an ordinary Soldier, but a member of the 19th Special Forces (SF) Army National Guard Battalion headquartered in West Virginia. And they’re not armed with your ordinary ammunition either. They are using 5.56-millimeter paintball rounds fired from their decked-out M4s.

This opportunity to be the Opposing Force (OPFOR) against these SF Soldiers was just part

of my three days covering their Culmination Exercise. The SF’s Operational Detachment Alphas (ODAs) were also training Soldiers in the battalion who were not SF qualified in the Basic Combat Course. The night exercise included assaults on several of the buildings at the hospital via Chinook CH-47s, UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and Humvees.

MAJ Chris, the battalion’s operations officer, said this exercise brought together all the earlier training, which included close quarters combat exercises and individual weapons qualifications.

“We’ve built from all their individual skills and their collective skills as a group, and now we’re applying them the way SF does,” the major said. “This includes advising an indigenous force for missions—what they did the last few nights.

“It’s a pretty big exercise [with] a lot of

moving pieces and definitely a fun time for the guys. They get a lot out of it and work every conceivable aspect possible.”

Everything You Want to Know About SF

An SF Battalion is unlike any other in the Guard. First, every SF Soldier, no matter his age, must score in the 17-to-21-year-old age bracket for the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT). There is no maximum age to join the SF. Soldiers must go to Airborne School, where their drills could consist of jumping into a training area. A 24-mile ruck march is included in their 14-day Selection Board.

“We don’t have ‘typical’ anything,” said battalion commander LTC Harrison. “We start drill with PT and could be jumping that day. We shoot a lot and still have to do basic Soldier skills. We also keep their admin up



to date ... we do medical training and a lot of cross-training.”

“We pack a lot of stuff into one drill,” said MAJ Charles Bradsher, battalion Public Affairs Officer (PAO).

The battalion’s stateside objectives include counterdrug missions, homeland defense, flood missions and search and rescue using its scuba team’s Zodiac rafts.

This battalion of more than 250 Soldiers was also credited with saving about 100 residents from floodwaters in Columbus, OH, in the first few days they arrived at the camp.

The SF Soldiers must be at least SSGs and have an 18 Series Military Occupational Specialty (MOS), although most have at least two MOSs. The rank structure for an Operation Detachment Alpha or ODA is a captain or a warrant officer as the team commander, a team sergeant or “team daddy” who is

HUNTING THE ENEMY: SF Soldiers execute a stack before heading up a stairwell in one of the buildings at the Muscatatuck Hospital grounds during the exercise.



experienced, an operational intelligence specialist, a medic, a weapons specialist, an intelligence analyst, plays a crucial role in its success.

Support Soldiers Play Crucial Role

The battalion's support company, which includes cooks, parachute riggers and intelligence analysts, plays a crucial role in its success.

CPT Paul, company commander, said his company is responsible for activities like administration, logistics and transportation.

"It's outstanding because you know your support mission is critical," he said.

Paul said he has sent cooks, mechanics and radio operators downrange to support the ODAs and the Operation Detachment Bravos (ODBs).

"That requires that they not only know their specific job or what they're supporting, but they also have to be tactically proficient," he said.

He said several of his Soldiers have also been deployed overseas. "So when it all comes together, we're a pretty tight-knit group who knows what we're doing."

I watched a rigger, SGT Tim, rig a parachute in about 13 minutes. The riggers average packing about 20 chutes daily. The maximum that can be packed in one eight-hour period is 25. He said being responsible for another Soldier's life is "just another job really."

Each rigger has his procedures inspected by another Soldier. In fact, both sign a paper folded into the chute stating they inspected it.

SGT Sean was the inspector this day. He said this rigger section takes more pride than some Active Army Airborne battalions because these Soldiers see the men they're packing the chutes for every day.

"We're up there jumping with the guys we see at lunch and dinner," he said. "We go out on missions with them."

He said having that responsibility is at first "somewhat intimidating," but it gets easier after a while. "We test our own equipment as part of our job when we graduate from rigger school," he said.

Rigger school includes learning how to pack personal and cargo parachutes, rig up loads and perform maintenance on parachutes in case of a hole or cut line, he said.

The company's medical section also covers drop zones. The medics' MOS is preventive medicine. The medics are also responsible for the Soldiers' immunizations required to deploy as well as daily sick calls.

The medical section can also assist either Civil Affairs in Medical Civil Affairs Programs (MEDCAPs) or Veterinary Medical Civil Affairs Programs (VETCAPs), or even run its own clinic.

One of the team's doctors said the battalion wants the host country to rely on its own healthcare system because a lot of treatments

are out of its realm, including birth defects.

"We advise them on what they should do with their doctors," he said. "We actually target the hearts and minds mission and run it."

Team Commander Explains Training

CPT Joe, one of the ODA commanders, said the exercise gave the non-qualified SF Soldiers a sense of what it's like to be an SF Soldier.

He said his team trained a squad of seven of these Soldiers, who started as beginners.

"[We] just locked in the ideas they already have of becoming a qualified SF Soldier and really impacted their motivation to strive to get that tab as soon as they can," he said.

"Once integrated into the team, we took them to a level [on which] we could operate successfully," he said. "With them incorporating some standard operating procedures with them, [they] successfully maneuvered through the buildings where everyone was on the same sheet of music and stayed at a level where they were [able] to utilize the skills they were taught, and then we worked around them and adapted based on their skill set."

SF Soldiers train to win at all times, and with SF Soldiers on our side, America can rest knowing they have our backs. **GX**

Editor's Note: For security purposes, SF Soldiers' names are not disclosed, and their faces are not shown.

**FAST
FACTS**

An ODA is led by a captain or warrant officer, and composed of:

- * a team sergeant or "team daddy"
- * an operational intelligence specialist
- * a medic
- * a weapons specialist
- * an engineer
- * a communication specialist

The M4 Carbine is the weapon of choice for the 21st century Warrior.

A 30-day course taught at Fort Bragg is designed to help Soldiers prepare for the Special Forces Assessment and Selection course (SFAS).

All SF Soldiers must learn a foreign language.



EXPERIENCING

★ OPERATION ★

FIT TO FIGHT

PART II

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SFC CLINT WOOD

::LEADING FROM THE FRONT::
Soldiers from the 81st Brigade Combat Team, Washington Army National Guard, follow the lead of SGT Ken as they become "Fit to Fight."



I'm lying in a normal Army push-up position, except that my knees are on the lush grass of the Yakima Training Center parade ground with the midday sun beating down on me in the middle of July, and I'm hoping I don't make a fool out of myself.

YOU SEE, I decided the only way to write about Operation Fit to Fight 2 (OpF2F2) was to do some of the operation's high-intensity exercises, too. Along with me, more than 50 Washington Army National Guard (WAARNG) Soldiers from the 81st Brigade Combat Team were doing the Train the Trainer session where they earn the title of Unit Fitness Trainer (UFT).

In last month's issue of *GX*, I wrote about OpF2F, emphasizing that several hundred Mississippi Army National Guard (MSARNG) Soldiers were the first to participate in this program, conducted on the jagged rocks of a Forward Operating Base (FOB) on Camp Shelby, MS. Now once again, SSG Ken Weichert, his wife, Stephanie, and one of SGT Ken's trainers, Bianca Buresh, are the trainers of this operation, a pre-deployment health and fitness program created by SGT Ken and Stephanie for *GX* magazine and www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/Fitness.

The 81st BCT is composed of five Guard battalions, including one from California, who were spending about 30 days at the training center for their annual training (AT). Once this AT is complete, they will spend about two months in Mobilization Training, including a Mission Rehearsal Exercise (MRE) at Fort McCoy, WI, before deploying overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This will be the second time the 81st has deployed to Iraq.

Back to that hot afternoon: Several Soldiers and I are standing a few feet apart, and we form a circle around SGT Ken. I have a perfect view of majestic Mount Rainier through the treeline.

"Oh yeah, these are today's leaders, serving our state and serving our countries far and beyond the call of duty each time," SGT Ken hollers.

