

# IRAQ

## WHAT THE WAR MEANT

More than 250,000 Guard Soldiers deployed to Iraq. They transformed a country, brought hope to millions and in the process redefined the Guard itself. The story of the conflict and America's triumph, as only a Soldier can tell it.



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**THERE ARE TWO PRIMARY CHOICES IN LIFE: ACCEPT CONDITIONS AS THEY EXIST, OR ACCEPT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CHANGING THEM.**



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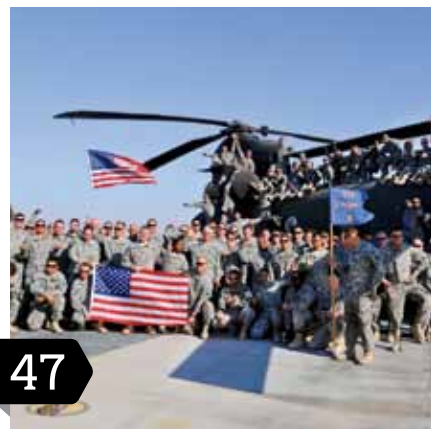
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**AS ACTIVE MILITARY OPERATIONS DRAW DOWN, OUR NEXT SHARED RESPONSIBILITY IS TO BE READY WHEN THE NEXT CALL COMES."**

**Soldiers,**

Congratulations on your 375th year of service! I have come to know and respect the Army National Guard during the course of my career, and am now even more proud of you as I serve as your 18th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The content of this issue of *GX* in many respects is emblematic of the Army National Guard's service to the nation. While the National Guard preserves the American military's oldest heritage, the dedication to protect their fellow citizens from harm resonates within all our military components. Those Citizen-Soldiers who assembled in Salem, Massachusetts, for the East Regiment's first muster in the spring of 1637 realized an obligation understood by every generation of Americans since: that defending the sanctity of American lives and liberty is both a noble and necessary undertaking, but there's a cost to be borne.

Operation Iraqi Freedom and its successor, Operation New Dawn, are but recent examples of the National Guard's historic commitment to sharing this cost. The end of Operation New Dawn also symbolizes another great strength of American character: that we will stand down when the danger subsides. The very symbol of the National Guard, the Minuteman—perhaps the most enduring military trademark the world over—tells all that we will leave the plow and pick up the musket when necessary, but also that we will stack arms and return to civil pursuits when the mission is done.

Putting aside our arms is never an easy task. Americans are not a militaristic people, but we fight when called, and so must ever be ready to



fight. As active military operations draw down, our next shared responsibility is to be ready when the next call comes. That means we'll have to prepare our forces while shifting from the demands of two wars to a more traditional training environment—and we'll do this with a smaller budget and different strategic priorities. As I survey the confidence and capability of the warriors of the National Guard, and of our entire military, I am heartened. You will meet all challenges, with courage, innovation and creativity. Army Guard Citizen-Soldiers have always risen to the occasion, whether abroad or at home, and I'm confident you will continue to do so.

I applaud the Army National Guard's successes, grieve for your losses, and take comfort in your steadfast performance as part of our Army and our magnificent Joint Force.

Sincerely,

*Martin E. Dempsey*  
General, U.S. Army



# MISSION? ACCOMPLISHED?

No way, Soldier, we're just getting started. And we'd love to hear what you have to say about GX. Take our short survey and tell us what you enjoy about the magazine, what you'd like to see, what needs to get better.

And we'll get on it.

[www.GXonline.com/survey](http://www.GXonline.com/survey)

# GX

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

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

**MISSION:** To celebrate and support the Soldiers and families of the National Guard. To provide today's Army National Guard members with information for becoming a better Soldier and better citizen. To encourage and assist Guard Soldiers in maximizing the benefits of their military career as well as their personal and family goals.

**Publisher** iostudio  
**Editor-in-Chief** Keith Kawasaki  
**Managing Editor** Mark Shimabukuro  
**Features Editor** Christian Anderson  
**News Editor** Stephanie Inman  
**Senior Copy Editor** Julie Zeitlin  
**Proofreaders** Rachel Jay, Greg Ottarski  
**Art Director** Laurel Petty  
**Editorial Designers** Dustin McNeal, Lizzie Moore  
**Project Manager** Gene Bedell  
**Contributing Writers** Dan Alaimo, Johanna Altland, Camille Breland, Ronnie Brooks, SFC William Davi, Rachel Gladstone, SGT Preston Griffall, CPT Darrin Haas, Jason Hall, Mark Kakkuri, Liesl Marelli, Brendan McNally, Joseph Montanaro, SGT Justin Olsen, Megan Pacella, Chaplain (MAJ) Mark Phillips, James Sullivan, Jeff Walter, SFC Patrick Williams

**Mail** GX: The Guard Experience  
 c/o Iostudio, LLC  
 565 Marriott Dr., Suite 100  
 Nashville, TN 37214  
 (866) 596-4558  
**Fax** (615) 256-6860  
**Editor** editor@GXonline.com  
**Subscriptions** subscriptions@GXonline.com  
**General Info** info@GXonline.com

GX welcomes article and photo submissions from Soldiers, family members, employers and supporting agencies. Content may be submitted to [stories@GXonline.com](mailto:stories@GXonline.com).

Please be sure to include your full contact information and a description of how your submission meets the GX mission and target audience (all Army National Guard members and their families). All submitted work (photos, articles, video) becomes the property of GX upon submission.

Please note, submitted content is not guaranteed to be published in GX magazine.

There are several factors that determine what content is ultimately published. These include but are not limited to:

- > Time and space availability
- > Ability to change the existing editorial outline
- > Approval by the Army National Guard GX contract officer
- > Relevance to both the GX target audience and the GX mission

Due to the volume of submissions we receive, we cannot reply to every submission. However, we do receive, review and appreciate each submission. If your content meets the goals and requirements, we'll be in touch!

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## LETTER from the EDITOR

“ I JUST LOVE THE AMERICAN FLAG. I'VE HAD IT ALL MY LIFE . . . IT WENT WITH ME WHERE I WENT. AND IT'S GOING TO GO WHERE I GO NOW.”

— VAN BARFOOT, WWII MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT, 1919–2012



### ON THE COVER

SSG Russell Klika, a frequent contributor to GX, took this photograph of Soldiers near Ad Dawr, Iraq, in May 2006. Our story chronicling the conflict and the Guard's major role in it begins on page 16.

I use the phrase “documenting legacies” a lot when referring to GX. I have a library of every one of our 53 issues next to my desk. Thumbing through, one can see where GX has separated itself from other military publications. We focus primarily on the people, the individual lives. This is all very purposeful. We recognized early on that the Soldiers and their families valued their stories in print. It gives proof of their sacrifices. It ensures their actions will not be forgotten by current and future generations. This is a responsibility we execute with heart and respect.

GX Features Editor Christian Anderson and I have been mesmerized by—and borderline obsessed with—the service of Van Barfoot for the past five years. Van, a WWII Medal of Honor recipient and Veteran of three wars, has more than a few tales of bravery. The stuff that movies *should* be made of. Christian tracked down the 92-year-old in Richmond, VA, and spent the day with him this past November. “He’s a giant of a man with a firm handshake. He stared me down!” Christian exclaimed, describing his first thoughts upon meeting Van. “This is the most important work I’ve done.”

