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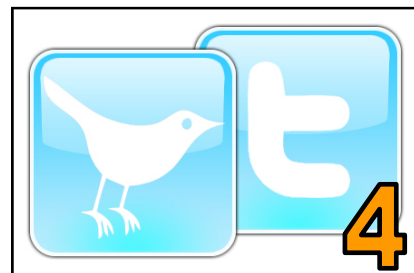
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*Cover- Maj. Michael Meylor of the 182nd Fighter Squadron gives thumbs up for extraction to the crew of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during a water survival training exercise at Canyon Lake, Texas, July 11. (Texas Military Forces photo by Master Sgt. Robert Shelley)*

# THE BULLETIN BOARD

## *Army Launches Online Safety Tool*

To prevent water-related deaths and injuries, the Army launched a new interactive, Web-based, multimedia water-safety tool on the webpage of the U. S. Army Combat Readiness/Safety Center at <https://safety.army.mil/SafetyCity/Pages/Water/WaterSafety.aspx>. The new water-safety tool features safety-related content presented to the user through links, videos and entertaining and informative safety challenges that display safety messages to promote water-safety awareness. The new tool requires users to have Adobe Flash Player 9 installed on their computers.

## *Army Tests Wikis*

The U.S. Army Combined Arms Center launched a test allowing Soldiers and leaders to make real-time updates to the Army's tactics, techniques and procedures via a wiki environment. The test is in contrast to typical time frames of three to five years for staffing and updating field manuals. With this test, the Army is exploring the possibility to share and revise TTPs using a milWiki platform available on Army Knowledge Online. Seven FMs that currently describe TTPs have been selected for the test. Soldiers and leaders can make contributions to revisions for the seven FMs by signing on to AKO, selecting the "Self Service Tab," then selecting "My Doctrine" and then "ATTP Pilot." The Army will also explore how to provide governance over how TTPs are shared via wiki.

## *Helmets to Hardhats for Guard-Reserve*

The U.S. Army Reserve and the Army National Guard recently signed an agreement with Helmets to Hardhats that allows Soldiers greater access to construction career opportunities. Helmets to Hardhats is a nonprofit program that connects servicemembers with construction jobs. It works with 15 building and construction unions and more than 80,000 employers represented by nine contractor associations. A part of the Army Reserve Employer Partnership Initiative, the joint venture will benefit all parties by recruiting and training highly skilled workers to serve both the civilian and military sectors. For more information, visit the Helmets to Hardhats website at <http://www.helmetstohardhats.org/>.

## *Program Matches Employers, Veterans*

A new Washington, D.C.-based employment pilot program will assist veterans with traumatic brain injury (TBI) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). The Department of Labor (DOL) is managing this pilot program with support from others. Workforce development professionals on the team will consult with organizations interested in employing veterans with TBI/PTSD, to match them with qualified veteran workers, provide ongoing support, and monitor experiences, and track best practices. For more information, visit the America's Heroes at Work website at <http://www.americasheroesatwork.gov/employipilot.html>.

## *The Yellow Ribbon Fund*

Founded in 2005, the Yellow Ribbon Fund assists injured servicemembers and their families while they recuperate at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. and the National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Md. The organization offers several programs for recovering servicemembers, including a mentor/intern program in which they can learn job skills from a local company. Family members and friends visiting a recovering servicemember are eligible for a Yellow Ribbon Fund rental car through the Soldier and Family Assistance Center at either medical facility. For more information, visit The Yellow Ribbon Fund website at <http://www.yellowribbonfund.com/>.

## *Operation Paperback*

Operation Paperback collects gently used books and sends them to American troops deployed overseas. Since 1999, they have shipped over 950,000 books to locations around the globe. Operation Paperback is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania. As a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, donations to the organization are tax deductible to the full extent of the law. For more information, go to [www.operationpaperback.org](http://www.operationpaperback.org).

# The DISPATCH

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# Guardmembers Urged To Pursue State Education Benefits

**By Army Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau**

ARLINGTON, Va. (7/14/09) – Citizen Soldiers and Airmen who do not qualify for benefits under the new Post-9/11 G.I. Bill should explore opportunities available from their individual states, Guard officials indicated today.

"Title 32 status ... is not qualifying service under the current provisions of the law as it currently reads," said Blaine Coffey, the National Guard Bureau's chief of Personnel Readiness and Compensation.

The new G.I. Bill that goes into effect Aug. 1 boasts the most comprehensive education benefits package since the original G.I. Bill was signed into law in 1944. Mr. Coffey described it as "an exceptional range of benefits and entitlements for our Soldiers and Airmen."

"Under the secretary of defense's provisions for compensatory-based benefits, all National Guard members that were mobilized after 9/11 ... receive the same entitlement for the performance of service," Mr. Coffey said. "It was to simplify as much as possible the eligibility and ... also to broaden the eligibility."

Many veterans – including many National Guard members – who served 90 days on active duty since Sept. 11, 2001, receive tuition and fees, a new monthly housing stipend and \$1,000 each year to-

ward books and supplies. These benefits are applied incrementally for time served, whether Active Component or as a Guardmember mobilized.

Servicemembers who meet certain eligibility requirements also have the option of transferring benefits to spouses and/or children. Check GI Bill Transferability Has Arrived for more information. (Website: [http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/2009/0409\\_gibill/](http://www.defenselink.mil/home/features/2009/0409_gibill/))

As things currently stand, the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill applies to Guardmembers who have served in Title 10 status, not Title 32 status.

Guardsmen who only served in Title 32 status do not qualify for the new benefits, said Bob Clark, assistant director of Accession Policy for the Department of Defense.

However, that may change in the future, because "we do plan to have this in our 2011 legislative agenda to take to the Congress," Mr. Clark said.

Title 32 service does qualify Guardmembers for many state entitlements that are not available to servicemembers in other components of the military, such as the U.S. Army Reserve who serve solely in Title 10 status.

"Those members that are in other reserve components are not subject to call-

up by their state governors," Mr. Coffey said. "Therefore, they do not have a range of entitlements and benefits that many Guardsmen [have]. They would only have the Title 10 benefits and entitlements."

If you are a Guardmember who has served in Title 32 status or in the Active Guard and Reserve program but not under Title 10, consult your state about education benefits, which vary significantly.

"Each of the state legislatures has prescribed various educational entitlements and benefits to our members," Mr. Coffey said. "The range of entitlement is pretty significant."

The Post-911 G.I. Bill is complex. Guardmembers should seek information available at [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) to fully understand the entitlement.

"One of the compelling issues in the National Guard is a system of record to ensure that a member does qualify when they go to apply," Mr. Coffey said. "The key issue here is to ensure that the National Guard has properly documented and ensured the member's eligibility with their orders."

Many Guardmembers also have extensive education benefits stemming from the Montgomery G.I. Bill, Mr. Coffey said. "In many cases, we have members that are well-served by the existing provisions."

## US Military Joins Social Networking Sites Twitter, Facebook

**By Dong Ngo  
[www.cnet.com](http://www.cnet.com)**

Last November, citing bandwidth and security reasons, the military launched TroopTube, a video-sharing social Web site designed for service members, as the alternative to YouTube. Apparently, it now has had a change of heart.