He then begins demonstrating an advanced push-up, belting out, "All right, first exercise, watch me first, we are going to do the dive bomber push-up again, forward, hold and back, hold."

But for some reason, SGT Ken changes his mind and says, "Oh no, we're not. We're going to go to a wide grip position; we're going to do a leaning lateral press a little bit easier, to your left, up, to your right, push-up position, move!"

I've never done this push-up, and I thought to myself: "How hard could it be?" So I didn't know whether to agree with him.

SGT Ken belts out, "To your left, up, to your right, up!" We were doing normal push-ups, but on the way up, we pointed our fully extended left

::MOTIVATING THE TROOPS:
SGT Ken charges through the PT formation.



::READY, EXERCISE! SGT Ken shouts out exercise instructions to the Washington Army National Guard's 81st Brigade Combat Team for his Fit to Fight training program in July.

and right arms to the sky, rolled our legs over and held our arms up for about three seconds.

By the first "to your right," I was so out of shape that my right arm started shaking as if I were having muscle failure, and I nearly fell over. That was the only time I did this in the next three to four minutes, despite doing several mountain climbers, dive bomber push-ups and leaning lateral presses.

By the time the session was over, my arms and chest were aching. And this was nothing. The other Soldiers had done this circuit three times.

"For the most part, [the training] was humbling, and it was motivational," said SGT Carl Sorrels, a former Marine Reserve combat engineer whose goal is to join the Guard's Special Forces. "It was nice because you got to see that, regardless of what fitness level you're at, there is always room for improvement."



..SWEATIN' IT OUT: A Soldier takes a breather in the heat of the intense Fit to Fight exercise program.

"IT WAS NICE BECAUSE YOU GOT TO SEE THAT, REGARDLESS OF WHAT FITNESS LEVEL YOU'RE AT, THERE IS ALWAYS ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT."

—SGT Carl Sorrels

As any Marine veteran knows, the Corps' physical fitness training is notorious for being intense: For example, Marines have to run three miles and bend and thrust, which is similar to SGT Ken's "Jump Squat Thrust."

Sorrels, who joined the Guard five months ago, admitted that the OpF2F2 training was "still humbling."

SGT Scott McManus, who became a certified personal trainer at Seattle's Gold's Gym after his deployment to Iraq, said, "I thoroughly enjoyed this training. It was highly charged and motivational [and] very energetic. [There was] great instruction given throughout the entire program. Fabulous."

SPC Jonathan Olander, whose wife is a personal trainer, liked the intensity of the training and the versatility of the time it takes for a workout.

"I was amazed at the type of workout I received," he said. "My wife is a personal trainer (Sorry babe, love you, but [I've] never received a workout like that before). So watch out Billy Banks—there is someone meatier in town."

SGT Ken also gave this outstanding workout to more than 300 Soldiers the next morning on the parade ground in a mass extended formation. The UFTs wearing white T-shirts with "Fit to Deploy" printed on the back stood in front and on the sides of the formation.

1SG Travis Wise, who will be in the Guard 20 years in November, said his expectations of this session were to "get a good sweat on" and learn some new techniques.

"I learned some new exercises that I haven't done before and worked

some muscles I haven't used in quite that way," he said. "It was a good time. It was a good motivator."

He said he enjoyed the trainers actually showing the exercises and techniques instead of just yelling out instructions.

SPC Jacob Smalser, who joined the Guard to challenge himself, loved being a UFT. "It made me feel more confident in doing everyday PT (physical training) with groups that are not at all the same PT level," he said.

Soldiers learn practical exercises

CSM Robert Sweeney, the senior enlisted Soldier of the WAARNG, told the Soldiers before the Train the Trainer Session that they are responsible for monitoring their units' physical fitness throughout their entire deployment.

He said he is going give them tasks to complete this mission, and he told the Soldiers that, yes, Soldiers on the FOBs in Iraq are still doing their required Army Physical Fitness Tests (APFTs).

He also told the Soldiers that Guard members' average age is about 32 years old compared with the Active Army Soldiers' average age of 23 or 24.

"We are an older group, and we're not used to wearing those rucksacks and that IBA and doing those things, too," he said.

To assist the Soldiers in wearing these items and doing things like foot patrols, Sweeney told the UFTs that they need to teach their Soldiers the proper way to get out of vehicles and how to move their bodies while wearing their body armor and gear.

"Our real goal and objective as senior leaders is to bring everybody home and not broken," Sweeney said.

After Sweeney's speech, the Soldiers participated in one of three practical exercises. The first one lasted 26 minutes. It was a group session of several exercises, including push-ups, high steps, lunges and flutter kicks. The second session was the circuit session, where SGT Ken instructed the push-ups and mountain climbers, Stephanie executed exercises using rubber tubing, and Bianca emphasized leg exercises, including lunges, squats and back-way front kicks.

The third practical exercise, "By the Numbers," was a first for SGT Ken's program. It consisted of UFTs forming teams of at least two to watch their partners doing several exercises that SGT Ken and his staff had seen Soldiers doing incorrectly in the earlier sessions.

SSG John Pelerine said he liked this last exercise best because it demonstrated the correct form. Overall, he said this UFT training has prepared him to lead his Soldiers.

"This has given me a very comprehensive block of instruction, so I can take it back to my Soldiers and better lead them in PT," he said. "[That way] they can be better fit for combat."

SSG Rueben Gardner, who has been in the Guard for eight years and deployed to Iraq twice, liked the program because it was continuous.

"I'm going to lead my troops by example," he said. "I'm going to try and implement that big part of not resting and continuing to keep your heart rate up. [I want to] change the old Army [way] and put in the new stuff. I like that, and that is what I'm going to do."

"Being in shape in combat is hugely important because it saves lives," he continued. "People think better and clearer, they look better, and they perform better. It's just an overall successful thing to be in shape."

Sweeney summed up the importance of the UFTs.

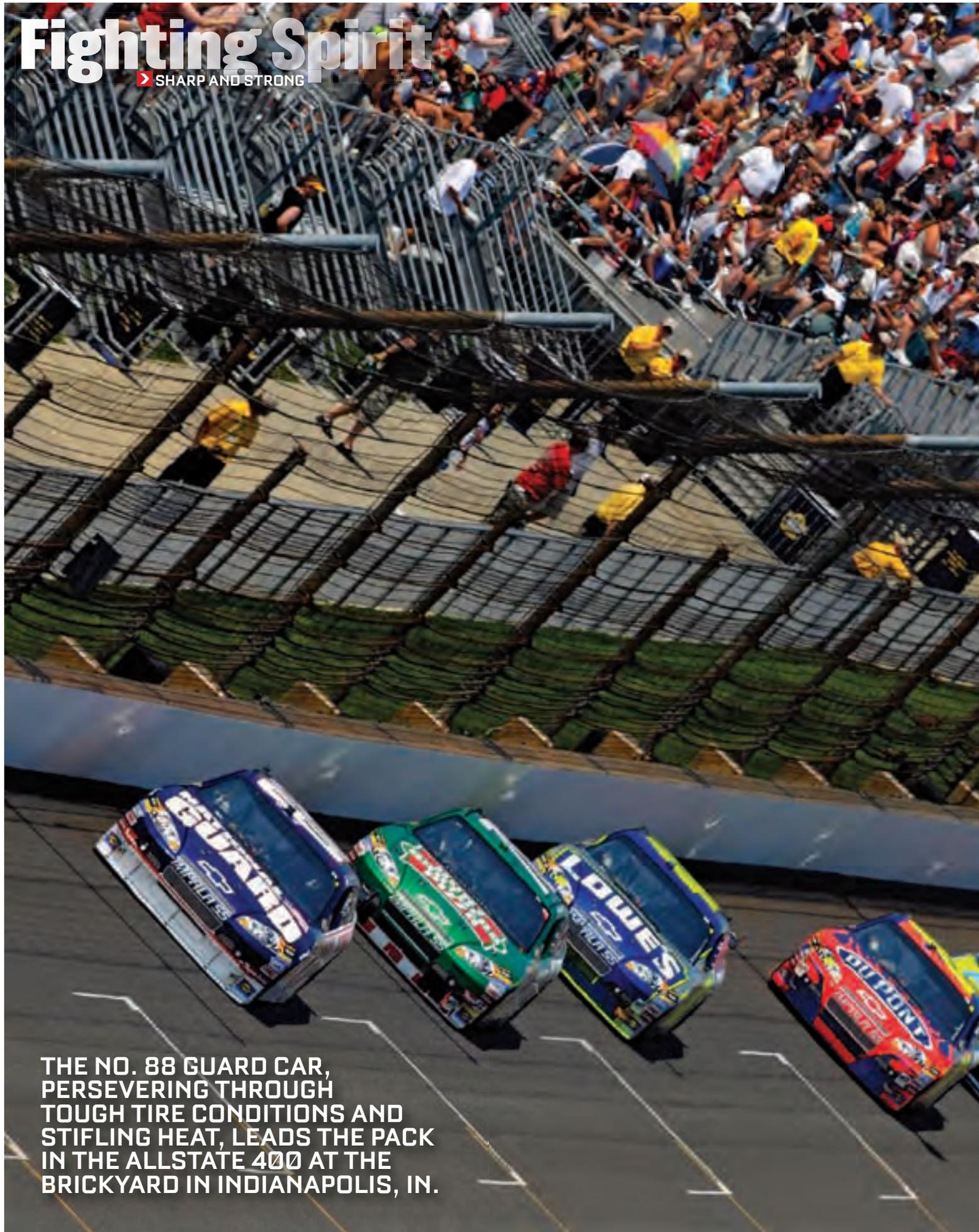
"If you're a leader and you can't lead from the front, then you're not an effective leader," he said. "You can't do it."