Since their meeting, the resulting article went through our usual process of editing and layout. Just days before this issue went to press, on March 1, Christian received word from Van’s daughter, Margaret Nicholls, that Van had fallen into a coma. In the early morning hours of March 2, Van Barfoot passed away.

Over the course of the weekend, Christian received calls from Margaret, Van Barfoot Jr. and Van’s son-in-law Roger Nicholls. They all echoed their blessing and enthusiasm to move ahead and print the story. At Van’s



GX’s Christian Anderson (right) stands with Van Barfoot, WWII Medal of Honor Recipient, while Barfoot keeps his eyes on the American Flag standing tall in his front yard, November 2011. Photo by Margaret Nicholls.

memorial service March 4, the family displayed the GX article, “The Man Who Stared Down Hell” (page 96).

It is our hope, and that of the Barfoot family, that Soldiers today and Soldiers tomorrow read this article and find inspiration in the service of a man who went toe-to-toe with Nazis, North Koreans and the Viet Cong—a man enamored with his country and driven to protect it no matter the cost.

We are committed to documenting the life and service of our Soldiers, to preserve their legacies. Our WWII Veterans especially are slipping from us every day. These true Warriors personify the best of what Americans can accomplish when pushed to their limits. I encourage all of you to reach out, record their stories and express your gratitude.

Thank you!

Keith Kawasaki, Editor-in-Chief  
[Keith@GXonline.com](mailto:Keith@GXonline.com)



# Mailbag

YOUR THOUGHTS, PHOTOS AND STORIES

## DROP US A LINE

Have a comment on an article you've seen in *GX*? An experience from the field that you'd like to share? Or a photograph that's crying out for a wider audience? We at *GX* would love to hear from you. This month a Georgia Soldier tells us about his experience on the Japanese TV show "Ninja Warrior," a deployed Soldier talks about discovering a passion for photography while overseas, and a teacher/second lieutenant shares a poem inspired by Veterans.

## WRITE THE EDITOR

Email all comments and photos to [editor@gxonline.com](mailto:editor@gxonline.com).

## INTERACT WITH US

Don't forget to join us on your favorite social media site: URL + /NationalGuard



## CASTING A VOTE

As a Florida National Guard Soldier deployed overseas, I was thrilled to fill out my absentee ballot in last month's presidential primary and participate in the great American tradition of democracy. I want to thank the Federal Voting Assistance Program for all their assistance helping Soldiers like me participate in the electoral process when we are abroad. *Find out how you can still vote while overseas. P. 33*

—SPECIALIST MATTHEW MAGRETA

## THROUGH THE LENS

I deployed to Kuwait on May 13, 2011, with the 1-125th FA, Minnesota National Guard. It was my first deployment. My wife, whom I married on Feb. 25, 2011, was pregnant at the time. On Aug. 14, 2011, I was able to see my son born over Skype. Starting at that point, I needed something to keep me busy, so I bought a camera. I started taking pictures of what I saw on a day-to-day basis. It helped keep my spirits high during the deployment.

We are scheduled for a safe return home in the spring of 2012. There I will reunite with my beautiful wife and baby boy. I wanted to share my story to show Soldiers that there are ways to keep yourselves busy when deployed. Many forms



of creativity and talents can emerge while overseas.

—SPECIALIST BENJAMIN JOHN VILINA

So excited to finally rejoin the National Guard. I was an NCO the first time, this time I'm going OCS. Hooah! @sgt\_ruiz, via Twitter

**GX asked a few Soldiers around the world to share their experiences. Here are their dispatches.**

## AFRICAN ADVENTURES

I'm currently deployed to Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, with the 1st Battalion, 161st Field Artillery, Kansas Army National Guard. Although my MOS is combat medic, I had the opportunity to become a public affairs liaison. I knew nothing

about public affairs before I took this job, but it has allowed me to create some amazing memories. I've participated in a 24-hour desert survival course with Djiboutians and midshipmen, flew in CH-53s and Ospreys with Marines, and interacted with many different foreign militaries. Along with the wonderful experiences, I've learned to be completely thankful for everything I have. I've realized that everything happens for a reason, whether we understand it or not.

—SPECIALIST MICHELLE LAWRENCE

## SECOND HOME

I never imagined when I deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, in October 2009, with the 116th Public Affairs Detachment, North Dakota Army National Guard, that I'd

Thanks for your service ladies and gents! @MFrockstar, via Twitter

still be there nearly 30 months and three voluntary extensions later.

Since I had recently changed my MOS from diesel mechanic to print journalism, my deployment was the perfect opportunity to test my new skills and work alongside more seasoned public affairs professionals, including my brother, Sergeant First Class David Dodds. I learned so much that I wasn't ready to leave when my first rotation wrapped up. So I volunteered to stay with the Puerto Rico National Guard. I continued to improve my journalistic skills, but also found myself providing the new group of Soldiers with expertise on local cultural differences, route navigation and area familiarities.

Near the end of my second rotation, I extended again. However, my duty station changed to Camp Film City in Pristina, Kosovo. The position was a NATO billet working as an administrative assistant and driver for the KFOR Headquarters' chief of staff, a position typically held by an American



brigadier general. I met so many interesting people. It didn't matter their military service or what flag was on their shoulders. Many became friends who I will cherish for years to come.

My departure on Jan. 20, 2012, was bittersweet as I left one home to return to another. I was happy to see my family but knew I had left some family behind.

—SERGEANT JOSHUA DODDS

## A DRIVEN CONTENDER

"Ninja Warrior" is a Japanese TV show that features athletes attempting to complete a timed obstacle course of four unique stages. I've faced many

I'm trying to join! Just finished my online application. @\_Just Flawless, via Twitter



obstacle courses throughout my 10 years in the Georgia Army National Guard, from ROTC at North Georgia College to Basic Training at Fort Jackson. Ever since I discovered the show, I've been determined to compete on it.

It has been a five-year venture, but I kept at it. People thought it was an impossible dream, but the National Guard taught me discipline and dedication. In 2011, I finally accomplished one of my goals—making it to Japan. The stakes were high. The American competitor who completed all four stages of the course could win \$500,000. In the show's 14-year history, only three people have won all four stages, and none of them was American. But I didn't let that distract me. I was happy to be there and didn't care if I fell on the first obstacle. I made it to the third stage but fell on the Ultimate Cliffhanger—an obstacle that requires the competitor to cross several ledges with only three centimeters of surface to cling on. Even after the fall, though, I came up smiling. I knew I had performed my best.

I'm training for the upcoming show's tryouts at the end of March. Then hopefully I can accomplish my next goal—becoming the first American "Ninja Warrior."

—FIRST LIEUTENANT RYAN STRATIS

Second Lieutenant James "Shad" Watters, North Carolina National Guard, sent us this poem. It is inspired in part by the Normandy Invasion and other conflicts, in remembrance of all Soldiers, past or present, and the sacrifices they make.

