

# The DISPATCH



Touch Down in Texas 5

Making History Again 10

TXSG Change of Command 13





## 4 Guard Members Visit Veterans at Parson House

Soldiers of the 36 Infantry Division Special Troops Battalion took some time recently to pay tribute and celebrate with military veterans, here, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Military Appreciation barbecue at the Parson House Assisted Living Retirement home.

## 6 Competing for the Ultimate “Tap Out”

Soldiers wearing flip-flops and inside-out uniforms stripped of their Velcro name tapes, ranks and patches gathered for the 2009 Texas Army National Guard Combatives Tournament at Camp Mabry August 9.

## 11 Cadets Rise to Challenge in Academy

The Youth Challenge Program sponsored by the Texas National Guard, provides second chances to young people in Texas every semester.

## 12 Texas Governor Visits Troops in Afghanistan

Texas Governor Rick Perry stepped away from the warmth of the Texas hill country to hot and arid Afghanistan to visit and thank U.S. troops and members of the Texas Military Forces, July 20 and 21.

## 15 36th Sustainment Bde. Ready to Deploy

The “Rawhide” brigade, as it is called, is part of the Texas National Guard’s 36th Infantry Division and will be responsible for providing Soldiers all over southern Iraq with the supplies and materials necessary to perform their mission.



**Cover— Maj. General Jose S. Mayorga receives the Texas State Guard flag from Lt. Gen. Christopher J. Powers during the Change of Command ceremony. (Texas Military Forces photo by Sgt. Maj. Bob Dashman)**

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## *Veteran Summer Sports Clinic*

The Second National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic will take place in San Diego on Sept. 20-25, 2009. The National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic promotes rehabilitation by teaching adaptive adventure sports to veterans with significant physical or psychological disabilities. Events such as sailing, surfing, kayaking, cycling, track and field will be offered. For more information about the Summer Sports Clinic or to request an application, contact Tristan Heaton at (858) 642-6426 or visit VA's 2009 Veterans Summer Sports Clinic webpage at <http://www.summersportsclinic.va.gov/>.

## *AF Launches Social Network Outreach*

The Air Force Office of Scientific Research (AFOSR) recently launched two new pages on Facebook and Twitter. To follow AFOSR on each site, type "AFOSR" in the search box on each page. The new AFOSR Facebook and Twitter pages will provide real-time information on AFOSR stories, accomplishments, scientific breakthroughs and events. In addition, postings will include announcements and deadlines for funding opportunities and award programs worth millions of dollars. To learn more about AFOSR, visit [www.afosr.af.mil](http://www.afosr.af.mil).

## *Tuition Aid for Spouses*

New tuition aid is available for spouses in the form of a Military Spouse Career Advancement Account (MyCAA). The Department of Defense-funded program is for spouses pursuing "portable careers." Portable careers are flexible in nature and can be performed just about anywhere servicemembers and their families are stationed. They include careers in business administration, education or health services. Military spouses of active-duty or active reserve members can apply for up to \$3,000 a year for college tuition for two years through the Military OneSource website at [www.militaryonesource.com](http://www.militaryonesource.com).

## *Spouse Quick-Hire Rule Begins in September*

Under a personnel rule that takes effect Sept. 11, some military spouses could be quickly hired for federal jobs without going through the usual competitive process. The new hiring preference guidelines are posted in the Federal Register under the title: "Noncompetitive Appointment of Certain Military Spouses." Visit <http://edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-19340.pdf> for more information.

## *Museum Launches Podcast Audio Tours*

The National Museum of the U.S. Air Force launched a free museum tour podcast on their website that gives a virtual tour of the museum. Once the visitor has subscribed to the podcast, they're encouraged to download it to an MP3 player and bring it to the museum during their next visit. Tour segments for the Early Years Gallery and Air Power Gallery are now available on the podcast with the rest of the galleries coming online throughout 2010. In the coming months, visitors will be able to click on a hotspot on a map and see a 360 degree view of that area of the museum. Visit the National Museum of the U.S. Air Force website at <http://www.nationalmuseum.af.mil/podcasts/index.asp> to explore the museum tour podcast.

## *Blog Offers Support to Families*

The American Forces Press Service launched a military blog called "Family Matters" dedicated to helping military families deal with the challenges and situations unique to the military lifestyle. The blog features tips from experts, useful resources and timely responses to comments and questions. Upcoming topics include back-to-school tips, education benefits, dealing with deployments, child care and more. Read "Family Matters" at <http://afps.dodlive.mil/>.

# The DISPATCH

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# 36th Inf. Div. Reaches Out to Local Veterans

Story and photo by Spc. Mary B. McDaniel

36th Infantry Div. Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas- Soldiers of the 36 Infantry Division Special Troops Battalion took some time recently to pay tribute and celebrate with military veterans, here, at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Military Appreciation barbecue at the Parson House Assisted Living Retirement home. Among the Soldiers in attendance were Command Sgt. Maj. Donna M. Balderston, Division Special Troops Battalion, and Division Special Troops Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Doug DeVries. Also in attendance were Veterans, their families, and local military supporters.

The barbecue was in honor of those veterans and Soldiers that have or are serving in the military Armed Forces. The event consists of fun games for the children, music and meet and greets between veterans and Soldiers. The 36th Infantry Division was there in support of a community outreach program put together by members of the 36th Infantry Division Special Troops Battalion (DSTB).

"This is great that we are able to interact and get involved with the community," Command Sergeant Major Balderston said of the event.

Lt. Col. DeVries, Commander of the Division Special Troops Battalion (DSTB), was asked to say a few words to the veterans and their family members.

"It is an honor to be here with you and share this day of appreciation." Colonel DeVries said.

Thereafter, Soldiers of the 36th Infantry Division gave a brief introduction about why they joined the service. Michael McGee, manager of the Parson House, presented the commander with a symbol of appreciation for the participation in this year's annual event.

Mr. McGee organized the barbecue to allow former World War II Veterans and current Soldiers to come together and share their experiences in the military.

When asked why he decided to put the barbecue together Mr. McGee explains his intentions.

"It's just a great way to honor Soldiers, Veterans and their families." Mr. McGee said.

The Military Appreciation Barbecue started five years ago and Mr. McGee intends to continue having the event for

years to come.

Cpl. Karl Clarence Riewe, a Soldier in the 36th Infantry Division, and a former Marine, comes from a long line of service members and has been a tradition in his family. Joe Mac Jester, Corporal Riewe's grandfather, served with the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Division as a tanker.

"I started the tradition. I was the first of my family to join the Marine Corp." Mr. Jester said.

He said being drafted to go overseas was not a great experience for him, nevertheless, he enjoyed being in the Marine Corps.

Ivan Malcolm Jester, Corporal Riewe's stepfather was a former Marine and his stepbrother who is now deceased, joined thereafter.

Corporal Riewe often visits with his grandfather, Along with former members of the Armed Forces.

"It's nice to be able to visit with my grandfather today, we really had fun the last time we were here, and it was some good times," he said.

The majority of the residents in the Parson House are military veterans.



Lt. Col. Doug DeVries trades stories with a Parson House veteran at the 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Military Participation Barbecue.



# Touch Down in Texas: The 56th IBCT Comes Home

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

Biggs Field, El Paso, Texas (8 Aug 2009) – Bone-tired, bleary-eyed but jubilant to be one step closer to home, Texas Army National Guard Soldiers deplaned in El Paso Saturday after a year-long deployment in Iraq.