According to the Associated Press, the U.S. military in Afghanistan is launching a Facebook page, a YouTube site, and Twitter feeds as part of a new communication effort. Officials said this would help

the military reach those who get their information online rather than via printed materials.

For now, the military's Facebook and Twitter sites in Afghanistan are still in a testing phase. Officials hope to attract thousands more users after a formal launch later this week.

The effort is primarily to counter Taliban propaganda, which some are saying routinely publicizes false claims about how many U.S. soldiers its forces have killed, or how many civilians might have died in an airstrike. This is the information war which, according to

U.S. officials, the military has been losing.

The military will also use this new method of communication for other military-related news. For example, it announced on Monday news on Twitter about the death of U.S. service members the previous day from non-combat-related injuries in southern Afghanistan, hours before its formal press statement.

Service members are also encouraged to post photos and stories on Web sites to show daily life in Afghanistan, including content that does not

make the news.

It's expected that this will be well-received by troops as many military commands and individual service members have long used social-networking sites to stay in touch with their families and friends. The Air Force and Army also already have Facebook pages.

Nonetheless, this communication effort in Afghanistan, which takes advantage of social-networking sites as a primary tool to release news, is the first that's been implemented in an active war zone.

# Ready to Return Home to the Lone Star State

Story and photos by Spc. Kiyoshi Freeman

3rd Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

AL ASAD AIR BASE, Iraq – Texas Guardsmen here are set to return home in August following a nine-month tour of duty escorting logistics convoys around Iraq.

Task Force Avalanche, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment (Texas Army National Guard) escorted primarily fuel trucks from the Jordanian border to coalition bases like Victory Base Complex in Baghdad. The Soldiers drove over 2.5 million miles escorting 55,000 trucks, which delivered 70 million gallons of fuel to support coalition operations.

"We had a large part in keeping all the vehicles and generators running while we were here in Iraq," said Lt. Col. Mark L. Burkett, 2nd Bn., 142nd Inf. Regt. commander.

Many of the Soldiers have deployed to Iraq before. Burkett, a native of Canyon, Texas, who was stationed in 2005 at Tallil, said the best part of this deployment was seeing all the positive changes which took place in Iraq.

"In 2005, it was the Wild West. It was very difficult to move anything in from Jordan and to get it here in one piece," he said. "It's not quite like driving I-10 back in the States, but it's getting closer. It's getting a lot closer."

Sgt. 1st Class Jose M. Orozco, a platoon commander with Bravo Company, said the difference is like night and day compared to his first deployment to Iraq.

"In 2004 and 2005 we were bombed nearly every day, every time we were outside the wire we found a [roadside bomb]," said the native of Hillsboro, Texas.

According to figures released by Multi-National Forces-Iraq, nationwide, attacks are at their lowest levels since August 2003, and the weekly average is 70 percent lower than it was last year.



**Top right- Over cups of chai, Iraqi policemen confer with Soldiers of Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment of the Texas Army National Guard at an Iraqi police station in western Iraq, Feb. 14. The guardsmen try to work with their IP counterparts as much as possible.**

**Above- Texas guardsmen with 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment escort fuel trucks back across the Iraqi/Jordanian border at Trebil Gate, Feb. 14. A significant portion of the fuel used by coalition forces throughout Iraq is transported from Jordan and escorted to hubs such as Al Asad Air Base.**



The improvement in security affects how units like Task Force Avalanche execute their mission, which Orozco said was the biggest adjustment Veterans such as himself had to make.

"During previous deployments, pretty much, we owned the road," said Capt. David Alderman, commanding officer, Co. B, in a previous interview. Coalition forces would often take control of intersections and not allow unknown vehicles to stray too close to their convoys, which was an unfortunate but necessary precaution at the time, he said.

Now coalition forces share the road with Iraqis, not unlike how military convoys work in any other host nation.

"As we're traveling, we'll move over, allow them to bypass our convoys when it's safe," Captain Alderman said. "In that way, we're not hindering their movement and they're not hindering our movement."

Another facet of sharing the road with Iraqis includes partnering with the Iraqi highway patrol and the Iraqi police, Burkett said. Task Force Avalanche worked with police along their routes, provided medical care to Iraqi civilians injured in an accident, and even invited Iraqi army officers to a Texas-style barbecue.

A police officer from Hillsboro, Texas, Sergeant Orozco said he took particular pride in mentoring and getting to know his Iraqi counterparts. He said he had a lot of respect for what they did to help make Iraq more safe and secure.

Colonel Burkett enjoyed meeting Iraqis like the chief of police for Hit, a city in Anbar province. "He is the type [of person] that's going to make Iraq a success," he said.

The Soldiers of Task Force Avalanche, 2nd Bn., 142nd Inf. Regt. were mobilized with the 56th (Infantry) Brigade Combat Team in August 2008. Falling under the 36th Infantry Division of the Texas Army National Guard, the unit's insignia is a distinctive olive drab "T" on a blue arrowhead.

They will transfer their mission to units from the Mississippi Army National Guard next month.



# Texas Unit at Home in Iraqi Wilderness

Story and photos by Army Staff Sgt. Jason Kendrick  
56th IBCT PAO, MND-B

BAGHDAD – For the second time in four years, troops from a Texas National Guard unit finds themselves in the full time service to their state and nation supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

For some Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry Regiment, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, deployment to the Middle East bares a close resemblance to home station.

Known as the “High Plains Infantry,” the companies that comprise the battalion are primarily found in the high plains area of the panhandle of northwestern Texas. This part of Texas has terrain that is mostly flat with moderate elevation and has high winds and temperatures during the summer; which is no different than many parts of Iraq.

This time around, they secure and escort convoys of critical supplies:

everything from beans and bullets to water and fuel across western Iraq in the famed al-Anbar province.

“Every single widget we use, from a slice of bread at chow to the fuel that runs our generators is brought in by ground convoy, and Texan Soldiers are the ones protecting it,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Link, 56th IBCT operations officer of Mansfield, Texas.

These convoy missions can take several days to complete and when rolling on the road, can stretch for several miles from the lead vehicle to the truck pulling up the rear.

“This mission normally puts about 1,000 miles on each of our trucks,” explained acting platoon sergeant, Staff Sgt. Richard Shaver, of Arlington, Texas.

For Sergeant Shaver, most missions normally lasts about four or five days, depending on execution times and cooperating weather. That’s five days of living out of a backpack, sleeping irregu-

lar hours, operating under the starry nights of western Iraq and sleeping in makeshift huts under the blaring desert sun.

Rolling out of the sprawling Victory Base Complex on the western edge of

**See WILDERNESS, next page**



## Governor Visits Warhorse Soldiers at Camp Taji



**Left- CAMP TAJI, Iraq – Governor of Texas, Rick Perry (center) stands with (from left to right) Capt. Ted Angle, commander of Company B, 949 Brigade Support Battalion, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Capt. Chris Combest, commander of Company A, 949th BSB, Lt. Col. Stephanie Purgerson-Allen, commander of the 949th BSB, and Capt. Garland “Spencer” Grantham, commander of Company F after a dinner at Camp Taji situated about 20 miles north of Baghdad on the night of Jul. 18. Part of the dinner was consumed under battery powered flashlights as the Governor witnessed first-hand the adaptability of Warhorse Soldiers when the generator providing the electricity went down.**

**Right- Command Sergeant Major Mark Horn, serving as the senior enlisted leader with the 949th Brigade Support Battalion, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and as the Garrison Command Sergeant Major for Camp Taji, is greeted by Texas Governor Rick Perry prior to a casual dinner held at Camp Taji on Jul. 18.**

**WILDERNESS, cont. from page 6**

Baghdad, Soldiers escort more than 30 tractor trailer trucks and start heading west in Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicles. The large trucks can strike an intimidating presence.