## THE COST OF FREEDOM

His white-knuckled fist embraced the grip,  
His booted feet trembled as he left his ship.  
The beachhead before him, a torrent of lead,  
Menacing missiles grazing his head.

He dove for the sand, cutting his lip,  
Instinctively reaching for the grenade at his hip.  
Pin yanked with his teeth which stifled his fear,  
The ball o' death visited the enemy near.

"Run after 'em, boys!" His men he told,  
His actions courageous, for one to behold.  
With rifle leveled, he unleashed its fire,  
Those in front fell; those behind were inspired.

But he didn't see the one that claimed his last breath,  
His eyes frozen open in the stillness of death.  
A Soldier's sacrifice made by the churning sea,  
Bore witness to valor; 'cause freedom's not free.





# Recon

## BAGRAM AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN

A New Jersey National Guard CH-47 Chinook takes off from Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, on Feb. 4. The Chinook's primary missions are troop movement, artillery emplacement and combat resupply.

*Distance Trenton, NJ, to Bagram Airfield: 6,798 miles*



PHOTO BY  
TECH. SGT. MATT HECHT





# Recon

## KAPISA, AFGHANISTAN

Soldiers with the Kentucky National Guard Agribusiness Development Team 3, Task Force Hurricane, inspect a greenhouse in Mahmud-e Raqi district, Kapisa province, Afghanistan, Dec. 28, 2011. The Soldiers were checking on progress with the local Afghans' efforts to improve their agricultural growth.

*Distance Frankfort, KY, to Kapisa, Afghanistan: 7,157 miles*



PHOTO FROM JOINT COMBAT CAMERA AFGHANISTAN





# Recon

## FLORENCE MILITARY RESERVATION, AZ

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, participate in wartime operation exercises at Florence Military Reservation, Jan. 7. The Soldiers conducted air assault raids as part of their mission to support the battalion's objective to deploy and fight on the battlefield as a light infantry battalion.



PHOTO BY SPC CELIA PRINCE



# IRAQ

## WHAT THE WAR MEANT

Pride, relief, hope. The close of the Iraq war after nearly a decade brought not one emotion, but many. One Veteran who feels them all and who was there at the beginning reflects, as only a Soldier can, on eight years of trials and triumph—and how the Guard met the challenge.

BY CPT DARRIN HAAS







PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. JOHN L. HOUGHTON JR., USAF

**W**hile flipping through the TV stations at home in December, I stumbled across the news story of the final U.S. convoy leaving Iraq. I saw that Guard Soldiers from North Carolina and Florida were helping escort that final caravan out of the country into Kuwait, and I thought about the numerous Guard units from several other states—units like my own nearly a decade ago—that helped make that day possible. Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation New Dawn were history; over eight years of war were finally over.

I had mixed feelings. I was glad to see the door close on Iraq, a conflict that had dominated the lives of most of my fellow Soldiers. It cost the nation billions of dollars and the lives of nearly 4,500 military members. I was also proud to know that the conflict ended honorably, that the U.S. had truly achieved its mission, and that the struggle, sacrifice and hard work by so many had finally paid off. U.S. forces accomplished what some felt was impossible: quell an insurgency, deter a civil war, put Iraq back on its feet and create a democratic nation in the Middle East. These were herculean tasks, and as the

Guard helped achieve each of them, it reinvented itself into a trimmer, more lethal and experienced force.

But I was also a little troubled. Iraq has long been at the forefront of most Guard members' professional and personal lives. Most of my family, friends and peers have been there or been affected by it, good and bad. Some didn't come back the same as they had left. A large part of most Soldiers' military careers has been shaped by the conflict through deployments, training, or missions or jobs that supported the war effort. Any Soldier who has joined the mili-

tary since September 2001 doesn't know peacetime.

Amid all of the emotions, though, one thing was clear: We've come a long way. As the orderly withdrawal of Soldiers crossed into Kuwait, the end looked nothing like the beginning.

## LIBERATION, EXHILARATION

When Coalition Forces crossed the Iraqi berm in March 2003, Guard Soldiers, primarily service and service support units, were embedded throughout the entire force. Some, like elements of the Tennessee National Guard's 730th Quartermaster Company, were with the forward-most units of the 3rd Infantry Division as they made their thunder runs into Baghdad. These Guard members were still wearing green BDUs, and carrying stripped and worn M16s.

My platoon from Tennessee's 267th Military Police Company was lucky enough to be wearing desert camouflage under our JLIST chemical suits when we were a part of

the invasion, but we still had '70s-era flak vests and drove battered, soft-skinned Humvees used in Desert Storm. They had no armor, no Blue Force tracker and no GPS. In the eight years since then, Guard equipment has greatly improved and caught up with our Active Duty counterparts.

At the time, there was little concern about the gear we had. Most of us were just excited to be there, getting to be a part of this historic endeavor. It was my generation's war, and I was thrilled to be in the middle of it. It reminded me of the scenes from Desert Storm I watched unfold on TV when I was in ninth grade. I was on an adventure.

When we crossed the Iraqi border in 2003, there were crowds lining the road cheering, asking for food and water. But some were throwing rocks. One Iraqi child got close to a Humvee that was driving by slowly, reached in and stole the sunglasses off the Soldier's face, then took off running. There was debris in the road and trash lying about. Over the next few weeks, we would convoy back and forth across the border as the Iraqis built barricades to slow us down enough to steal equipment off our trucks.

As the war progressed, we learned the four- to five-month deployment we were told we were on was changing to one year. Throughout that period, my platoon ran the gamut of missions: area security patrols, convoy security, detainee security and transfer. We worked with fellow Tennesseans and Guard members from countless states including Florida, Virginia, Kentucky and Illinois.

My platoon helped establish Camp Bucca, the prison base in southern Iraq, and sometime after President George W. Bush made his "Mission

## THE WAR AT A GLANCE

### 2003

**March 20** – The liberation of Iraq begins.

**April 9** – Baghdad falls.

**May 1** – President George W. Bush declares major combat operations have ended.

**June 22** – U.S. troops kill Saddam Hussein's sons Uday and Qusay.

**Aug. 19** – A truck bomb destroys part of U.N. headquarters in Baghdad. At least 17 are killed, at least 100 wounded.

**Dec. 14** – Saddam Hussein is captured.

### 2004

**March 31** – Four U.S. contractors are ambushed and killed, and their bodies are hung from a bridge in Fallujah.

**April 5** – First battle for Fallujah begins.

**April 28** – CBS's "60 Minutes II" broadcasts Abu Ghraib photographs.

Accomplished" speech, we started transferring detainees to Abu Ghraib. We witnessed Iraqis firing weapons in the air celebrating the capture of Saddam Hussein. We spent most of our time conducting detainee operations (escorting convoys, transferring detainees), an important but thankless job, as the violence started to climb and IEDs appeared.

My brother was a Reservist in Iraq, and my brother-in-law was also there on Active Duty. The combat began getting personal when I knew they had made it to theater. Also, casualties started climbing. To me, they were just names I didn't know until I saw that First Lieutenant Jeffrey Kaylor was killed in combat. I didn't know him well, but his wife was an Officer Basic Course classmate of mine, and a bunch of classmates and I spent the weekend with the couple waterskiing before he deployed.