One hundred and seven of the 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers finally arrived at Biggs Army Air Field after their flight had been delayed three times, and while some would have preferred to go straight to bed, every Soldier knows that inprocessing is a tedious but necessary process and none of them complained when they were asked to divide into several lines.

Mr. Carlos Escobar, Deputy S-1, knows all about the process. He deployed with the 56th the first time around when he was seriously injured and his right arm had to be surgically repaired with plates and pins. He received a medical discharge from the Texas Army National Guard, and is now employed in the Mobilization & Deployment Brigade as a civilian.

He said: “I have a vested interest that Soldiers who return from Iraq or Afghanistan are processed as quickly and painlessly as possible. I have had to do this in the past, and I know how tired these Soldiers are. We have this down to a science now.”

He explained: “They turn in their weapons, go through a quick and initial medical screening; receive their Welcome Home briefing followed by a good night’s sleep. Tomorrow,” he said, “they will start approximately five days of more extensive medical reviews, and other outbriefs.”

But before the Soldiers went through the inprocessing lines, Maj. Gen. Eddy Spurgin, Commander 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and the Oklahoma National Guard Band were there at the bottom of the aircraft stairs, to give Col Samuel L. Henry and his troops a befitting welcome.

The band leader explained that they were performing their annual training in Texas to accommodate the multiple inbound flights because the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division Band was deployed.

Chief Warrant Officer Scott Sand-

ers, Band Leader 145<sup>th</sup> Army Band of the Oklahoma National Guard, said: “We have 44 total band members, 36 are here today,” and he said: “We just came over the bridge to stay here through Friday of next week. We will cover another incoming flight on Wednesday and plan to have a Dixieland band when the troops arrive.”

Once inside the terminal, Sgt. Toni Deasen, in charge of awards for the Brigade and Battalions, Spc Lekita Hurd, Radio Transmitter Operator, from Austin, Texas, and Sgt. Ashlee Michalke, Intelligence Analyst, from Hotwells, Texas sat together and waited for the general to speak. They were just three of the approximately dozen female Soldiers returning on this flight, and they all agreed: “We have been treated just like the guys and we would not want it any other way,” and added: “but it is good - really good to be back in Texas because it maybe humid over here, but at least it is not tan.”

Sergeant Deason, from Ohio, volunteered to deploy with the Texas National Guard for the second time, “because,” she said: “They are really good guys, and,” she said with a grin: “I don’t hold it against them that they are Texans much.”

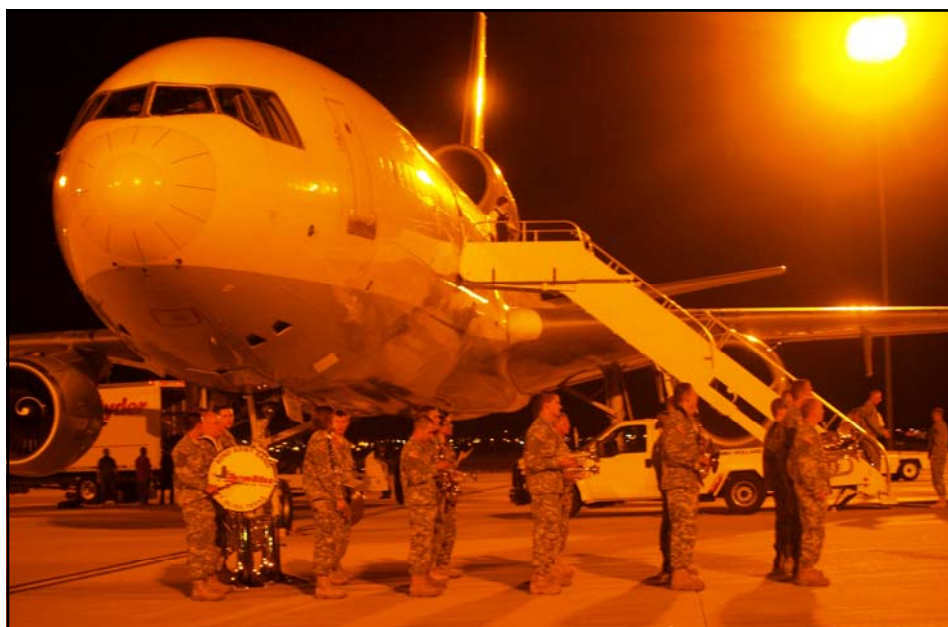
Staff Sgt. Jason Kendrick, Unit

Public Affairs Representative, and constant point of contact in Iraq for the past year, said: “I am very tired, but we had some time to relax in Bangor, Maine and at Fort Hood, but I will definitely be happy to be back in Fort Worth soon.”

When it was time for the general to welcome his troops home General Spurgin said: “I have been waiting for you guys for the past two days, which evoked a ripple of laughter through the ranks,” and continued: “I can’t tell you how much it means to me to see you here. I want you to know from the bottom of my heart how proud I am of you. I thought about you everyday. I know you are tired, so I’ll make it brief. God Bless each and everyone of you and God Bless your families.”

And finally, Colonel Henry said: “Soldier accountability is number one, go through this process just like you would while in Iraq. Do not let your speed overcome your accuracy while you are here. The First Sergeant and I will be working on a little get-together in a little German restaurant,” and after a final “Hooah,” the Soldiers were dismissed to enjoy a meal and get their first good night’s sleep on Texas soil.

A ceremony is planned for these Soldiers and their families, once all 3,500 Soldiers have returned home.



**The 145th Army Band of the Oklahoma National Guard welcomes home the Soldiers of the Texas Army National Guard 56th Brigade Combat Team .**



# Texas Soldiers Compete For the Ultimate “Tap Out”

Story by Master Sgt. Brenda Benner  
Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

CAMP MABRY, Texas – Soldiers wearing flip-flops and inside-out uniforms stripped of their Velcro name tapes, ranks and patches gathered for the 2009 Texas Army National Guard Combatives Tournament at Camp Mabry August 9. The double elimination competition showcased the talents of TXARNG Soldiers in six different weight classes from across the state.

A total of 31 competitors representing 11 different battalions hit the mats for their exhausting hand-to-hand combat matches. Scoring was tallied for both individual and team placements. Points were awarded for various holds, but getting an opponent to “tap out” was a guaranteed winning performance.

“Combatives is one of our basic 40 Warrior Tasks,” said Master Sgt. Geof-



**Top right-** Staff Sgt. Michael Tienda, 49<sup>th</sup> Information Operations Group, is launched upside down during his combatives match.

**Above-** Staff Sgt. Rudy Robles, top, a military police instructor with the 136<sup>th</sup> Regional Training Institute, is pushed away during his combatives match. Robles earned 3<sup>rd</sup> place in the heavyweight division.

**Bottom right-** Staff Sgt. Ricardo Perez, top, of the 112<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, battles Sgt. Richard McCarthy of the 162<sup>nd</sup> Area Medical Support Company.

frey Dennis. “We want our Soldiers to think like warriors so they will not hesitate to close with and destroy their enemy.”

The fundamentals of Army Combatives are based on Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. With increased skill levels, Soldiers incorporate different forms of martial arts such as Judo, Kali, Boxing, Muay Thai and wrestling.

One of the tournament’s referees, Staff Sgt. Neale Alanis, of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, is a level III combatives instructor. He said most troops are not familiar with hand-to-hand combat methods and the specialized training he provides before their deployments is a valuable skill.

“There are many circumstances when clearing buildings that someone is within barrel distance,” explained Sergeant Alanis. “We are to use non-lethal methods whenever we are not in imminent danger. Our training helps us subdue others. Preparing for this tournament provided a goal for everyone to train even harder than before.”