“I like driving the MRAP because civilians [in smaller vehicles] tend to stay clear when they see a 25,000 pound truck coming,” said a wide smiling Spc. Timothy Stewart, a vehicle driver from Rock Port, Texas.

The convoy traveled more than 250 miles during the night, often times barely crawling along due to sub-standard road conditions.

Along the way, vehicle breakdowns increase the timeline and prompts Sergeant Shaver to say, “We might see daylight before we finish tonight boys.” Once everyone has pulled into their destination, all the vehicles top off with fuel and get ready to go again the next day. As they look to the east, troops see the beginnings of daybreak and head to the dining facility for a breakfast meal that for many of the Soldiers will serve as supper.

The mood is light as everyone enjoys a helping of eggs, bacon and fruit. Some enjoy cereal and some of the many other choices available at the dining facility. Following chow, many of the Soldiers retire for the morning into a plywood building for a few hours of shut-eye.

As the afternoon sun begins to bake the desert at a stifling 110 degrees, many of the Soldiers begin to stir. Within a couple of hours these Soldiers start all the preparations of once again heading out on the road. As they ready their trucks, checking fluid levels and doing communications checks, the word comes that the convoy may not push out.

“I don’t mind spending an extra day out, because when we are out on the road it makes the days go by quicker,” said Sgt. Ryan Northcutt, a squad leader from Longview, Texas.

Many of the various missions performed throughout Iraq require a degree of flexibility and the capacity to change direction at the drop of a hat. On this night, the Soldiers would be put on standby because of unfavorable route status, only to be given the word “Go” after many had relaxed and settled in for what was thought to be an extra night on the camp.

“You absolutely have to be flexible in this mission,” said Sergeant Shaver. “We can go from being stood down and not moving to hitting a [start point] within an hour.”

Like the rest of the convoy, the security platoons operate using three elements: a forward security element for added safety and a sense of warn for the Soldiers on the mission, a main body who escorts the bulk of the semi-trucks with the supplies, and a recovery element which acts to recover any of the vehicles that may experience problems ranging from transmission problems to something as innocuous as a simple flat tire.

“We operate with three elements within the convoy. Each element operates semi-independently of each other. Their tasks being completed can make or break a mission,” Sergeant Shaver explained.

Along the route the recovery team got a chance to exer-

cise their skills as a fuel tanker had a tire blowout. The blowout caused the loss of two tires and both had to be replaced before the mission could continue.

On this night, however, this would not be the only maintenance issue that these Soldiers would be faced with. A separate trailer had tire issues as well, including the loss of some of the highly important lug nuts used to keep the wheels on and rolling down the supply routes. After some controlled substitution amongst the contracted drivers of the fuel tankers, the mission once again continued towards the Iraqi capital. There would be, however, one more breakdown.

This final breakdown happened along the supply route to Baghdad near Fallujah, some 30 miles west of the capital city. This incident would test the resolve and patience of the recovery crew.

Unable to self recover, Sergeant Shaver’s Soldiers would wait nearly ten hours on the outskirts of Fallujah in searing heat, all the while maintaining 360 degree security protecting the vital fuel in the tanker, and wait for addition recovery assets.

“Whenever we can’t self recover, we wait for additional assets to get to us. Sometimes that wait is only a couple of hours and sometimes it is longer,” said Sergeant Shaver.

Glad to be moving again, the recovery element of 1st Platoon breathe a sigh of relief as they finally continue towards Victory Base Complex on the western edge of Baghdad for some well deserved rest after their 22 hours on the road. Even on what many consider the most inhospitable terrain in Iraq and through scorching temperatures, the High Plains Infantrymen complete their tasks with a unique pride that lets them feel at home.



**Above- CAMP KOREAN VILLAGE, Iraq – Staff Sgt. Richard Shaver, acting platoon sergeant for 1st Platoon, B Company, 2nd Battalion 142nd Infantry, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, counts trucks coming out of the convoy yard at Camp Korean Village on the night of June 23. Shaver, of Arlington, Texas, counts all the trucks out of the gate checking his manifest to ensure accountability.**

**Previous page- BAGHDAD – A Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle in 2nd Battalion 142nd Infantry Division, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, stands ready for a convoy mission from Camp Victory in Baghdad past the city of Ar Rutbah in far western Iraq, June 22.**

# ANG Pilot Present as WASPs Receive Overdue Honors

By Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith  
National Guard Bureau



ARLINGTON, Va. - She was among the Air Guard's handful of women fighter pilots that first took to the sky.

Air Force Lt. Col. Bobbi Jo Doorenbos, an F-16 Fighting Falcon fighter pilot in the Air National Guard got to watch Wednesday's ceremony at the White House where Women Airforce Service Pilots (WASP) - who fostered oppor-

tunity for women in aviation - received the Congressional Gold Medal bill by the president.

The moment came more than 65 years after the WASP's ground-breaking war effort.

President Barack Obama signed the bill at the Oval Office July 1 authorizing the award. Three members of WASP as well as five active duty United States Air Force pilots, who followed in their footsteps, including Doorenbos, were at the Oval Office during the bill signing.

"The Women Airforce Service Pilots courageously answered their country's call in a time of need while blazing a trail for the brave women who have given and continue to give so much in service to this nation since," said President Obama. "Every American should be grateful for their service, and I am honored to sign this



Top- *Fifinella*, the WASP mascot designed by Walt Disney.

Top left- President Barack Obama chats with WASP pilots Elaine Harmon (left) and Lorraine Rodgers in the Oval Office after signing S.614, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to Women Airforce Service Pilots July 1 at the White House. The WASP program was established during World War II, and from 1942 to 1943, more than 1,000 women joined, flying 60 million miles of noncombat military missions. Of the women who received their wings as Women Airforce Service Pilots, approximately 300 are living today. (Official White House Photos by Pete Souza)

Top Right- Harlingen Army Air Field, Texas--Elizabeth L. Gardner of Rockford, Illinois, WASP (Women's Airforce Service Pilot) pilot, takes a look around before sending her plane streaking down the runway at the air base., ca. 1930 - 1975.

bill to finally give them some of the hard-earned recognition they deserve."

With the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Congressional Gold Medal is the nation's highest civilian award, of which the Tuskegee Airmen were recent military awardees.

"It's long overdue and well deserved," said Colonel Doorenbos of the WASP, who said she could probably count on one hand the number of female fighter pilots in the Air Guard when she joined her squadron.

According to a White House press release, "from 1942 to 1943 more than 1,000 women joined the WASP. Thirty-eight of them made the ultimate sacrifice for their nation in performing its mission. But their contribution went largely unrecognized for years, not even being acknowledged with veteran status until 1977."

Officials said "the groundbreaking steps taken by the WASP paved the way for hundreds of United States service-women combat pilots who have flown fighter aircraft in recent conflicts."