He added that these trainers don't have to do as many of the exercises or run as fast as their Soldiers; they just have to be "out front." **GX**

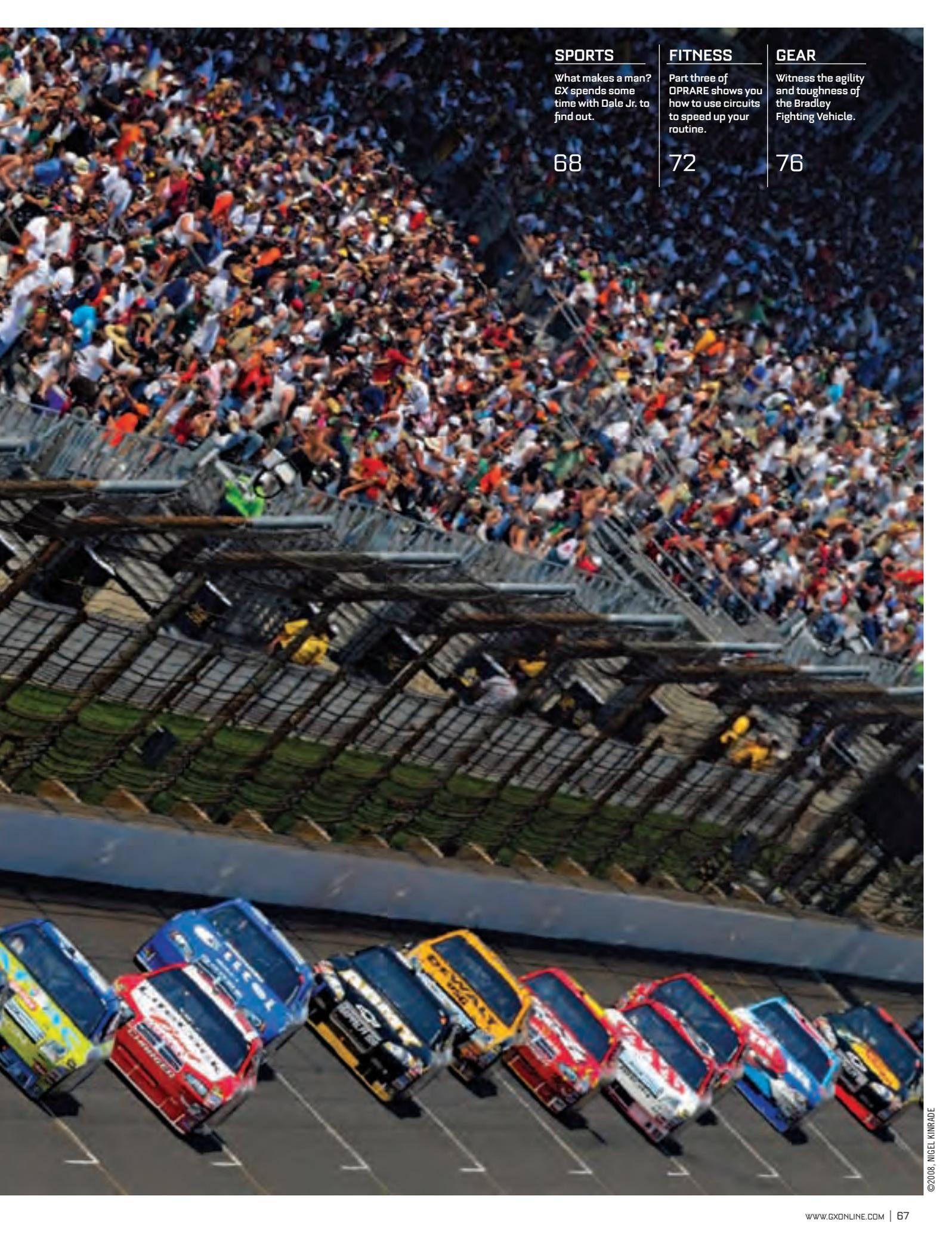


Fighting Spirit

▶ SHARP AND STRONG



**THE NO. 88 GUARD CAR,
PERSEVERING THROUGH
TOUGH TIRE CONDITIONS AND
STIFLING HEAT, LEADS THE PACK
IN THE ALLSTATE 400 AT THE
BRICKYARD IN INDIANAPOLIS, IN.**



SPORTS

What makes a man? *GX* spends some time with Dale Jr. to find out.

68

FITNESS

Part three of *OPRARE* shows you how to use circuits to speed up your routine.

72

GEAR

Witness the agility and toughness of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

76



“WHAT THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE NATIONAL GUARD DO IS AN HONORABLE THING.”

What Makes A Man? JR. SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON LOYALTY AND HONOR

Dale Jr. is an icon—no question about that. Some might say he’s living every man’s dream: racing cars and living life truly in the fast lane. But just like our Soldiers, he lives by a moral code. We stole a few moments with Jr. to catch his thoughts on two of the seven Army values: loyalty and honor.

By Christian Anderson and Keith Kawasaki

LOYALTY

GX: *Do you and your team spend much time together off the track?*

Jr.: We try to. Our schedules are really hectic during the season, and between my photo shoots and media obligations, and the guys working and burning the midnight oil, it’s tough. But I try to get down to the shop at least once a week. It’s good for me to be there, and it’s good for the guys to know I’m there to support them.

GX: *How important is family in your life?*

Jr.: Man, it’s everything. My family—my sister and mom—works all around me at JR Motorsports, and Tony Eury Jr. (Dale Jr.’s cousin) is at Hendrick. It’s good to have family around. I try to spend as much time as I can with them.

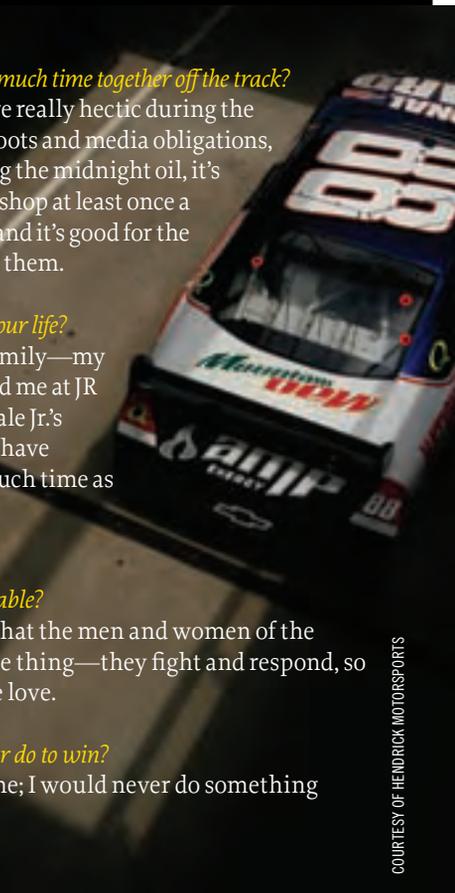
HONOR

GX: *What makes a person honorable?*

Jr.: There are lots of things. What the men and women of the National Guard do is an honorable thing—they fight and respond, so we can live freely and do what we love.