The tournament was a unique experience for Spc. Angela Johnson, a food specialist with Dallas-based Company B, 636<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion. She had her first combatives training last summer and said she felt empowered by what she learned.

“We are matched up according to weight classes, not just females against females,” said Specialist Johnson. “I think



all women should know self defense for every day protection. At first my friends thought I was crazy training for this ... then they started saying ‘you go, girl!’ when they changed their minds.”

Family members, friends and fellow troops yelled encouragement from their ringside seats as the combatants battled for the perfect takedowns and throws to execute their triangle chokes, cross collar chokes or straight armbar control positions.

Staff Sgt. Ricardo Perez of Hous-

**See COMBATIVES, next page**





**COMBATIVES, from previous page**

ton-based C troop, 1 /112th Cavalry Regiment, 36th Inf. Div. had his own cheering section with him as his wife, Esmeralda, and their two young daughters watched his every move.

“I love to watch his matches ... it’s exciting,” she said. “I’m so proud of him. He usually wins something when he competes.”

Once again, Sergeant Perez earned a medal for his efforts. He placed 3rd in the light heavyweight class.

Many times, match winners had only moments to rest before facing another challenger. The competitors were drenched in sweat and the mats glistened every time someone found themselves face-down to their opponent.

Brig. Gen. Joyce Stevens, Commander of the Texas Army National Guard, watched several of the hard-fought matches and later returned to present the individual medals and the team trophies.

Before the ceremony, she thanked and acknowledged the competitors, the coaches and the instructors for their extra dedication toward developing their combative skills. She also gave credit to the crucial family members who support their warriors during their time away from home while training and competing.

Welterweight 2nd place finisher, Staff Sgt. Bryan Purcell, a military police instructor with the 136th Regional Training Institute, put his special day into perspective.

“I’ve never received an award before that I felt I truly deserved,” said Sergeant Purcell. But this one is different, I earned it. I’ve never received anything from a general before and now when it happens I’m wearing my flip-flops.”

General Stevens recognized the awards presentation was different from any of her previous ceremonies considering the unusual, yet appropriate “uniforms.”

“Everyone fought really hard today,” replied General Stevens. “They deserve to receive their awards in a more relaxed manner.”

The following is merely a highlight of the final results:

Teams – 1st place, Combat Skills Training Evaluation Battalion (CSTEBn). 2nd place, 136th Regional Training Institute (RTI). 3rd place, 71st Theater Information Operations Group (TIOG)

Individuals – 1st heavyweight, Spc. Aaron Wood (CSTEBn). 1st light heavyweight, Staff Sgt. Chris Wagner (136th MEB). 1st cruiserweight, Sgt. Omar Hernandez (CSTEBn). 1st middleweight, Staff Sgt. Michael Tienda (71st TIOG). 1st welterweight, Spc. Michael Urias (536th BSB). 1st lightweight, Spc. George Sanchez (3-141st Inf. Bn.).

Staff Sgt. Justin Frasier, the head instructor for the TXARNG Combatives Program, said he was impressed with the skill levels of everyone who signed up for the competition and especially those of the beginners. He said the state’s program looks strong and encourages all Soldiers to learn combatives whenever possible.



*Top left- Staff Sgt. Ricardo Perez, top, of the 112<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment, 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, battles Sgt. Richard McCarthy of the 162<sup>nd</sup> Area Medical Support Company.*

*Above- Brigadier General Joyce Stevens, Commander of the Texas Army National Guard, presents the 2<sup>nd</sup> place team trophy to 136<sup>th</sup> Regional Training Institute members, left to right, Staff Sgt. Rudy Robles, Staff Sgt. Jake Ascher and Staff Sgt. Bryan Purcell. (All photos by Master Sgt. Brenda Benner.)*

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# Battle Mind, Mental Health : A mind does not turn on a dime

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

Brownsville, Texas (30 Jul, 2009) -- The lecture was a first, the topic was not, but a group of Operation Lonestar medical professionals in attendance here today, welcomed the opportunity to learn from a well-respected state leader in the Department of Veterans Affairs about mental health conditions that are misunderstood by many, and sometimes denied by people affected by them.

The lecture by Dr. Stephen L. Holliday, Ph.D., ABPP-CN, Mental Health Liaison Officer, VA Heart of Texas Health Care Network, was titled: *What Texas Military Providers Need to Know About Mental Health Issues Facing Returning Service Members and Their Families.*

Healthcare providers were in Brownsville for Operation Lonestar, an annual medical emergency preparedness exercise, providing community health services in some of the poorest regions in Texas.

"I saw a dedicated group of healthcare professionals who enjoyed what they were doing and treating folks who otherwise could not afford health care or

mental care," said Dr. Holliday and added: "They were doing a great job. I am very impressed with the operation."

While diabetes is the main health issue in the Rio Grande Valley, mental health, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and Traumatic Brain Injury are of concern to military leaders. Commanders have long recognized that health concerns may emerge weeks or months after a member of the Guard or Reserves returns to civilian life, and so they have turned to the VA and Dr. Holliday for help.

"First of course, you have to recognize the classic symptoms of PTSD," said Dr. Holliday, "It is the re-experiencing of traumatic events such as intrusive thoughts or nightmares, or the avoidance of things that remind you of the traumatic experience. Sometimes it may also manifest itself as hyper arousal, such as inability to sleep, irritability, and outbursts of anger."

He acknowledged that by its very culture, the military had long fostered a sense of secrecy concerning mental health problems and a tendency for members to deny or conceal their symptoms. Because of that, the Walter Reed Army Institute of

Research Army's Battlemind Program was born <http://www.battlemind.org>

The program encourages the Soldier or Airman to talk to a buddy, maintain or regain emotional control, be aware of hyper vigilance in self and others; it promotes non-defensive driving versus aggressive driving, and teaches targeted versus inappropriate aggression.

He added, "There is still a huge stigma in seeking mental health treatment,

**See BATTLE MIND, next page**



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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.



**BATTLE MIND, from previous page**

and the VA recognizes that. Some of the best ways of approaching that is for leadership to acknowledge that they are having some of these problems as well and that *they* are talking to somebody at the vet center, VA or other agencies involved in Partners Across Texas / TEXVET [www.texvet.com](http://www.texvet.com).”

“The truth is,” he added: “that PTSD is probably a normal reaction to a very abnormal situation. You cannot rev up the nervous system that much that long and expect it to turn off on a dime when you get home.

In wars past,” he explained, “we thought that to have PTSD a Soldier or Airman had to have had a particularly traumatic experience, for example see a buddy die. In this war it is different, because every time you get on the road in a convoy, you are at risk and you never know whether it was a pile of trash or an IED you were driving by.

What I am most excited about, he said, “is the Evidence Based Psychotherapies that VA is rolling out nationally, such as Prolonged Exposure and Cognitive Processing Therapies. The VA’s Uniform Mental Health Care Package specifies what treatments have to be available to all veterans and these treatments are included.

As in every treatment,” he said, some patients get better a lot, some get better a little, and some do not get better at all with these types of therapies, but you don’t know until you try and apply it correctly. It is up to the veteran. Some just want medication, others just want therapy and yet another patient wants to try both. It is patient centered care. We don’t tell them you have to get this or that treatment.”