"The WASP are role models for all," said Colonel Doorenbos. "They had the courage to step forward and do something that was so totally outside the expectations of that era. I really respect those who do that."





## Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison Visits Arrowhead Soldiers in Iraq



## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Why should I call the Lifeline?



The **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline** is a 24-hour, toll-free suicide prevention service available to anyone in suicidal crisis. If you need help, please dial **1-800-273-TALK (8255)**. You will be routed to the closest possible crisis center in your area. With more than 130 crisis centers across the country, our mission is to provide immediate assistance to anyone seeking mental health services. Call for yourself, or someone you care about. Your call is free and confidential.

Para obtener asistencia en español durante las 24 horas, llame al **1-888-628-9454**.

From immediate suicidal crisis to information about mental health, crisis centers in our network are equipped to take a wide range of calls. Some of the reasons to call 1-800-273-TALK are listed below.

- Call to speak with someone who cares.
- Call if you feel you might be in danger of hurting yourself.
- Call to find referrals to mental health services in your area.
- Call to speak to a crisis worker about someone you're concerned about.

# Air Guard Flight Crews Undergo Water Survival Training

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Phil Fountain

149th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

CANYON LAKE, Texas (July 11, 2009) – Thirty-five F-16 pilots and flight surgeons assigned to the 182nd Fighter Squadron at Lackland Air Force Base underwent required water survival and rescue training at Canyon Lake.

Members were briefed on the availability and use of tools contained in their survival gear. The water instruction culminated with an aerial extraction by a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, which provided joint training with the Army National Guard's 2nd General Support Aviation Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment, based at Martindale Army Air Field. Additionally, coordination with local authorities allowed for training with various forms of flare signaling devices, which would be used to help rescuers locate a downed aircrew.

While flight over water is not a primary theater of operations for the Air National Guard unit, the potential always exists. The 182nd Fighter Squadron and other elements of the 149th Fighter Wing are scheduled to deploy to the Czech Republic this fall, requiring these pilots to fly their F-16s over the cold waters of the North Atlantic.

"You train like you fight," explained Col. Kenneth Nereson, commander of the 149th Fighter Wing. "This is as close as you can get."

Flight crews have to be prepared for the event they are



forced to make an aquatic landing or ejection from the aircraft over water. Winds can pull the parachute across the water. Consequently, in the training, members fully suited in flight gear were dragged through the water by a boat.

They also had to clear themselves from underneath a floating parachute canopy and negotiate climbing aboard both a personal life raft and a 20-person raft.

The training also involved mounting and dismounting from an aerial rescue basket lowered by the helicopter. Once in the basket, designed to carry two at a time, there is still a potential for danger. Lt. Col. John Kane, squadron commander, said the water can sting their faces when they are being lifted from the water, and sand and gravel can pelt them as they approach the exit point, making it hard to see. All the same, each basket passenger disembarked safely onto the ground.

The training went smoothly with all members accomplishing the training course. Colonel Kane called this exercise a "unique joint training opportunity" and termed it "a huge success."

*(Master Sgt. Gregory Ripps contributed to this article.)*

**Left- Lt. Col. Kevin Tarrant, a member of the Texas Air National Guard assigned to the 182nd Fighter Squadron, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, takes cover after extraction from Canyon Lake, Texas, during a water survival training exercise there July 11. (Texas Military Forces photo by Staff Sgt. Eric Wilson)**

**Above- Lt. Col. Michael "Bones" McCoy (right), a member of the Texas Air National Guard assigned to the 182nd Fighter Squadron, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, guides an aerial rescue basket to other members. Colonel McCoy underwent water survival training as part of an annual training requirement at Canyon Lake, Texas, July 11. (Texas Military Forces photo by Master Sgt. Robert Shelley)**

# Basic Orientation Training for New State Guard Members

Story and photo by Spc. Rick Phelps

CAMP BOWIE, Texas- Soldiers from the Texas Army National Guard are not alone at Camp Bowie this week.

Representatives of the Texas State Guard are at the camp taking part in annual training.

During annual training, soldiers new to the state guard will participate in BOT (Basic Orientation Training), a condensed version of the basic training Army National Guard soldiers are required to attend.

“The training for our new soldiers includes drill and ceremony, map reading, customs and courtesies, disaster relief and radio procedures,” Maj. Michael Spraggins, public affairs officer, general staff, headquarters, Camp Mabry, said Friday.

“Soldiers not going through basic will train on CPR, shelter management, administration, public affairs and ham radio. We want all of our people to be certified. At some point, every member will have Red Cross shelter management and mass care certification — from private to general.”

With 1,600 soldiers statewide, Major Spraggins said each soldier lives by the group’s adopted motto.

“Texans serving Texas,” Major Spraggins said. “It takes a lot of commitment to do this and we are all here because we love what we do and we want to be here.”

Several distinct differences set apart the National and State guards, Major Spraggins said.

“First, the state guard is not paid for attending monthly drills (training as-

semblies),” Major Spraggins said. “The only time we are paid is if the governor activates us for a disaster or emergency situation.”

Because of the state guard’s pay structure, each soldier receives the same stipend.

“Everyone from Pvt. ‘Snuffy’ to a general are going to receive the same amount of money,” Major Spraggins said. “No one is in this for the money.”

Texas State Guard soldiers are also responsible for the cost of uniforms, equipment, food and fuel, Major Spraggins said.

Another difference, Major Spraggins said, are the missions in which the state guard takes part.

“While the National Guard answers to the governor and the president, we only answer to the governor,” Major Spraggins said. “Which means, we are not involved in overseas deployments. Our mission is defense support to civilian authorities.”

Information provided by the TXSG states that “..units throughout the State of Texas augment Texas Civil Authorities, providing the following services in times of Texas state emergencies such as shelter management, medical services, volunteer coordination, legal support, communications and information technology and chaplain services.”

Soldiers from “all walks of life” help fill the needs of the state guard, Major Spraggins said.

“We have a number of Ph.D.’s – doctors, nurses, dentists, law enforcement and other careers are represented within our ranks,” Major Spraggins said.

Items worn on the uniform help

distinguish between a National Guard and a state guard soldier. On the national guard uniform, a “U.S. Army” tag is worn, where on the Texas guard uniform, the tag reads “Texas State Guard.” On the right arm of a national guard uniform, an American flag patch is worn, while the state guard wear a Texas state flag patch on that same arm.

The Texas State Guard is one of the three branches that make up Texas military forces, the other two being the Army and Air National Guard. The state guard is comprised of six regiments, two air wings, a medical brigade and a Maritime regiment. Enlistment requirements include being between the ages of 18-60, passing a criminal background check, possessing a valid Texas drivers license and being in “reasonable” good health.



Cpt. Robert Spratt, Texas State Guard, receives a coin from the Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Jose Mayorga July 11 during a trip to Camp Bowie. While on site, Mayorga visited with Soldiers with the Texas State Guard and the 111th Engineer Bn. during training.

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# Comprehensive Hurricane, Tornado Preparedness

By Karen Krakower Kaplan

University of Texas Health Science Ctr.

Nine months ago, a tropical puff of wind off the African coast swelled to the third most destructive hurricane to hit the United States. Hurricane Ike, a Category 2 with a Category 4 storm surge, erased parts of Galveston and Chambers Counties, claimed over 100 US lives, and ripped 2.6 million people off the electrical grid for weeks. As of February 2009, 34 people remained missing from the Texas coast.