GX: *What is one thing you’d never do to win?*

Jr.: I would never hurt someone; I would never do something intentionally. **GX**



COURTESY OF HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS

RACE TALK WITH Vitor Meira

By Christian Anderson and SFC Clint Wood

AFTER BACK-TO-BACK sixth place finishes at the Firestone Indy 200 and the Ohio Honda Indy 200, Vitor Meira, Panther Racing and the National Guard can safely declare July a successful month for the No. 4 Guard car. *GX* got to chat with Vitor after the Firestone Indy 200 in Nashville, TN, about the Guard, Indy racing and how much he values his pit crew.

GX: *How does it feel to come to Nashville to represent the National Guard?*

VM: It feels good—not only here in Nashville, which is a very cool racetrack, but everywhere—to represent all the Soldiers and what the National Guard stands for. It's a unique experience. Every Soldier I meet challenges me [and] changes me to a better person.

GX: *What was it like to drive around the track and see the storm?*

VM: That was actually freaky because on one end it was dark and the other it was clear. Turns 1 and 2 were clear, but turns 3 and 4 were dark, and I could see a lot of lightning. It was interesting; it was a race against time. We didn't know how much time we had since the rain was coming [or] when it was going to hit, so it was a game to see how much we could risk. It was a nerve-wracking race, and it went on much longer than we thought it would. We ended up good, and the National Guard ran a good race, so that's what matters!

GX: *You started in 15th place. How did you end up in sixth?*

VM: The car was good in traffic, and we passed a bunch of cars on the start on the outside. [As for] the rest of the cars, since there weren't many crashes, I had to pass them. We were taking advantage of opportunities, and that's how we caught up, by making good passes. Our car was better off of turn 4.

GX: *What did it feel like to see the 50 Soldiers re-enlist at Watkins Glen?*

VM: I felt very good when I went to their ceremony. It was cool. It just proves that the Guard works and is a good environment for the Soldiers.

GX: *What did you know about the National Guard before you came to America?*

VM: As soon as I came here, I realized the National Guard is much more active than what I had previously experienced, since there is always something going on. The Guard is always active and better prepared than in any other place I have ever seen.

GX: *How important is your pit crew to the team?*

VM: It's vital. The pit crew, the guys at the shop, and the guys who make the parts [are] vital. People sometimes forget that cars break, mostly when they go too fast. They break and [the] decisions are always difficult; the decision of when to come into the pit stop or which setup we put on the car, that is vital. Without a good setup, you [get] nowhere. People who change the wheels over the wall, if one of them loses a nut or a tool, you lose many positions. It's a team; many people forget it's not just the driver. It's the driver doing his job, but also everybody else is doing their jobs. [My pit crew] is in the car with me and as much a part of this race [as I am]. The crew is as important if not more important than the driver. A so-so driver can drive an awesome car, but a very good driver cannot drive a very bad car. **GX**



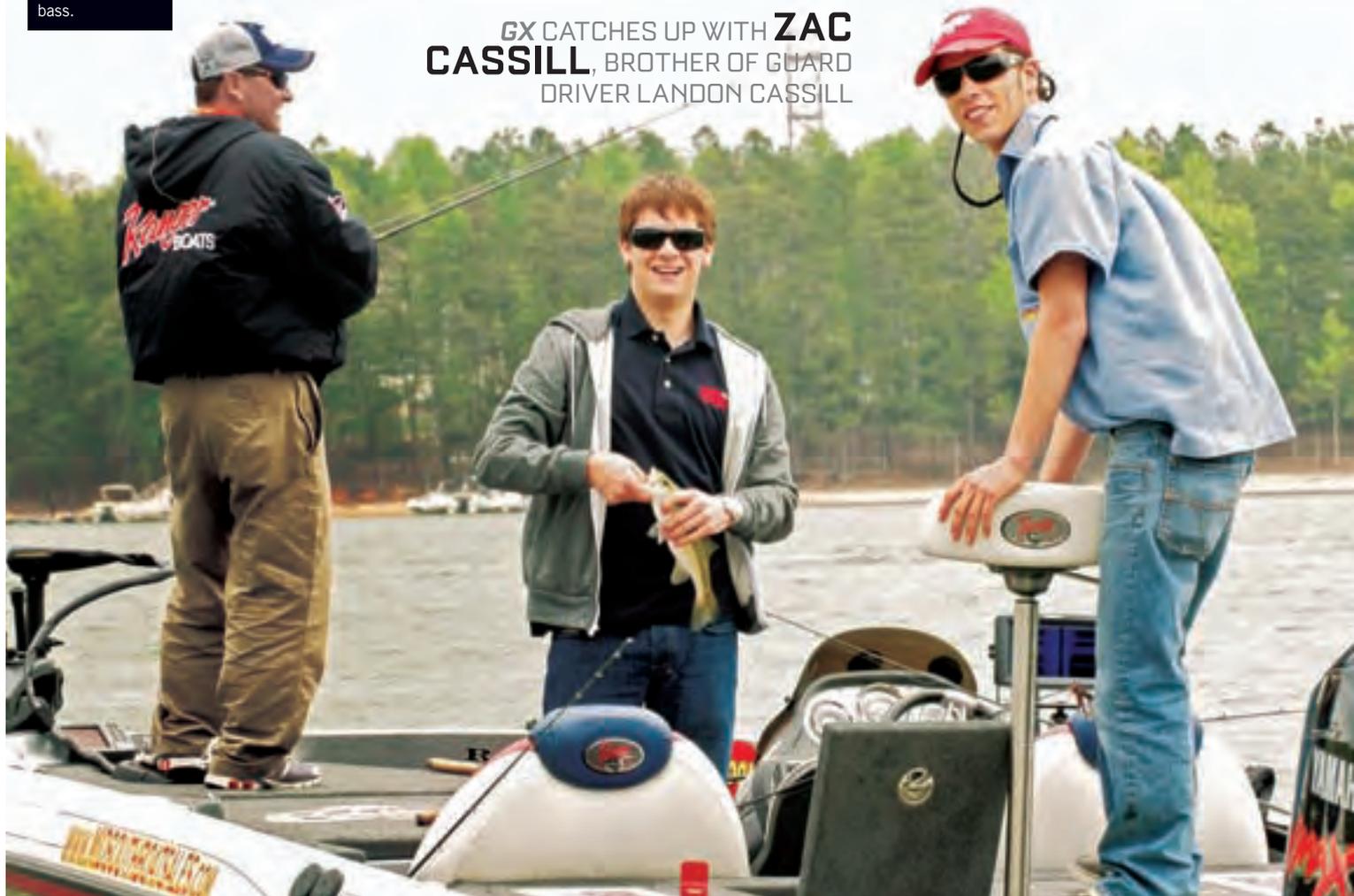
"EVERY SOLDIER I MEET CHALLENGES ME [AND] CHANGES ME TO A BETTER PERSON."

>> VITOR MEIRA

GO FISHIN': Zac Cassill (right), along with brother, Landon, and a friend relax as they fish for bass.

THE OTHER CASSILL

GX CATCHES UP WITH **ZAC CASSILL**, BROTHER OF GUARD DRIVER LANDON CASSILL



By Christian Anderson

GX HAS BEEN WATCHING up-and-coming Guard driver Landon Cassill as he continues to sharpen his skills in NASCAR's Nationwide series. The 18-year old has shown racing fans just a glimpse of what could come in the future.