The vastness of Texas with its many outlying areas has resulted in yet another way of providing patient centered care. “The VA has purchased mobile clinics that will be deployed in two ways,” Dr. Holliday said. “The Vet Centers will have a separate mobile clinic that deploys to this certain little town on a certain day of the week and park in the VFW parking lot so that Vet Centers can offer that store-front counseling. The other way of reaching patients is with a mobile primary care clinic that will be deployed in the lower Rio Grande Valley. And,” he said, we have the tele-health link to bring the specialty provider to the patient via teleconferencing equipment. Reaching the veterans in the rural areas is certainly our biggest challenge.

Also,” he said, “VAs across the country are experimenting with home-based video phones, where a little monitoring

device is plugged into your phone-line and the veteran is then able to receive evidence based treatments at home. This,” he emphasized” is at no cost to the veteran.” We are also doing much more telephone outreach to our veterans. If you saw a mental care provider for intensive treatment for a while, and something comes up later where you need to talk to the doctor, the veteran has that opportunity, instead of driving in for an appointment.

To maintain a high level of care, the VA initiated quality performance measures several years ago. “A group of experts and field advisory personnel, “ Dr. Holliday” said: “developed a system that asked: What is the best care for this disorder or what is the best way to treat it and came up with performance measures and targets to ensure that VA is providing it. Some of these performance measures,” he admits,” are very difficult to meet, because veterans are a mobile population and we cannot always do the follow-up but we continue to strive to meet the standards of care. VA now has hundreds of performance measures in place to ensure we are providing the most scientifically-sound care available, and we hold VA staff accountable for meeting these quality standards every day.”

Dr. Holliday is also excited about a new research consortium called “Strong Star” being conducted by Dr. Allen Peterson, who received a large DoD research grant to study treatments for returning OEF and OIF troops with mental health issues. The center is in San Antonio, but the research is also conducted at Fort Hood, Brooke Army Medical Center, and Wilford Hall Medical Center. I expect great things from this research.”

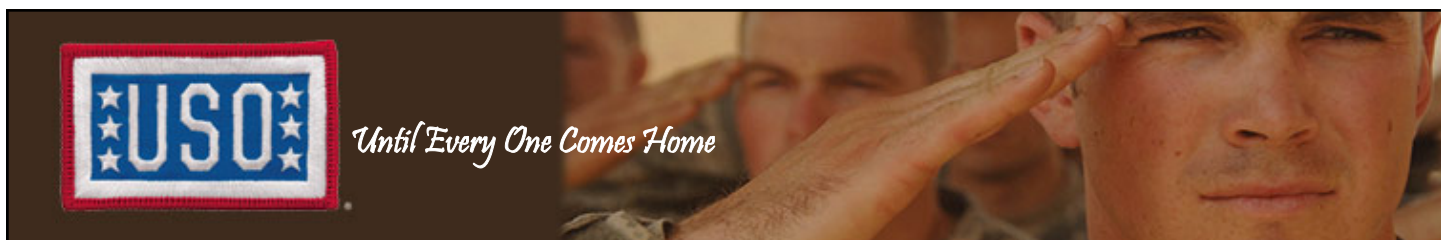
Dr. Holliday’s office is in San Antonio, a couple of blocks from the VA Medical Center and when asked whether there was anything he would like to add, he said: “We have been dedicated to veterans from every war; caring for today’s new veterans demands innovation, dedication, and continued research. We owe that to every Soldier, Sailor, Airman and Marine. This is not your father’s VA anymore.”

Dr. Holliday’s entire lecture is available on our web: [http://www.texasnationalguard.us/pdf\\_2/dr\\_holiday.pdf](http://www.texasnationalguard.us/pdf_2/dr_holiday.pdf)

Visit Partners Across Texas at: [www.texvet.com](http://www.texvet.com), or dial: 1-800-273-TALK. For emergencies, call 211

For information on the Army’s Battlemind Program, visit: <http://www.battlemind.org>

Some portions of Dr. Holliday’s lecture were prepared by: Miliken, Auchterlonie & Hoge (2007). JAMA 298:2141-2148



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# One More Chance To Make History: A Texas National Guard unit has orders to go to Iraq and help bring the war to an end.

By **Lindsay Wise**  
*Houston Chronicle (Reprinted by permission)*

*Editor's note: This is the first in a yearlong series of stories documenting the historic overseas deployment of the Texas Army National Guard's 72nd Brigade, based in Houston.*

Next to maps of natural gas pipelines and processing plants lining the wall of Mark Gregory's high-rise office in downtown Houston hangs a small framed picture that seems out of place.

The color print depicts grim-faced GIs wading toward the coast of Italy in 1943 as shells explode in the sea around them.

It's a subtle clue to Gregory's dual identity: The 43-year-old manager at a midstream energy company is one of hundreds of citizen-Soldiers in the Houston area who serve in the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Texas Army National Guard.

Headquartered at Heuer Armory on Westheimer Parkway, the brigade traces its lineage to the unit illustrated on the wall of Gregory's office. Now its Soldiers are poised to make history once again. The entire brigade has orders to mobilize this fall for what is projected to be the largest single deployment of Texas Army National Guard troops since World War II. About 3,500 Soldiers expect to participate in the yearlong mission, spending nine months overseas, most likely in Iraq.

They're slated to arrive in the Middle East at a crucial time as Iraqis prepare for national elections early next year, and the U.S. draws down nearly two thirds of its forces in the country by August 2010. An agreement the Bush administration signed with the Iraqi government last year stipulates that all U.S. troops must be out of Iraq by the end of 2011. The significance is not

lost on the brigade's commander, Col. Mark Campsey.

"I think we will look back and historians will tell these Soldiers they served at a time when history was made," said Colonel Campsey, a 45-year-old Texas Tech graduate who lives in Richmond with his wife, son and daughter. "I believe as Iraq begins to stand on its own, if we can create stability, and if Iraq is transferred to self-governance, that is, in my mind, a turning point in that part of the world."

It's still too early to know for sure what the brigade's mission will be. The unit they're supposed to replace has been assigned to security in the Green Zone and detainee operations south of the capital city, but Colonel Campsey said his troops could be shifted to different areas or tasks within Iraq or even redirected to Afghanistan as operations there intensify. They're training to be ready for anything.

"We'll do the heavy lifting," Colonel Campsey said. "We'll go do that wherever we're asked, we'll do it better than anyone else, and we'll come home."

Since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, the National Guard has played an increasingly important combat role beyond its primary duty as a reserve force called up in emergencies. As of last year, the Guard made up about 7 percent of American troops in Iraq and 15 percent in Afghanistan.

## A new life

Whenever a Guard brigade like the 72nd is tapped for deployment, thousands of ordinary teachers, doctors, students and businesspeople must uproot their lives.

To Colonel Gregory, a married father of two little girls, the deployment means leaving the polished glass and steel world of a skyscraper for the discomfort and danger of a war zone. He'll ride to work in a Humvee instead of a minivan, and trade his polo shirts and slacks for camo and Kevlar.

Departure is still months away, but Colonel Gregory's preparation already has begun. At work, he and his bosses are mulling over which employees will serve as his temporary replacements. Earlier this month, he boarded a bus with other local Guard troops to Austin, where they underwent physicals and psychological evaluations, and updated their wills and power of attorney.

## 'A desire to contribute'

Colonel Gregory knew a tour in Iraq or Afghanistan was possible when he signed his enlistment papers in 2005, the day before his 40th birthday. He and his wife, Claire, did a lot of soul searching before Gregory entered the recruiting office.