Four years before, Hurricane Katrina sunk one city and Rita chased another out of town.

Eight years before, a tropical storm named Allison washed away everything Houstonians knew about flooding.

Lessons learned: 1) No two storms are alike. 2) Prepare while the sun is shining.

(At this writing, the sun is *shining*.)

“People die in hurricanes, not only from 15-foot storm surges, but from flying debris, carbon monoxide poisoning and electrocutions,” says Dr. Robert “Safety Bob” Emery, vice president for Safety, Health, Environment & Risk Management at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

Print this out and keep it handy: this is the combined wisdom of those who have weathered true weather.

## Before you see the funny-looking weather maps

Long before the weather reports start crawling along the bottom of your TV screen, have these items on hand in your home:

- Gallon of water per day per person (about three days' worth.)
- Three-day supply of all daily medications. (Seven days for persons with disabilities: see [Disability 911](#))
- First-aid kit (and check for expired contents.)
- Readily consumable food that doesn't require cooking.
- Handheld can opener.

- Thick-soled shoes, preferably rubber-soled or rubber boots.
- Rain gear and sturdy work gloves.
- Fresh batteries and flashlights.
- Fresh batteries and portable radio.
- Charged cell phone and charger for both car and home.
- Duct tape, duct tape and perhaps duct tape.
- A reasonably full gas tank during hurricane months.
- Fire extinguisher that actually has been recently tested.
- *A recently checked insurance policy if you are concerned about “rising water.”* Most homeowner/renter policies do not cover rising water damage. They do however cover “driving rain”, hail and wind damage, including water damage from roof leaks. Only federal flood insurance, offered by FEMA covers flood damage.

## Leaving a paper trail

- Cash, Traveler's Checks and some money in coins. In case of a serious power outage, bank computers may be off line.
- Take valuable original documents to a safe deposit box.
- Put copies of valuable papers in freezer bags and put them IN the freezer (that's right—it's fairly fire, flood and wind-proof.)
- Make copies of your prescriptions or place empty medication bottles in the freezer, too.
- Extra toilet paper (don't laugh—it's the one item you'll wish you had.)

## Who ya' gonna call ?...

- Add to your “freezer file cabinet” phone numbers of family members/friends located in another geographic area in case phones are out and you need a point of contact (Alert friends and family that if you can't be reached by phone, they are to call your out-of-area contact. Use this number as a check-in station.)
- Take the time to teach your parents, older family members or text-challenged friends how to send and receive a text message in the event of a hurricane or evacua-

tion. If cell phone towers or electricity is knocked out, your older family members need to be able to communicate with you and you, them. Texting seems to have a better success rate, even when cell phone transmission is interrupted. (See Health Tip for more information)

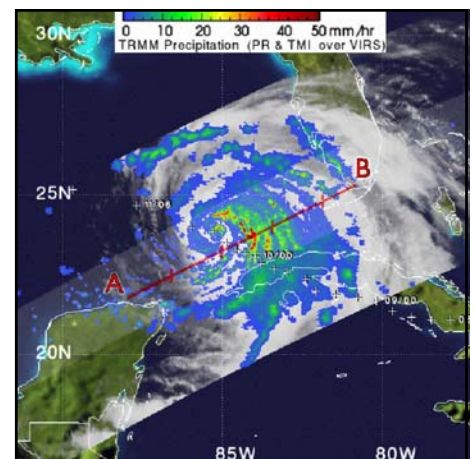
- Know your area's evacuation routes, shelters and emergency numbers, including FEMA, the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

- Have your insurance agent's numbers handy.

## Planning ahead for that rainy day

- Know how to turn off your electricity, water and gas. Remember that you'll need a professional to turn on your gas after the storm.
- If you're at work, have back-up plans to retrieve kids from camp/school/day care.
- Arrangements for pets—they need food and water stockpiles, too.
- Keep a backpack loaded with extras: medications, hidden cash and coins, personal hygiene supplies, change of clothes, sweater, comfortable shoes, extra socks, packaged snacks, bottled water, deck of cards, notepad and pen.
- Make a mental note to move to high ground any cardboard boxes sitting on the closet floor or under your bed. Items “out of sight” are often forgotten. (In other words, your baseball card collection is worthless once it is sopping pulp.)

See **HURRICANE**, next page



Hurricane Ike- NASA GSFC Scientific Visualization St

## HURRICANE, con't from previous

### When the TV reporter is soaking wet and windblown

- Once the National Weather Service has issued a warning and your area must **evacuate**:
- Grab cell phone and chargers for car and electrical outlet.
- Grab your map of evacuation routes and contra flow routes.
- “Freezer file cabinet.”
- Emergency backpack.
- Bed roll if you have room in your car, in case shelter runs out of mats.
- If you’re evacuating by car, move items like flashlights and emergency flares from the trunk to the back seat before you start driving.
- Towels.
- Pets, pet food and water and pet leash.

### ‘Fleeing in place’

Lessons learned from Rita—

If you are one of the million-plus Houstonians who found themselves going nowhere fast during Hurricane Rita, you know what “fleeing in place” means.

It means confidence is high that you will sit in a steaming car in gridlock traffic longer than you had planned if your major city must mass-evacuate. Add these items to your list:

- Plastic misting bottles: not only will a mist of water cool you down if your car’s air conditioning must be turned off to conserve gas, you’ll also save the life of your pet and the health of elderly passengers. Pets, particularly cats, might not drink in a moving car or when nervous. Spraying them down will make them lick their fur. Ill or very elderly passengers may only be able to take in fluid through a misting spray.
- Dignity takes a back seat to a 26-hour traffic jam. If you are concerned about restrooms, learn from your children—or childhood: take along diapers.
- Gasoline is safe to carry in your trunk if it is in a *certified gasoline container*. Check with your hardware store before hurricane season.
- Restock on vehicle road emergency



kits: canned tire patches, coolant, tire jacks, flashlights, center punches (for breaking windows in rising water.)

- Above all else, know your gas mileage before you evacuate. If you can’t get to your chosen destination on one tank, you’ll need an alternative plan.
- Make sure you have hats, sunscreen and good walking shoes in case you need to leave your car.

### When the TV reporter is blowing sideways

If your area has been advised to shelter in place and/or your neighborhood streets are already flooded or winds make it too dangerous to leave your home:

- If you still have electricity, stay tuned to weather coverage and charge your cell phone.
- Alert your friends/family list that a hurricane is headed your way and you might lose contact by land line.
- If you’ve lost electricity, turn on your battery-powered radio.
- Tape your windows in an “x” to mitigate glass breakage and shards from wind, hail and driving rain.
- Secure patio furniture, sun umbrellas—anything that can be picked up by strong winds and turned into a missile.
- Duct tape window edges at the sills and sides if you believe driving rain has a point of entry there.
- Watch for downed power lines in your yard.
- Have an interior room/hallway/

bathub cleared in case you need tornado coverage.