Before leaving Iraq, we convoyed near Baghdad to pick up a squad of Active Duty MPs who were going to replace us and escort them to Camp Bucca. We synced their radios to ours and incorporated them into our convoy. When we made it to Bucca, the Active Duty squad leader asked me, "I thought you guys were in the Guard?" I said we were and that I didn't understand his comment. He replied, "I thought you were Active from the radio traffic and how the mission was handled. You're not what we thought a Guard unit would look or sound like."

We came home to bands at the airport, and our small town of Dickson, TN, was shut down to welcome us. Interstates were blocked off, and thousands cheered our return. As we rode the bus on our last leg back to the armory before being released to see our families, I sat near my squad leader, who was



PHOTO FROM AP PHOTOS



PHOTO FROM NEW YORK NATIONAL GUARD



a Vietnam Veteran. He became teary-eyed. Shocked by the welcome, he told me to enjoy it; he didn't receive the same treatment when he returned from his last war.

We left Iraq in February 2004 proud of what we'd accomplished. For most of us, this was our first deployment and our first time in a hostile environment. We were successful despite austere conditions, hardships and a steep learning curve, and we came home with honor. Most other Guard units fared the same, and I'm thankful our company didn't lose anyone.

## THE GUARD'S ROLE GROWS

In 2004, the Guard's role in the war was intensifying. Soldiers were mobilizing at a quickening pace. North Carolina's 30th Infantry Brigade became the first Guard brigade combat team to deploy since the Korean War. It also had its own area of operation. I was delighted to see large maneuver units getting deployed, not just company-level support units as in Desert Storm. The 30th set the standard for all the other brigades to emulate.

While at home, I continued to watch the news. The Guard had taken a front seat in most missions since the Global War on Terror began and had been performing splendidly. Units were overseas in Iraq, Kuwait, Afghanistan, Kosovo and other countries. Operation Noble Eagle, which focused on homeland security, was a success with units mobilized throughout the United States. But in April 2004, photographs of detainee abuse from Abu Ghraib were released, destroying every honorable thing the military had done. As a military police officer who performed detainee operations, I took it personally. Those involved were Reservists, but the media and public tend to lump Reservists and Guard members together. Soldiers from my company were contacted by the media asking if we had been abusing prisoners and questioning the morality of our deployment. I despised the Soldiers who performed those acts, and loathed the officers and NCOs who let it happen. The military police corps would spend years trying to recover from the actions of those few Soldiers and still has not fully done so.

As the scandal unfolded, the violence and strife in Iraq worsened. The IED threat grew deadlier, and Soldiers became more concerned. In December 2004, Specialist Thomas Wilson of the Tennessee National Guard told Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in a town hall meeting, "We're digging pieces of rusted scrap metal and compromised ballistic glass that's already been shot up, dropped, busted—picking the best out of this scrap to put on our vehicles to take into combat. We do not have proper armament vehicles to carry with us north." At the time, I was a little embarrassed a fellow Guard



PHOTO BY SSG KEVIN BROMLEY

**May 11** – Internet footage shows U.S. businessman Nicholas Berg being executed by kidnappers motivated by Abu Ghraib photos.

**June 28** – U.S. transfers formal sovereignty to Iraqi leaders.

**Nov. 8** – Second Battle for Fallujah (Operation Phantom Fury) begins, involving 15,000 U.S. and Iraqi troops.

### 2005

**Jan. 30** – Iraq holds first free elections in 50 years.

**Feb. 28** – In deadliest attack since start of the war, a car bomb kills 122 people.

**Oct. 15** – Iraqi citizens vote to ratify constitution.

**Oct. 19** – Trial of Saddam Hussein begins.

**Dec. 15** – Iraqis hold parliamentary elections.

### 2006

**Feb. 22** – Destruction of Shiite shrine triggers sectarian violence in Baghdad.

**May 20** – Iraq forms first full-term government.

**June 8** – Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, leader of al-Qaida in Iraq, is killed by U.S.-led forces.

**Aug. 3** – General John Abizaid testifies before Senate that Iraq is in danger of civil war.

Soldier would publicly complain like that, but it opened up a discourse that saved lives.

In 2005 and 2006, during the conflict's peak, more than 53,000 Army National Guard Soldiers were in Iraq, providing eight of the 15 Army maneuver brigades. Guard Soldiers were gaining valuable experience and proving their mettle to their Active Duty counterparts. Our value was becoming publicly known. Young Soldiers were joining the Guard, and the deployment tempo helped clean up and get rid of unfit Soldiers. The Guard was transforming into a lean fighting force that was keeping pace with the Active Duty. I was proud.

The war would continue to escalate, and the Army had a massive black eye due to Abu Ghraib, but in June 2005, the actions of a few Soldiers helped shift public perception. In March, Kentucky National Guard Soldiers came to the aid of a truck convoy being attacked on a road near Salman Pak. These 10 Soldiers would kill 27 insurgents, resulting in Staff Sergeant Timothy Nein getting awarded the



PHOTO FROM GX

April 2006

GX magazine's Chris West travels to southern Iraq to document the experience of Guard Soldiers transitioning into the war zone.

Distinguished Service Cross and Sergeant Leigh Ann Hester the Silver Star, the first female Soldier to receive the award since WWII and the first ever to be cited for close combat. Not only was this historic, but it showed the value, skill and courage of National Guard Soldiers.

In 2006, Iraq appeared to be heading toward chaos. Violence kept increasing, and there was great fear a civil war would erupt. The Guard continued deploying at a rate not seen since WWII and playing a prominent role in Iraqi freedom. But there was still bad blood from Abu Ghraib. In 2007, I was deployed to Kosovo, and one of my duties was as the officer-in-charge of the Bondsteel Holding Facility. During mobilization training, when I first met the Active Duty instructors who would be training and evaluating the Guard force, they stared at my combat patch and then looked at me, stunned. "Are you serious?" they asked. "They got you to be the detention facility OIC? Is KFOR trying to cause an international incident?" I was wearing the 800th MP Brigade combat patch, the same unit that caused the Abu Ghraib scandal.

As I was assisting the security situation in Kosovo as the country declared independence, the Iraq surge began to be implemented. I didn't want to see Iraq turn into another Vietnam, as some in the media were beginning to say. Fortunately, by 2008, the plan did work and Guard members were on the



PHOTO BY SSG RUSSELL ALIHA

**Dec. 30** – Saddam Hussein is executed.

### 2007

**Jan. 10** – President Bush announces surge strategy, sends more than 21,000 additional troops.

**Jan. 20** – Ten Army National Guard Soldiers are among 12 killed northeast of Baghdad when their UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter is shot down. It's the highest number of Guard combat casualties in a single incident in more than 50 years.

**Feb. 10** – GEN David Petraeus is made commander of Multi-national Force-Iraq.

**June** – U.S. adopts strategy to arm Sunni Arab groups to fight militants linked with al-Qaida of Iraq.

**Sept. 10** – Petraeus says 30,000 surge troops to withdraw by summer 2008.

### 2008

**July 22** – Last of surge brigades withdrawn.



PHOTO FROM DVIDS

ground to make it happen. I was attending another Army school in February 2009 when I received a call from the wife of a friend who was currently in Iraq. "Have you heard yet?" she said. "Eric Emmert was killed yesterday."