"It's really hard to sum up, just a desire to contribute more than anything," Colonel Gregory said. "Once the idea got into my head, I couldn't really shake it. The Guard was perfect in that I didn't have to make a complete break in life, that I didn't have to say, 'OK I'm going to be a Soldier now, and stop being an engineer.' This was an opportunity to do both."

On a blazing hot afternoon earlier this month, Spc. Antonio Hernandez huddled under a tree with three other Soldiers, peering at satellite images that showed a cluster of buildings in a sandy clearing. The 24-year-old Houston native was practicing urban operations at Camp Swift in Bastrop, about 130 miles from Houston. In the civilian world, he's a shift manager for a security company, but for now he's the leader of Charlie Team, in charge

See **HISTORY**, next page





## **HISTORY, from previous page**

of planning how to safely search a known insurgent hideout.

"Soon as he kicks that door, come right around like this," Specialist Hernandez said. He pivoted on his heel, clutching a clipboard in one hand and extending the other in front of him like a weapon. "What I'm going to do is come in and go that way. She's going to stay in the middle, and you stay right by the door."

A few minutes later, his teammates would take on instructors armed with smoke grenades and rifles loaded with blanks. It's part of pre-mobilization training every Soldier with the 72nd will go through by the end of this summer.

"Most of the stuff we're doing here right now, for me it's review, so I'm trying to help some of the other Soldiers out, too, you know, give 'em some pointers," said Specialist Hernandez, who deployed to Iraq with a different unit in 2006.

About half of the brigade has served in Iraq or Afghanistan before, 15 percent more than once.

Specialist Hernandez wanted to be a Soldier since he was 6 and joined the Guard at age 17. He and his girlfriend are expecting their first child in October, when the battalion likely will be training at Fort Bliss in El Paso.

"It's hard for her, but we've talked about it many times, about what's going to happen, and so far, she's confident," Specialist Hernandez said. "I know sometimes there's exceptions where a father can go home on the day of the baby's birth, so I'm rooting for that."

### **Missing milestones**

At Camp Swift, he got a taste of what it will be like to be a long-distance dad when his girlfriend went to a pre-natal checkup without him. "She had her appointment this past Thursday and sent me a little picture of the ultrasound and that's pretty nice," Specialist Hernandez said.

His wide smile beamed through Camp Swift's dust and heat. "They say it's 99 percent for sure it's a little girl."

He hates to miss the first year of his daughter's life, but he has a motto: "You make it what it is."

Specialist Hernandez's point man during urban ops training at Camp Swift was a lanky private first class named James Houston. The 20-year-old from Clear Lake joined the Guard in April 2006.

"I got bored one day and needed some excitement, pretty much," he said. "I'm actually a diesel mechanic. I got laid off from work so I decided to volunteer for a deployment. Gives me something to do."

Pfc. Houston admits he's not sure what to expect in Iraq. "Hot, humid, a lot of fun," he speculated with a grin. But then he paused, and his bright blue eyes grew more serious.

"You never really know," he said. "My mom and dad don't want me to go, but they trust I'll do the right thing and

# Cadets Rise To The ChalleNGe in Academy

*By Ms. Lori Garrigus*

## **Texas Challenge Academy**

SHEFFIELD, Texas (Sep 19, 2009) -- The Youth Challenge Program sponsored by the Texas National Guard, provides second chances to young people in Texas every semester.

The Texas Challenge Academy located in Sheffield, Texas, is designed to reclaim the potential of at-risk youth by training them to become successful, responsible, productive citizens through a program of mentoring, education, physical fitness, and volunteer service to the community. The program is open to young people ranging from 16 to 19 years old who have either dropped out of high school or who are in danger of doing so.

Cadets stay at the Academy for five and a half months during the residential phase of the program. They may attain their GED or high school diplomas, but also learn leadership skills and followership. They are taught responsible citizenship, job skills, critical life coping skills, substance abuse awareness, and how to develop positive personal relationships. Additionally a large part of the program is focused on physical fitness and service to the community. After graduation cadets return home and meet with a mentor every week for 12 months to keep their resolve to change their lives for the better.

"My life before Challenge was very chaotic. Everything I thought was cool - drugs, tagging, being in a gang- was pointless," said Danny Gonzales, a successful cadet and graduate of the Texas Challenge Academy. "Now after being here at Challenge, I can say I have more structure. Challenge has helped me become a young man and I want to prove to my mom that I am different than I was before. I got accepted to Blinn Community College and I plan to attend in August. I got my diploma, my GED, and passed all of my tests. I'll go down the right track from

here."

There are many more stories like Danny's. The Texas Challenge Academy's success rate is more than 70%. That is especially impressive when one considers that as many as 50% of high school students in urban areas like Houston, Dallas, and San Antonio drop out every year in Texas. That is 119,000 dropouts in 2007 alone, according to a new study released by the National Center for Policy Analysis, Hispanic Council for Reform and Educational Options, and the Milton and Rose D. Friedman Foundation.

Second chances are rare in life, but not in a National Guard sponsored program. The program is based on Equal Opportunity principles, free to the families served, and an accredited high school.

For more information about The Texas Challenge Academy, contact Mr. Mike Weir, Program Director at (432) 836-1516 or michael.weir@isisd.net/ The website for TCA is [www.ngycp.org/site/state/tx](http://www.ngycp.org/site/state/tx).



**Cadets from the Texas Challenge Academy.**

# Governor Visits Texas Soldiers in Afghanistan

By Master Sgt. Ken Walker  
636<sup>th</sup> Military Intelligence Bn. Public Affairs

BAGRAM AIR FIELD, AFGHANISTAN – Texas Governor Rick Perry stepped away from the warmth of the Texas hill country to hot and arid Afghanistan to visit and thank U.S. troops and members of the Texas Military Forces, July 20 and 21. He was part of with a delegation of governors invited by the Department of Defense.

Gov. Perry traveled with Nevada Gov. Jim Gibbons, Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon, Illinois Gov. Pat Quinn, and Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty. While in Afghanistan, they went to the U.S. Embassy and military installations in Kabul, Ghazni, and Bagram Air Field.

Gov. Perry is no stranger to the combat zone having previously visited with Texas Soldiers and service members in January 2009 and in 2006.

Members of the 636th Military Intelligence Battalion, 71st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, 36th Infantry Division, Texas Army National Guard, stationed at Bagram Air Field, greeted the governor and provided a Texas-style ranch reception.

One of the highlights of the trip for Perry was presenting a Texas flag to U.S. Army Lt. Col. Thomas J. Kleis, the battalion commander of the Texas military intelligence unit known as Task Force Deguello.

TF Deguello is the only MI battalion serving in Afghanistan and has Soldiers at several dozen locations across the country.

“I am proud to present this Texas flag, flown over our great Texas capital so you may hoist it high here in Afghanistan,” Gov. Perry told Colonel Kleis. “May this flag serve as a reminder of the support you and our Texas troops have from the



**Texas Gov. Rick Perry (L) witnesses a reenlistment ceremony as Lt. Col. Thomas J. Kleis administers the oath of reenlistment to Staff Sgt. William Brown, Bravo Company, 636th Military Intelligence Battalion, 71st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade on July 20th at the 636th MI BN headquarters.**

citizens of the great state of Texas.”

After the 636th raised the Texas flag, Perry posed for pictures with the unit and other Texans serving in the combat zone. Texas MI unit members gathered around the governor as the summer heat faded to a comfortable breeze allowing the Texas flag to fly in full glory behind the group.