- Make a list of items by priority that must be moved higher should your home begin to flood, such as computers, valuable documents, photos, electronics.
- Put candles and matches in a high dry place.
- Do not sloop through your flooding neighborhood streets: fire ants, roaches and snakes are also looking for things to cling to, like a sloshing leg.
- Before evacuating, leave no wooden or other water-swelling drawers containing anything in place in the dresser. Move the drawer ANYWHERE, but don’t leave it in the dresser! When the water rises and the wooden dresser and drawer are soaked, the drawer frequently can not be opened. If the contents are clothes or paper, mildew and mold will take over before anything dries out and the drawer can be opened. A soaked drawer sitting on a flood soaked carpet is better than a soaked drawer captured in a dresser.

### Driving in high water

According to the **Red Cross, the NOAA, and FEMA**, vehicles are involved in half of all flood-related deaths.

One simple physics equation is all you need to remind yourself of how dangerous it is to attempt to drive or stay with your car in high water:

- When you are submerged deeply enough, the weight of the volume of water that you’re displacing is equal to your own

**See HURRICANE, next page**

## HURRICANE, con't from previous

weight. You become buoyant.

- So, when the weight of the water that is displaced by the submerged part of your car becomes equal to the weight of your car, your CAR becomes buoyant.
- Most cars will float in two feet of water.

### What to do while driving

- If you are driving through forceful winds or hail, get to a covered area, such as a parking garage if possible.
- If you are driving through water: assume that at some point during your journey, there will be impassable water. Consider pulling off to a gas station or parking lot that sits higher than the street until the rains slow or stop.
- If you are driving through streets flooded to curb height, keep your speed low and your foot on the accelerator to avoid water back-flowing into the exhaust pipe, which will stall you. If you drive a truck or SUV, curb your confidence and slow down so that you do not displace enough water to flood smaller cars. Then pull into a higher area off the street as soon as possible.
- If you approach an area that looks too deep, it probably is. Do NOT attempt to cross it. Look up the road so that you do not have to stop at the impasse and attempt to turn around which not only raises your chance of flooding, but also creates traffic chaos.
- If you do find yourself in increasingly deeper water, immediately roll down your window in case you need to swim out of it. If your windows are electric, they will fail

if the car stalls.

- If your car stalls in high water, abandon the car immediately. Two feet of water can sweep a car or SUV away. Climb to higher ground.

### When you see Dorothy grabbing Toto...

#### Tornado tips and clues

As of June 1, there have been 665 tornadoes reported in the US in 2009 (of which at least 420 were confirmed), with 21 confirmed fatalities.

*Most people are injured or killed not by the tornado itself, but by flying debris.*

Besides an obvious twisted funnel of wrath, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) lists the following signs and symptoms to look and listen for:

- Strong, persistent rotation in the cloud base.
- Whirling dust or debris on the ground under a cloud base—tornadoes sometimes have no funnel!
- Hail or heavy rain followed by either dead calm or a fast, intense wind shift. Many tornadoes are wrapped in heavy precipitation and can't be seen.
- **Day or night:** Loud, continuous roar or rumble which doesn't fade in a few seconds like thunder.
- **Night:** Small, bright, blue-green to white flashes at ground level near a thunderstorm (as opposed to silvery lightning up in the clouds). These mean power lines are being snapped by very strong wind, maybe a tornado.
- **Night:** *Persistent* lowering from the cloud base, illuminated or silhouetted by

lightning, especially if it is on the ground or there is a blue-green-white power flash underneath.

#### If you are in your home (and do not have a basement):

*In a house with no basement, a dorm, or an apartment:*

- Avoid windows. Go to the lowest floor, small center room (like a

bathroom or closet), under a stairwell, or in an interior hallway with no windows.

- Crouch as low as possible to the floor, facing down; and cover your head with your hands. A bath tub may offer a shell of partial protection.

- Even in an interior room, you should cover yourself with some sort of thick padding (mattress, blankets, etc.), to protect against falling debris in case the roof and ceiling fail.

- **Myth:** according to NOAA, it is a myth that you should open two windows to avoid a negative-pressure build-up (and house implosion.) They advise that you keep windows closed to avoid debris. They also say that most "explosions" occur from large debris crashing into structures.

*In an office building, hospital, nursing home or skyscraper:*

- Go directly to an enclosed, windowless area in the center of the building away from glass. Then, crouch down and cover your head.
- Interior stairwells are usually good places to take shelter, and if not crowded, allow you to get to a lower level quickly.
- Stay off the elevators; you could be trapped in them if the power is lost.

*If you are in your car:*

- Vehicles are extremely dangerous in a tornado. If the tornado is visible, far away, and the traffic is light, you may be able to drive out of its path by moving at right angles to the tornado.
- Otherwise, park the car as quickly and safely as possible, out of the traffic lanes. Get out and seek shelter in a sturdy building.

- As difficult as it may seem, leave your car if you are in the open country. Run to low ground away from any cars (which may roll over on you). Lie flat and face down, protecting the back of your head with your arms.

- Avoid seeking shelter under bridges which can create deadly traffic hazards while offering little protection from flying debris.

*This article is reprinted with permission from the Healthleader (<http://www.uthealthleader.org>), produced by The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.*



# San Antonio Native Bleeds Red, White and Blue

Story by Spc. Cory Grogan  
41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Master Sgt. John A. Uvalle of the Texas Inactive Ready Reserve has served in the military for 39 years and has undying love for his country.

This year, he will be serving on his fourth deployment with the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the Oregon



National Guard. It is a deployment that he volunteered to go on.

Sergeant Uvalle grew up in a difficult neighborhood on the Westside of San Antonio in a broken home.

"My mother, God rests her soul, with a 2nd grade education, did what she could to keep a roof over our head and food in our mouth, but like other fatherless children I grew up wild. I was getting into trouble with no discipline," explained Sergeant Uvalle. "I got into trouble one too many times, and by God's blessing one of the police officers who arrested me suggested 'if you like to fight why don't you go fight for your country and join the military?' That was the turning point in my life."

The discipline and camaraderie he got from the military helped him get rid of bad habits and gave him an understanding for what it is to be an American.

He also believes it helped save his life. "Most of the people I used to know are either dead, in prison or junkies," added Sergeant Uvalle.

He said that he serves his country because someone has had to pay for the freedom we enjoy as Americans since the time of the U.S. Revolution.

During his military career Sergeant Uvalle said he has had great times that include meeting the Jackson's with Michael Jackson, George Foreman, the Original Temptations and a man who served as a prisoner of war in Vietnam with John McCain.

He also said there have been difficult times that include having people he served with in Iraq lose their lives.

"I saw some of my brothers, who did great things in Iraq, pay the ultimate price, and I would hate to see us give up now," explained Sergeant Uvalle.

Before he dies, Sergeant Uvalle said he would like to meet the Commander in Chief and shake his hand.

"I have met generals and Medal of Honor recipients but to meet the president would be the ultimate reward."

Sergeant Uvalle mentioned that he is proud to be serving on a deployment again, and that he has been impressed with the Soldiers and leadership from the Oregon National Guard.

He said he will serve his country until he dies or gets kicked out of the military. The San Antonio native stands as an example of the American spirit that has made our Country great.

## Online services available for Air Guard members

ARLINGTON, Va., (7/1/09) — As a statutory tour or unit member of the Air National Guard, there are two main places to access online services, the Virtual Military Personnel Flight (vMPF) and the Virtual Personnel Center - Guard and Reserve (vPC-GR).

You can log onto vMPF and vPC-GR from any internet

enabled computer at any time during the day.