Eric, a platoon leader with the 269th Military Police Company, was lost that month in a Mosul police station. During a meeting with a local Iraqi police chief, assailants gained access to the station and sprayed the room with AK-47 fire, killing an interpreter, seriously wounding Eric and three other Soldiers, and wounding the police chief. Refusing aid, Eric ensured that his fallen Soldiers were cared for first and continued directing the fight. He would succumb to his wounds seven hours later.



He was a friend. He was also one of my platoon leaders when he first got commissioned. We had responded to a tornado in Gallatin, TN, together, and we worked together in Arizona during Operation Jump Start. He had 18 years' experience on Active Duty or in the Guard, and he always placed his Soldiers first. In the civilian world, he had spent eight years as a Tennessee state trooper, where he also served on the governor's security detail. He had just begun a new job as a Tennessee Bureau of Investigation agent when he was alerted to deploy. He had a passion to protect people, and to stand up for what is right and just. His loss was immeasurable, as a Soldier, a citizen and a friend. He embodied everything that was right about the Guard.

## NEW DAWN, NEW HOPE

Operation New Dawn, which marked the official end to Operation Iraqi Freedom, began in September 2010, signaling a new phase in the war. The violence had settled, and Iraqis were responsible for their country. Guard units were there for all of Iraqi Freedom and took a prominent role in New Dawn. Throughout the war, there was always someone I knew who was deployed, and I was always worried about them—there was always a concern when they left that you might never see them again.

Since that last convoy left the country, the outlook in Iraq is positive, though the situation remains delicate. Defense Secretary Leon Panetta testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee, "Thanks to innumerable sacrifices from all involved, Iraq is governing itself—as a sovereign nation, as an emerging source of stability in a vital part of the world, and as an emerging democracy capable of addressing its own security needs." Referring to the

**Sept. 1** – Local Iraqi police take over security control of Anbar province, former center of Sunni insurgency.

**Nov. 17** – U.S., Iraq agree on plan to withdraw U.S. troops by end of 2011.

### 2009

**Jan. 1** – U.S. hands control of Iraqi airspace and military operations to Iraqi military and police.

**Feb. 27** – President Barack Obama says most combat troops to pull out by August 2010.

**June 30** – U.S. combat forces withdraw from Iraqi cities.

**Aug. 19** – Car bomb attacks in Baghdad kill at least 122 and injure more than 500.

### 2010

**March 7** – Iraq holds parliamentary elections.

**Aug. 31** – Combat mission in Iraq ends.

**Sept. 1** – Operation New Dawn begins.

**Dec. 20** – After months of infighting, Iraqi parliament approves a new government.

### 2011

**Dec. 15** – Baghdad ceremony marks official end of war.

**Dec. 18** – Last U.S. troops officially withdraw from Iraq.



PHOTO FROM DOD

troops, Panetta added, "They can be proud of what they have accomplished, and they and all Veterans of the Iraq campaign have earned the nation's most profound gratitude."

It is praise well-deserved. More than 222,000 Guard Soldiers (and more than 34,000 Airmen) deployed to Iraq, many of them more than once. Throughout the war, the National Guard evolved into a serious fighting force that could stand with any of their Active Duty counterparts. I would argue that it has never seen this level of professionalism and experience in its 375-year history. Most of the few Soldiers who haven't deployed have been fighting for those now-coveted slots, not wanting to be left out of what some consider a required rite of passage.

Looking back at this enormous accomplishment, I hope it doesn't go to waste or get forgotten over the next few years of budget cuts. I remain optimistic about the future of Iraq now that everyday Iraqi citizens and their children have a chance at a brighter future. I am prouder than ever to be a Guard member. And I still think about my friend Eric. I miss him. **GX**



PHOTO BY PETTY OFFICER 2ND CLASS CARLOS MENDEZ

## ONE COLOSSAL OPERATION

The completion of Operation New Dawn not only marked the transfer of authority to Iraqi forces, it also concluded an American drawdown that was nothing short of a massive undertaking—the largest logistical move conducted by the United States since the end of WWII.

The coordination and personnel involved in closing bases and bringing thousands of troops, vehicles, gear, equipment and supplies out of Iraq—all while maintaining stability in the country, transferring responsibilities to Iraqis and keeping essential services inside the camps going—proved to be a unique achievement. And the National Guard was instrumental every step of the way.

In 2008, there were more than 500 military bases in Iraq manned by U.S. military personnel. By the end of July 2011, the U.S. had nearly 60 bases, a drop of almost 90 percent. At the end of Operation New Dawn, that number needed to reach zero. The overall drawdown involved thousands of Guard Soldiers across several states, including Kansas, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Florida, Virginia, Kentucky, Illinois, Tennessee and Oregon. Here's just a snapshot of some of the contributions:

» North Carolina's 1452nd Transportation Company, part of the state's 113th Sustainment Brigade, helped escort the last U.S. troops out of Iraq, guiding a convoy of roughly 110 vehicles and 500 Soldiers from Contingency Operating Base (COB) Adder, near the southern Iraq city of Nasiriya, to the Iraq-Kuwait border. Florida's 1st Battalion, 111th Aviation Regiment, provided security from the air.

» In March 2011, the responsibility for the Army's sustainment mission was turned over from the Active Duty's 1st Sustainment Brigade to National Guard members from Tennessee's 230th Sustainment Brigade. The 230th's primary mission was supporting U.S. forces stationed in Iraq and Afghanistan, while also overseeing the drawdown. The brigade and its supporting units conducted more than 800 logistical convoys and logged more than 12.5 million miles transporting equipment and

supplies. In the end, it processed and returned over \$1 billion worth of equipment back through the Army supply system. The brigade also processed over 1.2 million pieces of mail.

» Kansas' 778th Transportation Company played a significant role hauling supplies, tanks, trucks, connexes and numerous other items out of Iraq to the Kuwaiti Naval base for shipment to the United States or Afghanistan. Specialist Teaira Turner, a heavy equipment transporter driver with the 778th, was on the ground through most of New Dawn. "We were running missions until the very end. We were busy for the entire deployment," Turner says. "I had a hard time seeing the big picture and the magnitude of what we were doing, but we were hauling a lot."

» Louisiana's 239th Military Police Company at COB Adder contributed in another key logistical area: customs inspections. Every Soldier or

item leaving Iraq for the United States needed to go through a thorough inspection to ensure that illegal items, contraband or any organic material was not heading into our country. All equipment and gear had to be thoroughly washed and examined to make sure soil or dirt was eliminated. Any foreign organic substance could contaminate and potentially wreak havoc on the U.S. ecosystem. The 239th ensured that everything was safe and clean.

» Colonel Scott Campbell, commander of Kentucky's 149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, which provided security and support during New Dawn, captured the significance of the mission for his unit—and the Guard overall—last year. "When they write the history of this war ... we all know that the first chapter will be 'Shock and Awe,'" he said. "History will long forget how we arrived, but they will never forget how we leave."