After giving Gov. Perry a brief on the only MI battalion in theater, Colonel Kleis commented, “Gov. Perry knows how hard we’re working over here.” Colonel Kleis continued, “We gave him a little more fidelity on the insurgents and weapons caches we are taking off the battlefield.”

The Soldiers had a chance to visit with the governors that evening at the reception while enjoying live country music performed by the 82nd Airborne Division band. As more photos with the governors were taken, steaks sizzled on the grill filling the air with the promise of a fine meal. Home-made salsa, baked beans, corn, tortillas and a Texas favorite, pecan pie with vanilla ice cream rounded the menu.

Gov. Perry presided at the reenlistment of U.S. Army Staff Sgt. William N. Brown, assigned to Bravo Company as a unit supply specialist. Sergeant Brown normally works at Forward Operating Base Asad Abad, but was at Bagram for a resupply.

“I had no idea my reenlistment ceremony was scheduled to coincide with the governor’s visit,” Sergeant Brown, said. “It was an honor to stand beside the governor and take the oath of reenlistment, I’ll never forget it.”

Gov. Perry and the delegation traveled the following day to visit FOB Ghazni where a Texas based Human Intelligence Collection Team showed them automatic and recoilless rifles confiscated during military operations.

Gov. Perry took a few minutes to pin the prestigious Combat Action Badge on three Soldiers who recently were attacked on two separate patrols.

“I know you work hard through difficult and dangerous conditions to protect others, and deserve our highest honor and deepest appreciation,” Gov. Perry told the Soldiers.

After departing Afghanistan the delegation departed for Germany to visit the U.S. hospital at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center.

“The Texas Military Forces are proudly serving in Operation Enduring Freedom, and represent the largest number of National Guard troops deployed in the nation to Overseas Contingency Operations,” Texas Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Jose Mayorga said. “There are Texas soldiers who are on their 4th or 5th deployment since 2001; and continue to serve selflessly. These men and women are Texas heroes and heroines, and great Americans.”

As of May 2009, Texas had more than 35,000 deployed service members, including approximately 4,500 from the Texas National Guard, more than any other state in the nation.



# Texas State Guard Change of Command

Story by Col. William Meehan

Texas Military Forces Public Affairs

CAMP MABRY, Texas - "Sound Attention, Sound Adjutants Call"! With this command, Texas State Guard J-1 Colonel Balde-mar Cano launched the military tradition known as "Change of Command". Under a hot, bright July 25, 2009 sun on the Camp Mabry parade field, Lieutenant General (TX) Christopher J. Powers, relinquished command of the Texas State Guard to Major General (TX) Raymond C. Peters. General Powers, in command since 2006, reflected that he was "deeply honored by those in attendance" and acknowledged "the literally thousands of Soldiers, Marines and Airmen he had served with" in his 40 years in the military".

General Powers thanked his family and particularly his wife, Patricia, for the sacrifices they have made during his career. General Powers had high praise for the Texas State Guard, remarking that "thousands of Texans may never know your names, but will never forget your presence", referring to the many call-ups of the State Guard for state active duty and particularly during the 2008 hurricane season. He continued, "they will go anywhere, do anything, take on any mission; these are truly amazing people".

The ceremony was presided over by Major General Jose S. Mayorga, the Adjutant General of the Texas Military Forces. During the awards presentation, General Mayorga commented to General Powers that "the governor had a special trust to you, a dedicated warrior, to command the State Guard" and while the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division played the tune "She Wore a Yellow Ribbon", Mrs. Powers was presented with a bouquet of yellow roses for her support for her husband.

General Mayorga also welcomed General Peters, saying "you were selected to command the Texas State Guard due to your competence and commitment. I look forward to your service."

The highlight of the morning was the actual change of command where the Texas State Guard Colors were handed by senior enlisted leader Command Chief Master Sergeant (TXSG) Harold L. Higgins to General Powers, who handed them to General Mayorga. General Mayorga, as custom dictates, then passed the flag to General Peters, who finished the ceremony by entrust-

ing them again to Chief Higgins, completing the circle of command.

When asked how he felt about assuming command of the Texas State Guard, General Peters, of Austin, said "forty-five years ago, I stood out here on this very same parade field and never imagined that I'd be back here promoted to the rank of Major General. I consider it an honor and a privilege to command the Texas State Guard and am blessed to take command of the finest volunteer organization in the nation."

**Below- (From R-L) Maj. Gen. Jose S. Mayorga, Maj. Gen. Raymond C. Peters, Chief Master Sergeant Harold L. Higgins and Lt. Gen. Christopher J. Powers wait to pass the TXSG guidon to signal the transfer of authority.**

**Bottom- Members of the TXSG stand proudly before the change of command. (Photos by Sgt. Maj. Bob Dashman, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs)**



# 36th Sustainment: “Head em’ up...move em out!”

Story and Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Tad Browning

36<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Bde. Public Affairs

Fort Hood, Texas – When the 36<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade had to determine a motto, it only seemed natural to use “Head em’ up... move em out!” Almost 300 National Guard Soldiers from around the State of Texas have been called up to support the Global War on Terror in Iraq.

The “Rawhide” brigade, as it is called, is part of the Texas National Guard’s 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division and will be responsible for providing Soldiers all over southern Iraq with the supplies and materials necessary to perform their mission. The brigade will be responsible for tracking assets on the ground as Soldiers and equipment move out of Iraq.

With more than 30 million pieces of equipment in theater it is a large undertaking to keep up with all of the logistics on the ground, this is where the Soldiers of the 36<sup>th</sup> will make a difference.

“We are the basic life support to each Soldier on each Contingency Operating Base or Forward Operating Base or checkpoint that’s still standing,” explained Lt. Col. Darrell Debish, a support operations officer with the 36<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade. The brigade handles items such as food, water, fuel, ammo, barrier material and we are responsible for setting up convoys and making sure the convoys get there in a timely manner. “Basically, its like a Super Walmart except people don’t necessarily walk in the store, they do orders over the phone and we go out and deliver them like the milk man in the old days,” added Colonel Debish.

With Soldier movements on the increase as they move out of Iraq, it will be important to ensure that Soldiers get the supplies and commodities they need to complete their missions.

“We are supporting the movement of the soldiers out of the cities, therefore the COBs and FOBs they move to have increased in population,” said Colonel Debish. “We support the



increases of food, vegetables and ammo going, instead of many smaller places within the city to larger more enduring places that can handle the population. “

Prior to mobilization, the 36<sup>th</sup> went through a series of demanding training events that consisted of warrior tasks and command exercises that prepared them for the training they are enduring now.

“At Fort Hood we are doing more of a level two training,” said Colonel Debish, “when we went through our 21-day readiness exercise, we zeroed our weapons, fired our weapons, walked the ground, broke down and cleaned the weapons. We also got out and drove IED defeat lanes, walked IED defeat lanes and here at North Ft Hood we’re getting the level two version of it.”

The training at Fort Hood is designed to test leader’s decision-making skills during collective training. Usually units like this do not have the opportunity to come together and execute a mission from beginning to end.

Throughout the mobilization process, the brigade has focused on the ‘team’ and building that team means working together with the systems they will use in country when they arrive. Tracking commodities in theater will be easier with the implementation of computer tracking systems.

“The military uses several different STAMIS systems, each commodity has its own tracking system and they talk within a larger system called a BCS3(supply support system) and also a CPOF(Command Post of the Future) system. It’s more like a Heads-up system of all the different class of supplies,” explained Colonel Debish. “Systems feeding into it and we’re able to manage the commodities and see what’s coming from theater, theater being either Europe, America or anywhere else.”