In vMPF, you can see your ribbons for precedence on your ribbon rack, view your data verification brief and update data in your record review. To access vMPF, go to <https://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/vs>.

In vPC-GR, you can request corrections to your federal awards and decorations, duty history and some service dates and submit a request to correct your retirement points if necessary. To access vPC-GR, go to <https://arpc.afrc.af.mil>.

If you have questions about personnel information or personnel online services, the Total Force Service Center (TFSC) is here to help. The TFSC isn't a building or an organization. As part of the Personnel Services Delivery Transformation effort, it's a concept to provide Airmen seamless access to personnel information, services and tools.

TFSC is a virtual connection of the Air Force's two personnel service organizations, the Air Force Personnel Center (AFPC) in San Antonio, Texas and the Air Reserve Personnel Center (ARPC) in Denver, Colo.

You can contact the TFSC 24 hours a day 7 days a week at 1-800-525-0102.

**Total Force Service Center**  
Single-point of entry for personnel information and services

**800-525-0102**

TFSC delivers personnel services to Active Duty Airmen, Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve and Civilian populations through a virtual connection of the Air Force's personnel service centers

- Provides a single access point for customer calls and minimizes call transfers
- Simplifies processes for Airmen to navigate through the personnel centers and get the personnel answers they need
- Provides consistent, accurate, and understandable personnel information to all
- Ensures all Airmen continue to receive quality personnel services and increases the overall efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery
- Provides seamless access to personnel information, services, and tools – anytime and from any location

# Financial Problems or PTSD Need Not Affect Security Clearance

**By Tamara Haire**  
**Army News Service**

WASHINGTON (July 8, 2009) -- With the nation in the throes of an economic downturn and entering the seventh year of overseas combat, some Soldiers and civilians are worried about their security clearance.

The stress of combat and the rise in foreclosures have some Soldiers wondering if their security clearance will be impacted.

"All Army personnel should understand that they can obtain counseling services for financial and mental health issues without undue concern of placing their security clearance status in jeopardy," said Col. Edward Fish, commander, U.S. Army Central Personnel Security Clearance Facility, known as the CCF.

Army leaders want to ensure Soldiers that the security clearance process is fair, equitable and comprehensive and the Army is taking steps to ensure it remains that way. Leading this effort is the deputy chief of staff, G-2, who is responsible for policy formulation, evaluation, and oversight of intelligence activities for the Department of the Army. This includes policy development and oversight of the security clearance process, to include oversight of the CCF.

The CCF reviews personnel security investigations to grant security clearances for Soldiers, civilian employees and contractor personnel. The CCF uses the national adjudicative guidelines to process security clearance requests. These guidelines outline the standard application of the process, which includes consideration of both favorable and unfavorable information, identify specific concerns, and highlight associated mitigating factors.

A bankruptcy or foreclosure will not automatically prevent one from obtaining or maintaining a security clearance, according to G-2 officials. They explain there are many conditions surrounding financial hardships that often mitigate security concerns.

The guideline for financial considerations focuses primarily on individuals who are financially overextended because they may be at risk of engaging in illegal acts to generate funds. For instance, financial guidelines consider "the conditions that resulted in the financial problem were largely beyond the person's control...and the individual acted responsibly under the circumstances." Adjudicators identify such conditions as mitigating circumstances.

For example, if an individual did not have financial problems in the past, yet was forced into foreclosure because of a permanent change of station, or PCS move, adjudicators would consider this a mitigating circumstance. However, if the individual has a history of not meeting financial obligations and now forecloses on a home, this would display a pattern of financial irresponsibility that cannot be easily mitigated, officials said.

Likewise, a bankruptcy will not automatically prevent obtaining a security clearance.

There are many other conditions surrounding financial hardships that often mitigate security concerns, officials said. About 98 percent of cases received by the CCF which involve financial issues were granted a security clearance. This trend has been consistent since 2005.

Individuals under financial duress are encouraged to contact their local Army Community Service or Military One Source to obtain financial counseling to determine how to best manage their debts.

In addition, Soldiers, civilians and contractors should not be forced to weigh the detrimental impacts of a possible loss of a security clearance against the choice of whether or not to seek mental health counseling or treatment, officials said.

Many Soldiers expressed an unwillingness to participate in behavioral or psychological health programs based on the perception that a "Yes" answer to the mental health question (Q21) on the U.S. Office of Personnel Management Standard Form 86 Questionnaire for National Security Positions would lead to denial, suspension or possible loss of a security clearance.

The OPM conducts the background investigations on Army personnel seeking a security clearance. The OPM ensures that investigations are conducted in a manner compliant with the revised Q21, which excludes the reporting of treatment related to adjustments from service in a military combat environment, such as post traumatic stress disorder, known as PTSD, or mild traumatic brain injury.

Executive Order 12968, Access to Classified Information states mental health counseling in and of itself is not a reason

**See CLEARANCE, next page**



**Sgt. Callen Weispenfennig (left), an occupational therapy assistant with the 785th Medical Company's Combat Stress Control Fitness Team, hands a patient's information file to Spc. Lindsey Gunning, a mental health specialist with the 785th Med. Co., at the Combat Stress Control Center, March 4, at Camp Liberty, Iraq.**



## CLEARANCE, from page 16

to revoke or deny a security clearance. Seeking support to address mental health issues demonstrates inner strength and embodies the Warrior Ethos, Army leaders have said.

Professional mental health counseling is not a threat to an individual's security clearance; rather it can be a positive factor in the security clearance process, officials said.

CCF's adjudicative history indicates that 99.98 percent of cases with psychological concerns obtained/retained their

security clearance eligibility. Most cases that resulted in a denial or revocation had other issues in addition to psychological concerns.

The current policy provides both adjudicators and commanders flexibility to allow individuals undergoing counseling to maintain their security clearance.

Leadership must make it a priority to educate Soldiers, civilians and contractors that acting responsibly with regard to indebtedness and seeking mental health counseling is a positive course of action and will not result in the denial, loss or suspension of a security clearance, G2

officials said.

Ultimately, the well being and safety of Soldiers, civilians and contractors, especially those in the demobilization process, is of great concern to Army leaders, and personnel must not be discouraged from seeking assistance, Fish said.

Communication from leaders is key, Colonel Fish said. He added that Army personnel need to know that their chain of command, fellow Soldiers and coworkers will support their decision to seek the proper help for both mental health and financial concerns.

## afterdeployment.org Explores Behavioral Health Information

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The U.S. Army, with oversight by TRICARE Management Activity (TMA), has created an interactive Web site that allows service members and their families to explore behavioral health information. The site launched Aug. 5, 2008 at <http://www.afterdeployment.org>, and development continues.

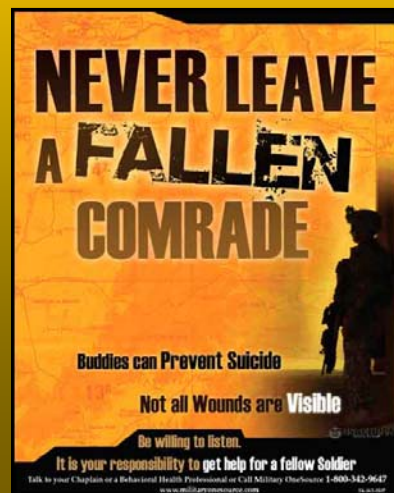
"Afterdeployment.org serves as an interactive, self-help solution to assist with behavioral health needs following deployment," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director, TMA.