## ABOUT CPT DARRIN HAAS

Captain Darrin Haas has served in the National Guard for 13 years. Before that, he served in the Navy for five years as an aircrew rescue swimmer. He's currently a platoon trainer and instructor for the Tennessee National Guard's Officer Candidate School. His military medals include a Combat Action Badge, a Naval Aircrew Badge, two Meritorious Service Medals and six Army Commendation Medals.

### DEPLOYMENTS

**1996**  
USS Saipan,  
Aircrew Rescue Swimmer

**1998**  
USNS Saturn, Air Detachment,  
Aircrew Rescue Swimmer

**2002–2004**  
Operation Iraqi Freedom,  
Platoon Leader, 267th MP Co.

**2007–2008**  
KFOR 9, Company Commander,  
130th MP Co.

### GUARD MISSIONS

**2005**  
Operation Vigilant Sentry,  
Bulgaria, 269th MP Co.

**2005**  
Hurricane Katrina,  
269th MP Co.

**2006**  
Tornado Relief,  
Gallatin, TN, 269th MP Co.

**2006**  
Operation Jump Start,  
Yuma, AZ, 269th MP Co.

**2007**  
Operation Jump Start,  
Yuma, AZ, 117th MP Bn.

PHOTO BY ADAM LIVINGSTON



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## NEWS & EVENTS IN THE GUARD



Gen. Craig McKinley, right, testifies before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense while Lt. Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, director of the Air National Guard, listens, Washington, DC, 2010.

## Head of National Guard Elevated to Joint Chiefs of Staff

**ST. AUGUSTINE, FL** General Craig McKinley, chief of the National Guard Bureau (NGB), has officially joined the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

President Barack Obama signed a bill into law on Dec. 31 that expands the membership of the senior military advisory body to include the head of the NGB. Under that law, McKinley, 59, who's also a Florida National Guard member, will serve as a full member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, which traditionally has included a chairman and vice chairman and heads of the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps.

"The real import of this legislation is to institutionalize the position of the chief of the National Guard Bureau," says McKinley.

He noted that variables such as personalities won't deter future National Guard Bureau chiefs from having the "opportunity to give voice to the 460,000 members" of the National Guard.

"It will mean at the highest levels I can represent the adjutants general better than I am doing today," he says. "Future chiefs will have the opportunity to brief not only the

chairman [of the Joint Chiefs of Staff], but the secretary of defense and the president on matters of domestic importance, especially during natural disasters like hurricanes."

According to the adjutant general of Florida, Air Force Major General Emmett R. Titshaw Jr., the move will improve coordination between the governors, adjutants general and federal authorities during domestic emergencies.

"The unique status of our National Guard," whether in federal or domestic operations, "necessitates our chief has a seat with the traditional military services on our nation's highest military advisory council," Titshaw says.

Titshaw adds that since joining the Florida Air National Guard as a T-33 Shooting Star and F-106 Delta Dart alert pilot in 1980, McKinley has steadily moved through increasing levels of responsibility and has championed the

### MAJOR AWARDS AND DECORATIONS

Distinguished Service Medal with oak leaf cluster

Defense Superior Service Medal

Legion of Merit

Meritorious Service Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Air Force Achievement Medal with two oak leaf clusters

Air Force Outstanding Unit Award

Combat Readiness Medal with four oak leaf clusters

National Defense Service Medal with bronze star

Global War on Terrorism Service Medal

Humanitarian Service Medal

Air Force Longevity Service Award with silver oak leaf cluster

Armed Forces Reserve Medal with silver hourglass

Air Force Training Ribbon



Gen. Craig McKinley and Serbian Army Maj. Gen. Petar Cornakov review Serbian troops after McKinley set a wreath at the Monument to the Unknown Hero on Mount Avala in Serbia in 2010.

roles of Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen at every level.

The 2012 Defense Authorization Bill, which elevated the chief of the NGB to the Joint Chiefs of Staff, includes other key provisions for the Guard. It re-establishes the position of the vice chief of the NGB at the three-star level; increases the number of National Guard general officers considered for senior positions at U.S. Northern Command; and helps clarify the disaster response command relationship among the Guard and the U.S. military commands.

"This truly is a significant and historic day for the Guard and for all the Guard does for our nation," Sen. Patrick Leahy of Vermont, who helped author the act, said in a statement.

"Many people have asked why this change is so important to make, and why now. Our Guard has been bravely serving in near-constant rotation with Active Duty forces overseas for the last decade. At the same time, Guard troops have been the military first responders here at home. Yet the Pentagon has not fully caught up with the institutional changes that must accompany those operational changes."

McKinley, a native of Jacksonville, FL, joined the U.S. Air Force in 1974. In November 1980, he became a member of the Florida Air National Guard's 125th Fighter Interceptor Group in Jacksonville and progressed through the ranks. He served in key positions including commander of the 125th Fighter Wing in 1991; commander of Southeast Air Defense Sector in 1996; deputy director of the Air National Guard in 1998 and director of the Air National Guard in 2006.

In November 2008, McKinley was sworn in and promoted as the first four-star general to lead the National Guard.

As chief, McKinley is the senior uniformed National Guard officer responsible for formulating, developing and coordinating all policies, programs and plans affecting more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel.

— Master Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa

## Model Force

### Guard officials advise United Arab Emirates

**COLUMBIA, SC** In February, the South Carolina National Guard welcomed a military delegation from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to tour the Joint Operations Center, McEntire Joint National Guard Base, and McCrady Training Center.

The UAE is interested in establishing its own reserve component force and wanted to learn firsthand how it operates in the U.S. During the visit, South Carolina built relationships with the delegation to help support U.S. national interests and security cooperation goals.

"The National Guard is woven into the fabric of our nation. It [consists of] citizens who give up their time to protect the country," The adjutant general of South Carolina, Major General Robert Livingston Jr. says.

One main point stressed to the delegation is the advantages the National Guard has over the Active component. While immobilized, the Guard costs about one-third less than the Active force. And Guard Soldiers bring civilian skills, so when they're called to action, the sense of community goes with them.

The UAE delegation also met in Washington, DC, with General Craig McKinley, chief of the National Guard Bureau; Lieutenant General Bud Wyatt, director of the Air National Guard; and Lieutenant General Bill Ingram, director of the Army National Guard, to understand the role of the Guard on a national level.

"This visit to the National Guard Bureau and South Carolina was only the first step in coordination between U.S. and UAE National Guard programs. We hope we will have many other opportunities to visit in the future," says Staff Col. AbdelRahman Ibrahim AlMazmi, a defense attache of the Embassy of United Arab Emirates (U.S. & Canada). "It is our intention to establish a National Guard-like entity that would be similar to the one we visited at the National Guard Bureau and South Carolina, but would also be more well-suited and tailored toward the UAE specifically."

— CPT Jamie Delk



# In the Face of Danger

Illinois Guard Soldier foils robbery attempt and catches three suspects



**CHICAGO, IL** Quick actions by a 21-year-old Illinois Army National Guard Soldier single-handedly thwarted an attempted robbery in January, resulting in the arrest of three teenagers.