“It’s a huge job to make sure that each one of these commodities is accounted for and tracked and loaded and gets to its end destination. We’re able to follow commodities all the way through the supply chain to make sure they get to the end user who requested it,” he added.

The brigade conducted a Command Post exercise in



**Top right- Spc. Michael Neu, 36th Sustainment Brigade, looks through binoculars during an IED training event on North Fort Hood.**

**Above- Soldiers of the Texas National 36th Infantry Division attend a brief in preparation for deployment to Iraq.**

**See SUSTAIN, next page**



## **SUSTAIN, from previous page**

April and will hone some of the skills acquired in an upcoming Mission Readiness Exercise.

“The biggest thing that’s going to help us is the upcoming MRX where we will certify to go into country,” explained Colonel Debish. “The MRX allows us to work the systems that we will be working with in country, managing commodities, supervising commodities. They put injects in the exercise to falter the commodity flow and how we react to that, such as a crisis situation. How do we overcome it, how do we change, how do we maneuver those commodities to get them to the end customers who actually needs them. I be-

lieve we’re ready, we’re looking forward, every night we study a different topic, rehearse a different topic for the MRX and I think the sustainment brigade is ready to go.”

On the home front, Soldiers are also preparing family members for the upcoming deployment. The brigade has pulled together another team consisting of spouses and community organizations to ensure Soldiers will be able to complete their mission abroad, knowing that their families are being supported at home.

“Family readiness for the brigade is doing really well, they’ve answered the needs of several soldiers that I have had that have came up with last-minute needs and we got them in to see family readiness

and they’ve tackled those problems,” Colonel Debish said. “They did a great job on the deployment ceremony and setting up the Yellow Ribbon event,” he added.

For Soldiers and families of the 36<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade it will be a challenging year, one that they are willing to face head-on.

“In the upcoming months all of the talk that is going on, all of the speculation, everyone wants to plan differently,” said Colonel Debish. “I told everybody, lets do what we do best, and that’s support our commodities, support the Soldiers, support the infantries, support the ground-pounders, and we’ll take changes as they come in country and we’ll make the best of it. We’ll stand tall.”

# Texas National Guard Fights Fires From Above

**Story and photo by Sgt. Malcolm McClendon  
Texas Military Forces Public Affairs**

Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas (27 Aug 2009) - As summer draws to an end, many parts of Texas have seen little rain. The drought and the searing sun have left the earth scorched, perfect for wildfires. According the Texas Forest Service, over a million acres have been destroyed and more than 1400 homes lost to these blazes since 2005. This is why any and all local resources are pulled together to fight these monster fires.

Included in this fire fighting arsenal, is Texas Army National Guard Aviation. When needed, the brave men and women of the Austin and San Antonio Flight facilities are on call, and ready to go within a moments notice.

“We are able to respond to a call within 30 minutes,” said Lt Col Andrew Rochstein, Instructor Pilot Supervisor at the Flight Facility in Austin.

Each facility counts on a team of two UH60s carrying a 660 gallon capacity bucket to douse the fires. Combined, the two stations have launched 40 times in the past two years in response to wildfires, dropping over an estimated 1 million gallons of water.

“On average each aircraft drops 20 buckets of water over the fires.” Rochstein goes on to explain, “We can usually turn around in less than two minutes between the fire and a water source, however, water sources are getting much shallower and more difficult to find as the drought continues”

These full time pilots and maintenance personnel have been on nearly continuous fire standby duty for the past two years, ever since they returned from their overseas deployment. Each UH60 has a crew of 4 that fly with the aircraft and an entire maintenance shop, that maintains and trains on the aircraft. Checks are run everyday to ensure they are ready to go at any moment.

All the hard work and stress of being on standby pays off when lives and property are saved.

Recalling the 26-28 February fires in Bastrop this year, Rochstein says, “It is absolutely the most rewarding thing we do when we are protecting life, limb and property on the ground.”

It is not only faceless families the Texas National Guard protects, it’s own members have been in the path of these destructive blazes. “I was very happy to see the aircraft overhead when the Bastrop fire was raging,” said Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada, Public Affairs Chief. She lives in Bastrop and was speaking to the media on the ground while the Texas Army National Guard helicopter crews where dousing the fire from above. “This last wildfire,” she added, “had all of us scared. It was so intense; it left black holes in the ground where once proud Loblolly Pines stood. It was sad to see the destruction but Thank God, no lives were lost.”

The role the TXARNG Aviation plays is significant to the State of Texas. Combined, fire fighting agencies have help save over 54,000 homes and an estimated three billion dollars in Texas since 2005, as stated in a document from the Texas Forest Service.



**Lt. Col. Andrew Rochstein checking the tail rotor blades for excessive play and securing cable attachments on his UH-60 at the Austin Flight Facility.**



# COURAGE TO CARE



A Health Campaign of Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences, [www.usuhs.mil](http://www.usuhs.mil), and the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress, Bethesda, Maryland, [www.cstsonline.org](http://www.cstsonline.org)

## HOW CAN I GET HIM TO SEEK HELP? *Talking Points for Women*

Women play a key role in encouraging men to seek help for health problems. It is often a wife or important female (girlfriend, mother, sister or aunt) who is the first to notice changes in their loved one's behavior or appearance. These changes may signal a health or mental health problem, or both.

**Women play a key role in encouraging men to seek help for health problems.**

Men are often reluctant to seek out healthcare services, especially for emotional problems and depressive symptoms. As a result, many men are living with serious health issues that affect their well being and the well being of their families and children.

There has been an increase in psychological and medical disorders since the start of OEF and OIF. Many service members, some subjected to multiple deployments and combat exposure, have returned with post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, drug and alcohol misuse. The number of suicides has increased. Physical injuries include traumatic brain injury (TBI), and war injuries such as burns, amputations and multi-trauma wounds.

Talking to a loved one about seeking help isn't always easy. *How do you talk to someone about changes in their behavior* (anger, withdrawal or risky behaviors such as reckless driving, alcohol and drug misuse), and *how do you get them to seek professional help?*

This *Courage to Care* provides tips on talking to your loved one using three approaches that may help men view health seeking in a more favorable light.

When talking to your loved one about seeking help, emphasize:

### 1. The Role of Outside Events

When talking to your loved one about seeking help, point to the *outside factors* that may have contributed to what you are seeing or to your loved one's symptoms. Men may be more willing to acknowledge a problem in terms of outside events rather than as an illness.

#### Talking Point

*"I've noticed that you are not yourself lately. You are more irritable, withdrawn and seem sad a lot of the time. Given what you have been through – multiple deployments, combat stress and adjusting to being back, it's understandable, but the kids and I are concerned, and we want you to feel better."*

### 2. Help Seeking as a Strength

Many men are concerned that seeking help means they are weak, dependent, and they worry "what will others think of me?" Talk about seeking help as a sign of *superior judgment*, good decision-making and involving collaboration.

#### Talking Point

*"This has lasted a long time — restless sleep, jumpiness, anger. Seeing someone at the clinic would be a good idea and and probably the best thing you can do at this time. I know you and the doctor can work together to help you feel better."*

### 3. One's Obligation to Stay Healthy

Duty is part of military life and culture. Discuss health seeking as fulfilling one's duty to self and important people in the service member's life — family, children and comrades.