Authorized by legislation, the site is a pilot project to help service members deal with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and other behavioral health conditions.

Visitors to afterdeployment.org will notice the user-friendly environment. By clicking on a video link play button, users can watch veterans, spouses and other family members tell real-life stories about how war changed their lives and how they dealt with the demands of readjusting after combat deployment.

In addition to these first-person accounts, a tool bar on the left side of the Web site links beneficiaries to educational topics that include: Getting Help, Check How You're Doing, Staying Healthy Where You Live, Stories from Home and Far Away, and Links, Books, Blogs & Pods. In each of these areas, additional links offer detailed information on chosen subjects.

A user-friendly environment is not all that matters to service members. Privacy is of paramount concern, and users don't have to register to access the site. Afterdeployment.org provides confidential education on sensitive issues such as stress and triggers, conflict at work, reconnecting with family and friends, moods, anger, sleep, substance abuse, stress management, kids and deployment, spiritual guidance, living with physical injuries and health and wellness.



*Until Every One Comes Home*

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# News Briefs

## Texas Trains Wisconsin

Story by Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada  
Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

Volk Field, Wisconsin — (19 Jul 2009) As part of Operation Joint Patriot the 272nd Engineering and Installation Squadron deployed 39 personnel to conduct Engineering and Installation projects as well as critically needed training to Wisconsin and Texans being Texans, staked their claim with the Texas flag.

The Large Management Team consisting of the 272 EIS, 210 EIS, 217 EIS, 220 EIS from Savannah, Ga., the 214 EIS from Bangor, Maine and the 243 EIS from Alpena, Maine are managing projects such as giant voice installation, network cabling installations, augmenting combat com with live UAV video feed to Volk Field and upgrading the base-wide network infrastructure.

Lt. Col. Mark S. Eubanks, 272 EIS commander, said: "In addition to standard engineering and installation workload, the Texas J6 has provided the 272 EIS with a JISCC Lite package that our electronics troops have been training on throughout the two weeks. This will allow the 272 EIS to provide emergency communications in support of J6 contingency requirements."

He continued: "During initial stand up, training was being provided on our Med-Pro (Poletruck) and we just happened to have a flag with us and in Texas tradition the flag is Texas sized. A second flag was kidnapped by Wisconsin locals but after a successful CSAR mission it was retrieved and is being



used to mark drop zones for our upcoming helicopter medevac training."

To Brig. Gen. John Nichols, Commander Texas Air National Guard, he wrote: "Your Texans are leading the way once again."

## Texas National Guard Air Crews On Standby For Wildfires

By Sgt 1st Class Jon Soucy  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va., (17 July 2009) — National Guard helicopter crews in two states are standing by ready to assist local firefighters as wildfires continue to scorch parts of Texas and Nevada this week.

Texas Army National Guard Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment assisted firefighters recently with containing one of the large wildfires burning near Austin, said Army Col. William Meehan, spokesman for the Texas National Guard.

According to National Guard Bureau reports, Texas Guard helicopter crews have already logged more than 17 hours of

flight time assisting firefighters since beginning to fly fire suppression missions July 10.

The Texas ARNG has staged two Blackhawks in San Antonio and another two in Austin to further assist with firefighting efforts if requested.

The National Interagency Fire Center has reported that about 3,500 acres have already burned in Texas and Gov. Rick Perry has issued an imminent disaster proclamation for 168 Texas counties because of the dry conditions and possibility for wildfires to spread.

In Nevada, CH-47 Chinook crews from the Nevada Army National Guard remain on standby as two separate wildfires continue to burn a few miles from each other near Hallelujah Junction.

Officials with the Sierra Front Interagency Fire Center said that both fires have burned about 3,000 acres. As of Thursday afternoon, heavy smoke has slowed traffic on highways through the area but no roads have been closed and the fires do not pose an immediate threat to structures or populated areas.

Earlier this week, the Oklahoma Army National Guard responded to wildfires in Major County with one Black Hawk helicopter. About 50,000 acres were burned in that fire with damage to two homes being reported.

All Oklahoma National Guard personnel have returned to home station and the response mission has been reported to the National Guard Bureau as closed.

# This Month in Military History: August

**August 3, 1916** Nogales, Arizona — Members of the 2nd Connecticut Infantry conduct training maneuvers along the Mexican Border while guarding it against incursions by Mexican bandits. The trouble started in March 1916 when Mexican bandit leader Pancho Villa led his men on a raid against the town of Columbus, NM. A number of civilians were murdered in the raid. President Woodrow Wilson dispatched most of the small American Army into northern Mexico to kill or capture Villa and his men. To protect the border and stop further raids he mobilized 158,664 Guardsmen from all 48 states and had them move to camps in Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. Besides being a security presence on the border this mobilization allowed the Guard to conduct large-scale field exercises not normally available in two weeks of annual training each summer. This was to prove beneficial on many levels as World War I was then raging in Europe and America's Army (including the Guard) needed to prepare in case the nation was drawn into the fighting. While Villa was never caught, tensions eased with Mexico and the Regular Army came home. This allowed many Guard units to return to their states and the men to be released from active duty. For the 2nd Connecticut this occurred in November 1916. However, the regiment was remobilized in February 1917 as America prepared to go to war with Germany. Many of the lessons and skills learned by the Guardsmen on the border proved of great value when the men of the 2nd Connecticut, redesignated as the 102nd Infantry, 26th Division, fought in six battles in France in 1918.



*Above- Members of the 2nd Connecticut Infantry on a road march through the rugged terrain of Arizona during the regiment's Mexican Border service.  
Painting by Donna Neary for the National Guard Bureau Heritage Series*

**August 15, 1944** Southern France — Operation DRAGOON, the Allied invasion staged on the French Riviera was conducted by three American infantry divisions making an assault landing between Nice and Marseilles. Two of these divisions, the 36th from Texas and 45th from Arizona, Colorado and Oklahoma, were Guard units largely composed of combat veterans having seen hard fighting in Italy. The troops met little resistance and quickly moved inland to secure the road between Cannes and Frejus. Over the next few weeks they would drive north and by early September link up with American forces moving out of Normandy into central and eastern

*Right- Medics of the 36th Infantry Division render first aid to civilians injured by the allied bombardment during the assault landings on the Riviera. They are all seeking shelter behind an American M-4 Sherman tank modified into the "DD" configuration allowing it to "swim" ashore using the propellers shown.  
National Archives and Records Administration*



**BRIGADIER GENERAL JOHN C.L. SCRIBNER**

**TEXAS MILITARY FORCES MUSEUM**

**BUILDING 6, CAMP MABRY**

**AUSTIN, TEXAS**

**HOURS OF OPERATION:**

**WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY - 10:00AM TO 4:00 PM**

**MONDAY AND TUESDAY - CLOSED**



*Spc. Raymond Gerth goes over mission details with Texas Adjutant General Jose Mayorga. (Photos by Spc. David Emerson)*



*Spc. Alfredo Gutierrez, First Sgt. Richard Allbee, and Texas Adjutant General Jose Mayorga share a laugh.*