Specialist Paville N. Simpson, a military police officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, in Chicago, intervened in the robbery, detaining three suspects after they took someone else's iPhone.

Simpson, who also works as a security guard for World Security Agency, was on his way to his job and waiting for a train around 6:30 p.m. when he was flagged down by the robbery victim. After receiving the description of the suspects—he was told one of the teens had a gun—he quickly went into action.

"It was just instant. The guy needed help, so

I helped him," Simpson says.

Simpson chased the suspects, all juveniles, up the stairs. He seized two of them, both 16 years old, on a storage bin. He handcuffed them together, then chased after the remaining suspect, according to CBS 2. The third suspect, a 17-year-old male, attempted to run back down the stairs. When Simpson caught him, the suspect pulled out a replica of a gun. Simpson then drew his own gun, which, as a security guard, he has a permit to carry. Simpson controlled all three suspects until Chicago police officers arrived.

Police arrested all three, says Officer Robert Perez, a public information officer with the Chicago Police Department. Two of them were charged as juveniles, one as an adult. The iPhone was returned to the robbery victim.

"One of the values that the Army and the

Illinois National Guard instills in our Soldiers is personal courage. Simpson certainly displayed that courage in helping a fellow Chicago citizen last night," said Major General William L. Enyart, adjutant general. "We are proud to have such courageous men and women in our ranks."

Lieutenant Colonel Maurice Rochelle of Flossmoor, officer in charge for the 404th, says this is what having Citizen-Soldiers in our communities is all about. He adds that the unit that day had just completed Army combatives training, which teaches the art of self-defense.

"That very evening Simpson put those skills into action," Rochelle says. "I think this is tremendous. What he did is amazing."

Simpson, however, denies being a hero.

"It's not about me being a hero. It's about me doing the right thing at the right time," he says.

—SGT Jamie L. Witt

# A Leader in Overdrive

For top ROTC cadet, there's no slowing down

**ROTC Cadet Mariya Golotyuk** is accustomed to pushing herself to the limit, whether it's pursuing a master's degree or caring for her two children. So when she entered the 2011 Leader Development & Assessment Course (LDAC), she was determined to put her perseverance to the test—and it paid off. After the grueling five-week training course, the Ukraine native became the U.S. Army Cadet Command's Cadet of the Year.



**What did you do to prepare?** I rose at 4 each morning except Sunday and ran on the track and up the steps, often with a 30-pound pack on my back. I also took part in the Geodesy Training, using my compass, map and GPS, urging on my fellow Soldiers.

**You are a full-time master's student, work full time, are an ROTC cadet and a mother of two. How do you balance everything?** I don't balance anything; I simply do what I can do in a 20-hour day. I guess I do not need as much sleep as most people.

**How has the Guard scholarship you received impacted you?** It made my pursuits possible. I think without it, there wouldn't be enough hours in the day.

**You are prior service enlisted. What influenced you to become a cadet and pursue a commission?** In Ukraine, I grew up respecting the institution, and as early as my teenage years I decided that I wanted to be a career officer in the military. The opportunity to join the U.S. Army, the greatest army in the world, has been a special blessing.

**What advice and guidance would you give other cadets preparing for LDAC 2012?** Not everyone is as single-minded as I've been, and I don't recommend such regimen for all. I think the most important advice is to dedicate oneself to a goal and to participate. The 5,642 cadets who did not come in first last summer are also winners.

—MSG Ken Suratt,  
ARNG Scholarship Programs Manager



## Cooks Learn From Seasoned Chef

**DENVER, CO** CPT Mark Tommell, commander of Company E, 2nd Battalion, 135th General Support Aviation, has enlisted the services of a professional chef and culinary instructor to teach his food service specialists the tricks of the trade. Chef Ronald Lavallee, a culinary instructor at Johnson & Wales University, is a Vietnam Veteran with 45 years in the food service industry. He's been working with the cooks of Company E since autumn 2011, and since Tommell called on him for assistance, the Soldiers tend to stick around for lunch on drill weekends.

—Story & photo by SPC Zachary T. Sheely



## Soldiers Recognized for Invention

**CAMP DODGE JOHNSTON, IA** SSG J. Winkowski, SPC Aaron McNew and SPC Derick Morgan, all with the HHC, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry, were recognized during the Army's greatest inventions competition for most innovative advances in Army technology. Their invention was a prototype for the "Ironman Pack Ammunition Pack System for Small Dismounted Team," created during a recent deployment to Afghanistan. This high-capacity ammunition carriage system enables a machine gunner to carry and fire up to 500 rounds of linked ammunition from a rucksack-like carrier.

—Story & photo from Iowa National Guard



## Kansas ADT's Afghan Market Opens

**LAGHMAN PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN** Kansas National Guard's Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) and their Afghan counterparts have opened a new market near the village of Gerdy Katz in Afghanistan. Two years ago, the ADT began the project, working on farming and agriculture including greenhouses, an irrigation system, and a citrus fruit tree and nut tree orchard. About 120 Afghan farmers were trained in greenhouse technology, soil analysis, drip irrigation, pest management and animal husbandry. The result is this market, owned and operated by Wasir Kahn, who wants the market to bring hope to his district.

—Story & photo by SSG Luke Graziani



## Pennsylvania Trains With Canada

**FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, PA** In October, Exercise Maple Resolve marked the first time that members of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's B Company, 2nd of the 104th General Support Aviation Battalion, worked face-to-face with their Canadian military neighbors. MG Wesley Craig Jr., adjutant general of Pennsylvania, called the exercise a win-win for both forces. "The Canadian army . . . needed to conduct training . . . to meet their requirements to deploy," he said. "Unfortunately, all their Chinooks are in Afghanistan, so they asked if we could help out. We were, of course, happy to do so."

—Story by MAJ Ed Shank, photo by 2LT Javin Lau



## Task Force Tours Ship Channel

**HOUSTON, TX** Members of Joint Task Force 71 (JTF-71), Texas National Guard, joined Coast Guard and Harris County Hazmat members for an extensive tour of the Port of Houston Ship Channel in December 2011. The channel is a catalyst for growth that generates jobs in the community. In recent years, concerns over possible attacks from dirty bombs within U.S. borders led the Department of Defense to establish Guard units like JTF-71 to deal with such threats. The irradiation of a highly trafficked hub like the Houston Ship Channel could be a national disaster.

—Story by SSG Melissa Bright, photo from the Texas National Guard



## 40 Years Later, Soldier Gets Bronze Star

Retired Missouri Guard member receives honor for recon missions in Vietnam War



**ST. JOSEPH, MO** More than four decades after being deployed to Vietnam, Larry Payne was recently presented with a Bronze Star for meritorious service in connection with armed conflict operations during the siege of Khe Sanh in 1968.

Payne received the medal, the military's fourth-highest combat award, while being a reconnaissance team leader with the U.S. Army Special Forces. "Myself and one more American, we ran recon over the fence—black ops," Payne says. "We were told there was nobody in Laos, or Cambodia or North Vietnam—that's what they said, but we spent time in those three countries watching the Ho Chi Minh Trail."