#### Talking Point

*"I know that you are 'getting by', but by getting help, you can be doing that much better! By taking care of yourself, you are taking care of our family. We both have a duty to stay healthy for each other, for our work and importantly, for our children."*

Remember, women play an important role in encouraging men to seek help. This fact sheet provides three approaches that may reduce the stigma many men attach to seeking medical care. When you talk to him, it

*Continued*



may be helpful to: 1) describe whatever changes you are seeing as likely due to *external events* such as the stresses of deployment, 2) talk about help seeking as a sign of *courage*,

*good judgment* and an *obligation or duty* to one's self, family, friends and one's job.

#### RESOURCES

##### Real Warrior: Resilience, Recovery, Reintegration

<http://www.realwarriors.net/>

Contains information on psychological health and traumatic brain injury for service members including Guard and Reserve. Features real stories of service members who have sought and received help.

##### Militaryonesource

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

Features comprehensive information on all aspects of military life and health, and an 800 24/7 helpline for all services and their families.



## afterdeployment.org Explores Behavioral Health Information

FALLS CHURCH, Va. – The U.S. Army, with oversight by TRI-CARE 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.

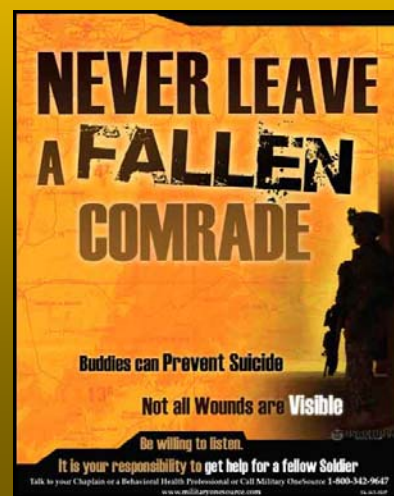
“Afterdeployment.org serves as an interactive, self-help solution to assist with behavioral health needs following deployment,” said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, deputy director, TMA.

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.



# News Briefs

## Bureau Chief addresses Sexual Assault and Drug/Alcohol Related Issues

**Story by Sgt. Malcolm McClendon**  
**Texas Military Forces Public Affairs**

SAN ANTONIO, Texas (04 Aug 2009) –National Guard Bureau Chief, Gen. Craig R. McKinley addressed Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SARP) and Sexual Assault Response Coordinators (SARC) here Tuesday morning.

Gen. McKinley recognizes the negative effects sexual assault and drug and alcohol abuse have on units and recalled some instances where investigations significantly reduced mission effectiveness in theater. Speaking to the attendees, Gen. McKinley main point was: “We need to preserve the readiness of Soldiers and Airmen so they can perform their jobs.”

“We’re fighting a two front war,” Gen. McKinley said. “These are troubling times for all of us,” stressing to the audience that they needed to be on alert.

Gen. McKinley advised the attendees that they should be prepared and know what actions to take, now more so than ever - recognizing the warning signs, but also knowing how to react. “We need to be fo-

cused on what we need to do when we see the signs,” Gen. McKinley said. He acknowledged that this would be a challenge, since many Guard members have lives and jobs outside of the military.

He recognized the hard work and dual lives many Guard members lead and emphasized the need for a different approach to these issues. “Our people do not have the access our active duty partners have,” Gen. McKinley noted. Gen. McKinley went on to say: “We have to be very diligent about taking care of our Soldiers and Airmen in a different way than the active component takes care of theirs”.

Gen. McKinley also pointed out the importance of training workshops like the one being conducted in San Antonio and that the growth and understanding learned and shared would be critical. “We are at a point in this journey, but we have not reached the destination yet,” Gen. McKinley stated: “We haven’t solved the problems of sexual abuse, we haven’t solved the problems of drug and alcohol abuse yet”.

Gen. McKinley is optimistic however, and knows that the men and women

that make up the SARC and SARP are there for a noble cause and will continue to help Guardsmen and women deal with these problems. Talking directly to the audience, Gen. McKinley said, “I sense we have the right people, in the right job, in the right time to continue the journey to be the best National Guard ever.”



**National Guard Bureau Chief Gen. Craig R. McKinley (Courtesy photo)**

## Wildfire Season Heats Up Across Texas This Summer



Texas’ summer fire season is here and not likely to go away anytime soon.

This year over 659,000 acres have been burned, including over 1200 structures. While some fires are the result of nature more than 90 percent of fires are started by humans – accidentally or purposely. With the drought many Texans are facing, the probability of future fires is high.

The Texas Forest Service (TFS) has asked us to help continue to get the word out about wildfire prevention and safety. TFS has put together a comprehensive site for current fire incidents, weather outlook, safety tips, statistics on acreage affected, and maps for burn bans, risks, weather and warnings.

Visit <http://txforestservice.tamu.edu/main/default.aspx> and click on the flame for links to current information.

**REMEMBER TO SAVE THE DATE FOR THE  
3RD ANNUAL OKTOBERFEST TRAIL RUN  
AND VOLKSMARCH!**

**CAMP SWIFT, OCTOBER 17, 2009**





# Questions about your GI Bill?

Visit <http://www.gibill.va.gov/>

**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**



## *This Month in Military History: September*

**BAPTISM BY FIRE-** SEPT. 9, 1943: In the pre-dawn blackness, T-Patchers tumbled off the ropes into small landing craft bobbing on Salerno Bay. They were eager and ready for their first combat mission. The threat of invasion had forced Italy's surrender, and the announcement, made just nine hours before the jump-off, had spread rapidly throughout the ships. Some men thought the invasion would be cancelled but the operation went ahead. Confident, tough, doughs hit the deck.

Salerno was a fierce baptism of fire for the 36th. The small landing boats bucked the surf, grounded on the beach. Men charged ashore, cut paths through mine fields and barbed wire. An enemy outpost marked them with machine gun tracers.

The landing barely had been accomplished when the Germans launched their first armored attack. On the right flank, Nazis barreled through to the beaches, where 3rd Bn., 141st, in a bloody man-to-tank action, threw them back. For this action, the battalion received the first Presidential Citation awarded a 36th unit.

Guts, firepower and teamwork decided the battle of Salerno that day. T-Patchers sealed off the Nazis along little La Cosa creek and drove off the lumbering panzers. Covered by naval and land guns, doughs rolled the enemy back into the hills.

Four 36th Div. men won the Congressional Medal of Honor at Salerno.

Tech. Sgt. Charles E. "Commando" Kelly, Pittsburgh, held off the Germans alone by throwing mortar shells when there were no more grenades.

On Hill 424, Pvt. William Crawford, Pueblo, Colo., grenaded several machine gun nests, captured another machine gun position and fought the enemy until he was captured.

Lt. Arnold Bjorklund, Seattle, Wash., grabbed an enemy

rifle, destroyed two German machine guns with it.

Tech. Sgt. James Logan, Luling, Tex., single-handedly wiped out machine gun nests which held up an entire battalion, advanced alone to rout snipers which covered his unit's positions.



*Riflemen from the 143rd Infantry Regiment, 36th Infantry Division, wade toward the beach at Paestum, south of Salerno, at the start of Operation AVALANCHE on September 9, 1943. The milky haze from artificial smoke was intended to blind German gunners on the high ground ring-ing the landing sites. (Image courtesy of [www.liberationtrilogy.com](http://www.liberationtrilogy.com))*



*Cadet Calvin Johnson, top, 636<sup>th</sup> Brigade Support Battalion, and Spc. Daniel Cecil, of the Combat Skills Training Evaluation Battalion, had one of the most exciting combatives matches of the tournament. (Photo by Master Sgt. Brenda Benner, Texas Military Forces Public Affairs)*