In a previous issue, *GX* spoke with Landon as he entered a fishing tournament with his brother Zac, a professional angler. We decided to see what Zac is up to, and what it is like to be the brother of a NASCAR superstar.

GX: *What's it like to be a professional bass angler in the Bass Fishing League and FLW?*

ZAC: When I first started fishing FLW events, it was a big jump because before I had

fished small clubs and buddy tournaments. The competition in FLW is tough, and at first it was a steep learning curve. The tough competition in the Wal-Mart Bass Fishing League and the Stren Series is the reason they are the best things to fish as a young angler. I feel like every FLW tournament I fish [makes me] a better fisherman.

GX: *What are you studying at Winona State University? Will you continue to fish after graduation or pursue another career?*

ZAC: I am studying environmental science geology at Winona State University. I plan to graduate in two years. From the time I was a kid, I had a goal to go to college and study science, and before that, I wanted to be a pro

bass fisherman. In a sense, I'm working to achieve two childhood goals at once. After I graduate, I will try to get into the FLW tour as a pro. That has always been my dream.

GX: *What's it like to watch your brother race in NASCAR? Do you ever get to go to his races?*

ZAC: I really love to watch Landon race. I tape every race and watch it after I'm done fishing on the weekends. I went to the Dover Nationwide race last year in the fall. It was the first time I had been in the pits at a NASCAR event—it was a rush.

Listening to him talk to his crew over the scanner made me realize how far he has come since he was racing go-karts on dirt tracks in Iowa.

MIKE CARROLL



:: RACING TO THE FUTURE: Zac Cassill heads upstream to compete and reach his goal of becoming a pro-bass fisherman.

:: FISHING BUDDIES: (Below) Zac and his brother, Landon, spend some time catching bass.

“From the time I was a kid, I had a goal to go to college and study science, and before that, I wanted to be a pro bass fisherman. In a sense, I’m working to achieve two childhood goals at once.” >> ZAC CASSILL

GX: *How long have you been fishing? Is it something you do to relax, or do you view it strictly as competition?*

ZAC: I have been fishing for as long as I can remember. Papa, a friend of the family, would take Landon and me out fishing. He made cane poles out of willow trees, and we fished with worms and a bobber. It seems like the fishing was always good when we were with him. The times we spent with him are some of my most cherished childhood memories.

I do fish to relax at times. On the upper Mississippi River, we have fantastic trout fishing. I love going up little streams by myself, totally immersed in nature and trying to outsmart the most wary fish out there—the brown trout. **GX**



OPERATION RAPID RESPONSE™ (OPRARE)



Part 3 of 3, Dumbbells and Dynamics

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

Dumbbells and Dynamics is the final workout of a three-part series called Operation Rapid Response. OPRARE is the answer when it comes to safe and intense workouts that can be accomplished in a short period of time.

In part one, we responded to SGT Ruks and other deployed Soldiers with a “fixed circuit” fitness workout. A fixed circuit is based on a time limit for each exercise or station. Since SGT Ruks and his colleagues were overseas when we developed the workout, we provided body-resistance exercises only.

CSM Hudson inspired OPRARE part two, a “free circuit” based on a repetition limit for each exercise or station. This was also our first workout utilizing free motion or cable exercise systems. Free circuits are meant to challenge participants to achieve faster exercise completion times, making the workout a sort of personal competition.

For part three, we have a workout that allows you to choose the fitness circuit method, fixed or free. You can train by time limit or by repetition. Your choice!

READY... BEGIN!

—SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

::STANDING TALL, LOOKING GOOD::
GX would like to thank the Soldiers at the Smyrna National Guard Training Center in Tennessee for their selfless and continued support! Stay the course!



EVAN BAINES, SGT KEN: ILLUSTRATION COURTESY OF START FITNESS ©

“Obstacles are those frightful things you can see when you take your eyes off your goal.”

—Henry Ford

WARM-UP PHASE

1. Aerobics (5 minutes):
Examples: Running in place, side-straddle hops (jumping jacks); high steps/knees

2. Stretching (5 minutes)

3. Foam Rolling (5 minutes)
Use a foam roller to help stretch tight areas of the body. Example: If your calves are tight, put the foam roller under your calf and gently press your calf into the roller. Move your leg so that the foam roller massages the entire length of your calf.

MUSCLE TARGET PHASE

Part One: Upper Body and Core

4. Sit-ups, Crunches

START: Lay down on your back with both legs together and bent 90 degrees at your knees. Place your heels on the ground and point your toes upward. Interlock your fingers and place your hands behind your head.

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominal muscles and raise your upper body until your shoulder blades come off of the ground and return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached.

Warning: Do not pull your neck with your hands. Keep your elbows wide and your chin pointing toward the sky during the entire exercise.

FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 30 seconds
Intermediate: 60 seconds
Advanced: 90 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 15 repetitions
Intermediate: 30 repetitions
Advanced: 60 repetitions

5. Four-Count Reverse Crunch

START: Lay down on your back with your palms on the ground and to the sides of your lower hips. Position both legs straight and together while elevated approximately 20 inches off the ground. Flex your feet. Note: Do not lock your knees. You can look toward your legs or keep your head down against the ground.

ACTIONS:

1) Bend your knees and raise them over your hips. Note: Your feet will remain parallel with your knees and flexed at your ankles.
2) Extend your legs upward until your feet line up over your knees and hips. Note: Do not lock your knees.
3) Return to position No. 1.
4) Return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached.

FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 20 seconds
Intermediate: 40 seconds
Advanced: 60 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 10 repetitions
Intermediate: 20 repetitions
Advanced: 30 repetitions

PLANK HOLD WITH SINGLE ARM DUMBBELL ROW



6. Plank Hold with Single Arm Dumbbell Row

START: While holding a set of dumbbells, balance your body on your hands and feet with your back forming a straight line. Look forward and keep your feet approximately 18 inches apart.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight and balancing on one side, slowly bring the dumbbell on the opposite side upward toward your body by bending your elbow. Return to the start position and perform the actions with the other arm. Continue until your goal is reached on each side.

FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 20 seconds
Intermediate: 40 seconds
Advanced: 60 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 10 repetitions
Intermediate: 20 repetitions
Advanced: 30 repetitions

BY THE NUMBERS

1. Aerobics (5 minutes)
2. Stretching (5 minutes)
3. Foam Rolling (5 minutes)
4. Sit-ups, Crunches
5. Four-Count Reverse Crunch
6. Plank Hold with Single Arm Dumbbell Row
7. Prone Back Bends with Dumbbells
8. Push-ups, Normal Grip
9. Squat with Forward Dumbbell Raise
10. Lunge with Overhead Dumbbell Press
11. Back Leg, Front Kicks
12. Switch Lunges
13. Stretching (5 minutes)

“Remember to take little or no break between exercises to achieve best results.”

—SSG Ken Weichert

”

PRONE BACK BENDS WITH DUMBBELLS



7. Prone Back Bends with Dumbbells

START: Lower your body to the ground with your arms outward and bent at the elbows. Place your hands on the ground slightly above your shoulders while holding a light set of dumbbells. Place your feet on the ground hip-width apart.

ACTIONS: Slowly arch your lower back by tightening your rear end and lower back muscles until your legs and arms move slightly upward. Return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached.

Warning: Do not jerk your body during this exercise. Perform the actions slowly.

FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 20 seconds
Intermediate: 40 seconds
Advanced: 60 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 10 repetitions
Intermediate: 20 repetitions
Advanced: 30 repetitions



Great works are performed not by strength, but by perseverance.”

—Samuel Johnson

8. Push-ups, Normal Grip

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet (or knees) with your back forming a straight line. Look slightly forward and keep your feet together or up to 12 inches apart. *Note:* Different arm positions engage different arms, chest and shoulder muscles. You will engage your triceps the closer your hands are positioned together.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, drop your body straight down by bending both elbows. Return to the start position.

Warning: Do not look down to the ground during this exercise. Maintain a slightly forward focal point at all times.

FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 20 seconds
Intermediate: 40 seconds
Advanced: 60 seconds

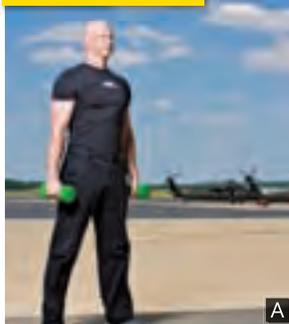
FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 15 repetitions (male), 5–10 repetitions (female)
Intermediate: 30 repetitions (male), 15 repetitions (female)
Advanced: 45 repetitions (male), 25 repetitions (female)

MUSCLE TARGET PHASE

Part Two: Lower Body

SQUAT WITH FORWARD DUMBBELL RAISE



9. Squat with Forward Dumbbell Raise

START: Stand with a neutral spine, toes pointing forward, legs placed hip-width apart and arms at your sides while holding a set of dumbbells.

ACTIONS: Lower your body by bending both knees to approximately 90 degrees of knee flexion with your hips moving back as if sitting on a chair. While you lower your body, raise your arms forward and upward until level with your shoulders. *Note:* Maintain your weight directly over the heels or mid-foot. Return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached.

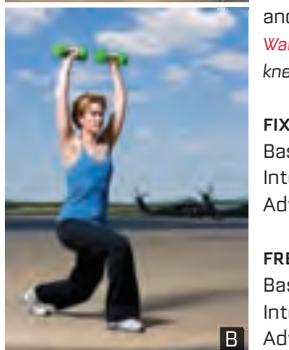
FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 20 seconds
Intermediate: 40 seconds
Advanced: 60 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 10 repetitions
Intermediate: 20 repetitions
Advanced: 30 repetitions

LUNGE WITH OVERHEAD DUMBBELL PRESS



10. Lunge with Overhead Dumbbell Press

START: Place one leg in front and the other straight behind you with your toes pointing forward. Your upper body is upright and your shoulders are lined up over your hips. Position your arms outward, bent at the elbows, hands slightly above your shoulders while holding a light set of dumbbells.

ACTIONS: Lower your body by bending both legs at the knees until your forward leg achieves 90 degrees of knee flexion. While you lower your body, extend your arms upward. Maintain your balance in the center. Return to the starting position. Continue until your goal is reached. Switch positions, and continue until your goal is reached.

Warning: Do not lock your elbows. Do not let your forward knee bend beyond your toe line.

FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 20 seconds
Intermediate: 40 seconds
Advanced: 60 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 10 repetitions
Intermediate: 20 repetitions
Advanced: 30 repetitions

“If you are going to be a champion, you must be willing to pay a greater price.”

—Bud Wilkinson

BACK LEG, FRONT KICKS



11. Back Leg, Front Kicks

START: Stand with your legs hip-width apart. Start with your left leg in front and your right leg behind you with your feet at a 45-degree angle to the right. Bend your knees slightly and tighten your abdominals. Clench your fists, and position them slightly lower than eye-level so you can see over your fists without blocking your vision. *Note:* Keep your wrists straight.

ACTIONS: Shifting your balance to your left leg, lift your right leg by bending the knee and tucking it into your chest. *Note:* This is called the “chamber.” Quickly extend your right leg out and upward with your toes curling back (aiming as high as you can). Your balancing foot will twist slightly outward, balancing on the ball of the foot. Return to the start position. Quickly repeat until your goal is reached. Switch legs, and continue until your goal is reached.

Self-defense note: You would strike your target using the ball of your foot, located just underneath your big toe.

Warning: Do not snap your kicking knee while performing this version of the front kick.

FIXED CIRCUIT

Basic: 20 seconds

Intermediate: 40 seconds

Advanced: 60 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT

Basic: 10 repetitions

Intermediate: 20 repetitions

Advanced: 30 repetitions

12. Switch Lunges

START: Place one leg in front and the other straight behind you with your toes pointing forward. Your upper body is upright with your shoulders lined up over your hips. Position your arms at your sides.

ACTIONS: Lower your body by bending both legs at the knees until your forward leg achieves 90 degrees of knee flexion. Next, jump up, switch leg positions in midair and land in a lunge. Continue switching legs quickly until your goal is reached. Maintain your balance in the center. *Note:* You can perform this exercise without jumping (Basic level).

Warning: Do not let your forward knee bend beyond your toe line. Do not compromise your form.

FIXED CIRCUIT:

Basic: 20 seconds (not jumping)

Intermediate: 20 seconds

Advanced: 40 seconds

FREE CIRCUIT:

Basic: 10 repetitions (not jumping)

Intermediate: 10 repetitions

Advanced: 20 repetitions

STAMINA STOPWATCH

Operation Rapid Response: 1 full set = approximately 35 minutes

Operation Double-Time: 2 full sets = approximately 45 minutes

Operation Max Load: 3 full sets = approximately 55 minutes

Note: The warm-up and cooldown phases are performed only once.

“Do not believe that possibly you can escape the reward of your action.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

COOLDOWN PHASE

13. Stretching (5 minutes)

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

- Dumbbells

“WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK ‘HAMPTON WEIGHTS’ FOR THE USE OF THEIR DUMBBELLS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT.”

—SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



CHRIS KISSLING

SSG KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT

A six-time Soldier of the year and Veteran of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, SSG Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie, a certified personal trainer, founded the START Fitness® program, a San Francisco-based group exercise and hiking business that delivers military-inspired, boot-camp style workouts to Soldiers and civilians. The program now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors.

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.

BRADLEY FIGHTING VEHICLES

Ready for Action

By Camille Breland

FOR GROUND COMBAT, Soldiers rely on a wide array of weapons and armor to give them top-notch support against the enemy. Whether moving in and out of a high-activity combat zone or scouting a foreign area, many troops use the Bradley Fighting Vehicle to accomplish their missions.

EVOLUTION OF THE BRADLEY

The Bradley Fighting Vehicle was named after GEN Omar Bradley, who helped drive the Nazis back to Berlin during WWII. Like GEN Bradley, it's tough, reliable and efficient. Besides the heavy 25 mm cannon and another crew-served weapon, the Bradley is fully armored and tracked and can carry a small squad of troops into battle. The enemy has learned to fear the Bradley Fighting Vehicle not only for its firepower, but also for its agility and toughness.

There are two types of Bradleys—the M2 Infantry Fighting Vehicle and the M3 Cavalry Fighting Vehicle. The M2 is used mainly to transport Soldiers into combat, while the M3 mostly conducts scout missions.

Because the vehicles have different primary functions, the M2 can carry nine Soldiers (three crew and six dismounts), while the M3 carries only five (three crew and two dismounts).

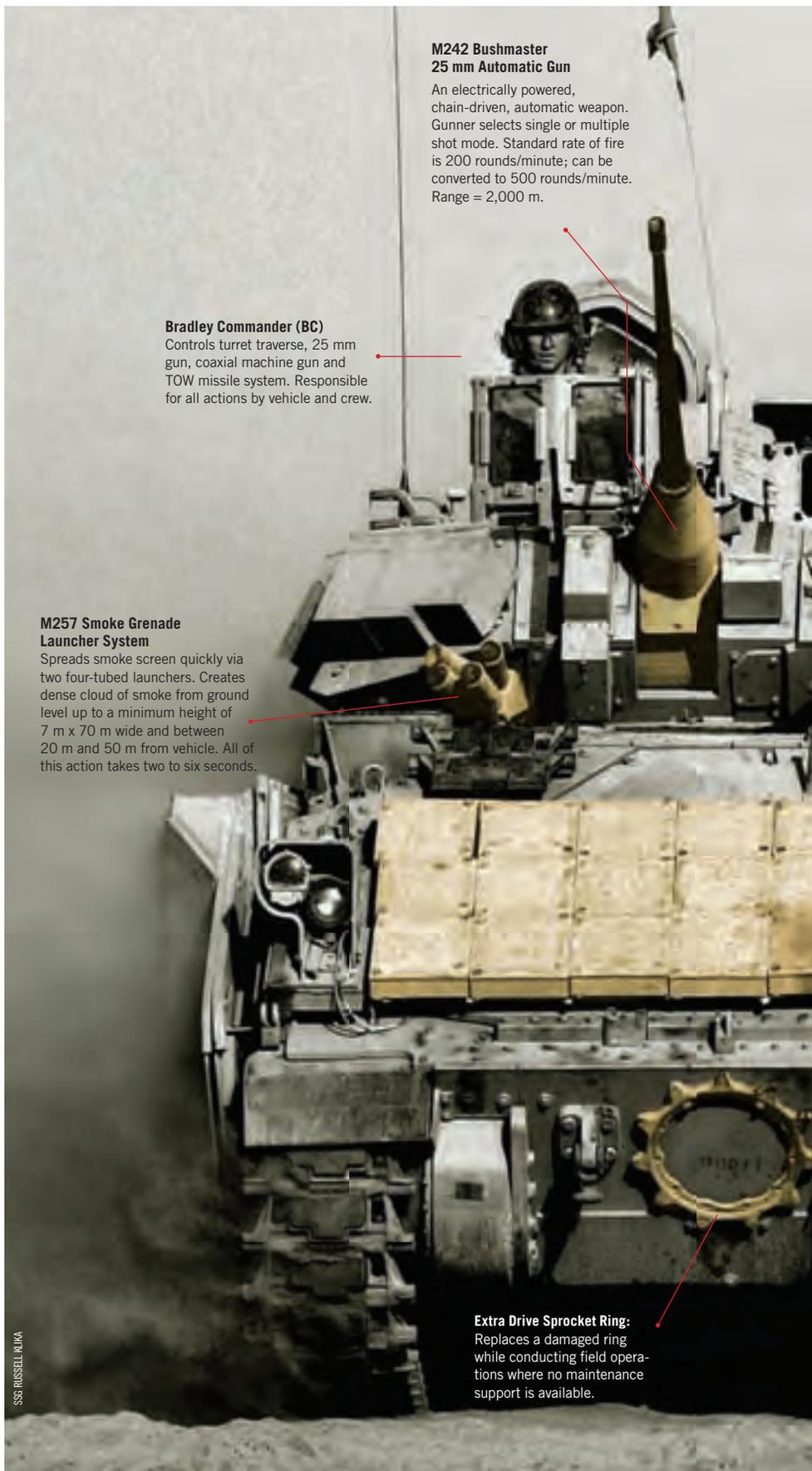
BRADLEYS IN ACTION

Since the Bradley's introduction into service in 1981, 6,724 of the tanks have been produced. During Desert Storm, 2,200 Bradleys saw heavy action, even destroying more enemy vehicles than the M1 Abrams, according to www.GlobalSecurity.org.

The Bradley's main weapon, the M242 25 mm "Bushmaster" chain gun, can fire up to 200 rounds per minute over distances as great as 2,000 meters (more than a mile). The vehicles also come equipped with TOW Anti-Tank missiles that have a range of 4,000 meters (about 2.5 miles) and a M240C machine gun. Both vehicles are amphibious—able to carry troops through water with an inflatable pontoon on its front and sides.

Bradleys are used extensively in Iraq for the War on Terror, where they're called "lifesavers."

"The Bradley is a remarkable platform," LTG Stephen Speakes told *USA Today*. "It can hold a squad of infantrymen and provide direct-fire support. The 25 mm gun is a wonderful cannon. It gives you enormous flexibility. It's amazingly agile, very reliable and responsive. This vehicle will flat kick a—."



M242 Bushmaster 25 mm Automatic Gun

An electrically powered, chain-driven, automatic weapon. Gunner selects single or multiple shot mode. Standard rate of fire is 200 rounds/minute; can be converted to 500 rounds/minute. Range = 2,000 m.

Bradley Commander (BC)
Controls turret traverse, 25 mm gun, coaxial machine gun and TOW missile system. Responsible for all actions by vehicle and crew.

M257 Smoke Grenade Launcher System

Spreads smoke screen quickly via two four-tubed launchers. Creates dense cloud of smoke from ground level up to a minimum height of 7 m x 70 m wide and between 20 m and 50 m from vehicle. All of this action takes two to six seconds.

Extra Drive Sprocket Ring:
Replaces a damaged ring while conducting field operations where no maintenance support is available.

SSG RUSSELL ALIKA



★ BRADLEY ★

BRADLEY FIGHTING VEHICLE STATS:

Length: 21 ft., 2 in.

Width: 11.83 ft. with armor tiles;
10.75 ft. without armor tiles

Height: 11.8 ft.

Weight: 50,000 lbs. unloaded;
67,000 lbs. combat loaded

Power train: 600 hp Cummins
VTA-903T diesel engine with GM-Allison
HMPT-500-3SEC hydro-mechanical
automatic transmission

Cruising range: 250 miles

Road speed: 38 mph

Crew: M2A3: 9 (3 crew; 6 dismounts);
[commander, gunner, driver]
M3A3: 5 (3 crew; 2 dismounts) [mainly
conducts scout missions]

Armament:
25 mm M242 Bushmaster cannon
TOW II missile system
7.62 mm M240C machine gun

BGM-71 TOW II Anti-Tank Missile Launcher:

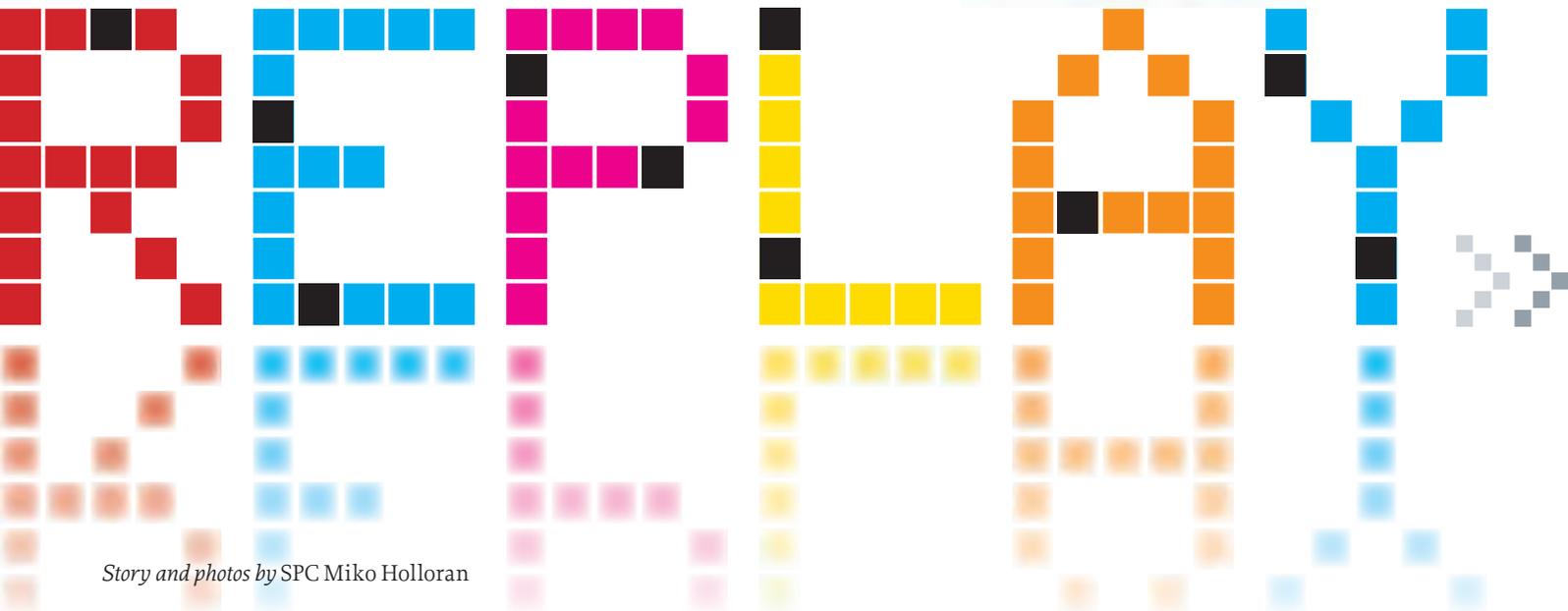
Tracks with optical sight, which
detects infrared signal from
the back of a missile in flight.
Double-wire command link
between missile and gunner is
dispensed from two spools at the
back of missile. Launcher sends
flight correction data to guidance
system on missile via the com-
mand link. Range = 3.75 km.

Explosive Reactive Armor (ERA):

96 tiles fixed to
the vehicle. Hull is
constructed of welded
aluminum and spaced
laminate armor.



◀ DISTANT ▶



Story and photos by SPC Miko Holloran

DEEP in a war-torn foreign country, a group of high-speed infantrymen finally settle down after a long, dangerous foot patrol. Weary, dirty and exhausted, the Soldiers begin to prepare themselves for the rest of the night, or what little of it is left. With a laptop plugged in and ready to go, the Soldiers crowd around the glowing screen, still clutching their rifles. The group then hears a voice that brings them back home, if only for an hour and a half: “And last week I saw Cameron Diaz at Fred Segal, and I talked her out of buying this truly heinous angora sweater. Whoever said orange was the new pink was seriously disturbed,” Elle Woods says in *Legally Blonde*.

“I was mailed a handwritten letter from those particular troops,” Kaylee Radzynski laughs. “It was one of the best letters I’ve received so far. Even though they were watching a movie that they probably wouldn’t have watched if they were at home, it definitely took their mind off the situation at hand and brought their spirits up.”





- > Kaylee and crew have mailed thousands of boxes overseas, but have only had three returned.
- > Tunes 4 the Troops has a goal of sending out 500,000 CDs and DVDs by Christmas 2008.
- > Tunes 4 the Troops also accepts cash donations, since each box of approximately 150 items costs about \$15 to ship.

THE SOLDIERS HAVE KAYLEE TO THANK

for the break from their daily routines while being deployed. Between completing her junior year of high school, working as a hostess at a chain restaurant and keeping up with her high grade point average and extracurricular activities (sports, JROTC, clubs) at her high school, Kaylee has managed to start up Tunes 4 the Troops (www.tunes4thetroops.org), a nonprofit organization that collects used and new DVDs and CDs.

Once she receives a certain amount of donations, Kaylee rounds up her friends and any volunteers for a “packing party.” The DVDs and CDs are then packed and shipped to deployed units all over the world.

“This all started when I went to a homecoming ceremony,” Kaylee says. “I asked the troops, ‘What do you miss the most when you’re deployed?’”

“They told me friends and family are what they miss the most. But the second thing they missed was new movies and music. They told me how there is usually only a handful of CDs and DVDs available when they are deployed, and that watching them over and over can get old pretty quickly.”

Kaylee decided to take it upon herself to find a solution. Once she returned home, the now high school senior dug out all of her old CDs and DVDs and put them in a box. She then enlisted her friends to donate and now has more than 200 satellite donation centers all over the country. Big players like Showtime, Netflix, Hollywood Video and major record labels have also donated to Kaylee’s cause.

“Kaylee doesn’t just send [packages] to those in Afghanistan or Iraq,” Kaylee’s mom Stephanie Radzysinski says. “Everyone in the service is our hero. So

we have honored requests for those in Kosovo, Serbia, Africa, Germany, Korea and from NATO groups.”

Kaylee has received a huge amount of help from her local community. Her high school allows her to utilize the gym for her packing parties. They also handle the donations that Tunes 4 Troops receives.

**“THEY TOLD
ME HOW THERE IS
USUALLY ONLY A
HANDFUL OF CDS AND DVDS
AVAILABLE WHEN THEY ARE
DEPLOYED, AND THAT
WATCHING THEM OVER AND
OVER CAN GET OLD
PRETTY QUICKLY.”**

>> Kaylee Radzysinski

The local Home Depot donated a shed that holds the materials until they’re shipped overseas.

“No matter how fast I clean it out, it usually fills up again pretty quickly!” Kaylee says.

This young American’s efforts haven’t gone unnoticed either. In 2005, Kaylee received the Tennessee Titans Jr. Community Quarterback Award, along with \$4,000 to help cover the costs of shipping the packages. The Daughters

of the American Revolution awarded Kaylee with the National Excellence in Community Service Award, and in 2007, Mayor D. Gary Davis proclaimed April 16 Kaylee Radzysinski Day in Bradley County, TN.

This year, she has received the Tennessee Youth Volunteer of the Year—Prudential Spirit Community Award. CNN also selected her as a “CNN Hero,” featuring a story about Kaylee on its Web site.

Kaylee has been interviewed by numerous national teen magazines and has appeared on several radio and TV shows, including the “Montel Williams Show” and the “Sean Hannity Show.”

But the recognition that means the most to her is the thanks that come in the form of handwritten letters or emails from the service members themselves. One even went so far as to present her with a Bronze Star he had earned in combat.

“He told me that he wanted to give me something that meant a lot to him, so that I could understand what I did for him. It blew me away,” Kaylee says.

As this article went to press, Tunes 4 the Troops had sent over 310,000 CDs, DVDs and books on CD to service members overseas. You can help Kaylee meet her goal of 500,000 CDs and DVDs shipped by Christmas by visiting www.Tunes4theTroops.org, where you can find information about shipping your donations or how to start your own Tunes 4 the Troops satellite donation center.

Tunes 4 the Troops will not accept burned or copied CDs and DVDs due to federal copyright laws. You can request to have a package sent either to your unit or a family member’s unit overseas by emailing Tunes4theTroops@hotmail.com. **GX**



THROUGH THE FIRE



ON JANUARY 15, 2008, SPC VERONICA ALFARO, 23, OF THE ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD, WAS DRIVING A LIGHT MEDIUM TACTICAL VEHICLE ESCORTING A CONVOY ON A MAIN U.S. SUPPLY ROUTE FROM BAGHDAD TO BALAD, IRAQ.

SUDDENLY, THE CONVOY CAME UNDER HEAVY FIRE BY ENEMY FORCES WITH MACHINE GUNS AND SEVERAL SMALL ARMS. ALFARO WHEELED HER VEHICLE IN THE LINE OF FIRE TO PROTECT THE CIVILIAN DRIVERS.



AFTER FINDING OUT THE DRIVER IN THE VEHICLE IN FRONT OF HERS WAS WOUNDED, ALFARO IMMEDIATELY GRABBED A COMBAT LIFESAVER BAG AND CHARGED MORE THAN 50 YARDS AS BULLETS WHIZZED PAST HER.

AFTER REACHING THE VEHICLE, ALFARO INSTINCTIVELY PLACED HER BODY BETWEEN THE GUNFIRE AND THE CIVILIAN WHILE SHE PROVIDED MEDICAL TREATMENT TO HIM AND ANOTHER WOUNDED CIVILIAN.



FOR HER VALIANT AND BRAVE ACTIONS, SPC VERONICA ALFARO WAS AWARDED THE BRONZE STAR FOR BRAVERY AND WAS PINNED BY VICE PRESIDENT DICK CHENEY IN A CEREMONY MARCH 19, 2008.



THE END

THERE WHEN YOU NEED US

The **Soldier/Family Support and Services (SFSS) Division** is a diverse division focused on the care of Soldiers and their Families. Some of the programs we handle are: Funeral Honors, Casualty Notification, Suicide Prevention and the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration program. We have several other programs that are equally as important, and we continue to expand our role in Soldier and Family care issues and Deployment Cycle Support.



NATIONAL
GUARD

**SOLDIER / FAMILY
SUPPORT and SERVICES**

Interested Soldiers should contact MSG Lisa Porillo-Birkhead at lisa.porillo@us.army.mil to receive information.

HOOAH!

YOUR LIFE + NO LIMITS

CELEBRATING + SUPPORTING
AMERICA'S YOUTH



Start your **free** subscription today at 1-800-GO-GUARD.com/hooah

NATIONAL
GUARD