Payne says his orders came straight from the Pentagon. "They would look at recon pictures and say, 'What is this?' Then they would send in my

team to go check it out."

Recordkeeping back then was not what it is today. Payne says that during his last 30–40 days in Khe Sanh and Mai Loc, his unit received a new commander, and awards for Payne and others in his unit were lost in the shuffle. Overall, Payne served 37 years in the military, including 31 years with the Missouri National Guard. He retired as a chief warrant officer in 2003 from the 135th Signal Company in St. Joseph.

"It's a real honor for me to recognize someone with his length of service and the kinds of contributions he made both in Vietnam and 31 years in the same city, same armory," says Brigadier General David Irwin, assistant division commander for the 35th Infantry Division.

—Jennifer Archdekin

## Preparing for a Radioactive Threat

South Dakota hazard response team conducts mock exercise at national monument

**CUSTER, SD** The South Dakota National Guard's 82nd Civil Support Team (CST) paired up with personnel from Jewel Cave National Monument to conduct a mock cave rescue and emergency response exercise in January. The 82nd CST and Jewel Cave officials used the exercise to train in rescue operations and response to releases of chemical, biological or radioactive agents. The 82nd is South Dakota's all-hazard response team.

The emergency response exercise was designed around a scenario in which a Jewel Cave employee discovers a radioactive container located inside the cave. The unit dispatched 14 members with equipment for the investigation. Twelve hours later, the team, teaming with an FBI agent, had identified and removed the source.

"We like to train like this because this is the stuff people have actually seen in real life, and it betters us as a team to know what to do in these types of situations," says Staff Sergeant Alex Raber.



The chances of the CST team being called to respond to an incident at Jewel Cave are rare, but the unit needed to be prepared, says Larry Johnson, superintendent of Jewel Cave National Monument. "You learn in the National Park Service to never say never," he says.

—SSG Theanne Tangen

## Using Virtual Reality to Counter IEDs

Cutting-edge simulator re-creates battlefield experience

**EDINBURGH, IN** Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) Kapisa, which was training at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan, was the first PRT to train on a new virtual reality combat simulator Dec. 16. The simulator was designed to help Soldiers better deal with the number-one killer in the contemporary operating environment: improvised explosive devices.

The Counter-IED Collective and Individual Mounted Training Program puts Soldiers in a simulated armored vehicle and uses high-definition video projected onto a giant screen surrounding the vehicle. Sound and percussion elements are used to add to the realism of the simulation.

The system is designed to replicate realistic conditions of mounted combat such as smoke, noise, poor visibility, confusion and physically jarring explosions—all within the confines of safety. The simulator puts Soldiers through realistic scenarios and physiological challenges to fully engage all the senses that affect their performance and decision-making skills on the battlefield.

"It was designed because there was nothing out there to safely simulate an IED blast for Soldiers," says Michael Laughead, an observer/controller with RL Leaders, the company responsible for building the simulator.

The simulator trains Soldiers on much more than just reacting to an IED threat. They also get to practice troop-leading procedures, night training, mobility kills, reporting unexploded ordnance and medical evacuation reporting.

"There is a lot being trained here, and the training device itself is really awe-inspiring to Soldiers, because they've never seen anything like it," Laughead



says. Not only does the new simulator provide a realistic training environment, it also gives a digital recording of the entire training scenario to units that they can immediately review on any computer so Soldiers can learn how they can improve.

Lieutenant Colonel Eric K. Shafa, commander of PRT Kapisa, is excited about being with the first PRT to have the opportunity to train with the new simulator.

"This simulator is more realistic than anything I've seen before, and the ability for these guys to get in there and work together and actually run through scenarios where they are leaving the [forward operating base] and being able to communicate with each other as well as work on their situational awareness, that's really the most important thing," he says.

Shafa added, "A lot of these guys have never been to Afghanistan, and for them to see what the

roads are like, what the scenarios are that they may encounter, it helps prepare them for what they will see when they get downrange so they already have in mind what it's going to be like."

Specialist Darren J. Ganier-Slotterbeck, a civil affairs specialist for PRT Kapisa, is no stranger to Afghanistan or IEDs. A California native, Ganier-Slotterbeck deployed in 2005, 2007 and 2008 with the Marines and encountered IEDs on multiple occasions. He was quick to vouch for how realistic the new simulator is.

According to Ganier-Slotterbeck, Soldiers like him benefit most from the experience offered by the new simulator by seeing such a realistic depiction of encountering IED threats. The simulator shows Soldiers what to look for in an environment that could only be more realistic by

actually training in Afghanistan.

"If we'd had the ability to go through training like this at the time, those [previous] deployments would have been a lot different," he says.

First Army Division East is responsible for training Soldiers deploying through Camp Atterbury and has been since 2003. Sergeant First Class Jason S. Graning, a trainer/mentor assigned to the 4th Cavalry Battalion, observed and validated PRT Kapisa as it went through the new simulator.

"This simulator is extremely cost-effective because we can add all sorts of variables to scenarios that we would normally have to resource all sorts of equipment for," he says. "As far as the quality of the training, this is the first time I've seen this system, and I think it has to be one of the best simulators the Army has put out. It's just awesome."

—SSG Matt Scotten



# Welcome Reception

Virginia brings radio to homes in rural areas of Afghanistan

**ZABUL PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN** The song "Video Killed the Radio Star" was the first video played on MTV in 1981 and launched a music revolution. While the stars may be "dead," radio is not—not here at least. It is a primary form of spreading news and information throughout rural areas of the country.

Soldiers of the Virginia Army National Guard's 116th Infantry Brigade Combat Team are deploying technology in a revolutionary way in Afghanistan using a shortwave radio transmitter that can reach almost every radio in Zabul province.

This is the first time a province-wide transmitter has been used in Afghanistan. The transmitter allows the Zabul provincial and district government to send messages to rural Afghan homes.

"No other unit in the International Security Assistance Force has ever done this at any level," says Master Sergeant Joel Fix of the novel application of the technology.

Listening to the radio—thousands of which were distributed by NATO-ISAF—is a cultural norm for Afghans, many of whom follow both the BBC and Voice of America.

Fix, a 14-year Veteran of the National Guard on his third overseas deployment, came up with the transmitter solution in response to a problem raised in discussions with Afghan officials: "How could the government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan communicate to their people in remote areas?"

It was a particularly timely predicament. As the Afghan government expanded its influence into every district, its continued legitimacy rested on the ability to reliably reach and involve ordinary Afghans in their parliamentary democracy.

Specifically, the district governors of Mizan and Day Chopan in Zabul province wanted to invite the elders of their districts to grand shuras (a council or assembly), in September.

Day Chopan has the highest elevations of Zabul province, with deep valleys unreceptive to radio signals.

The 116th, in partnership with Romanian troops and Soldiers of the Alaska-based 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry Regiment, all members of Combined Team Zabul (CTZ), came together to brainstorm a solution.

Traditional options raised by CTZ such as leaflet drops, broadcasting radio transmissions from aircraft and even flying aircraft with

loudspeakers attached were all denied.

"The government was looking for ways to communicate with people on a greater scale, but there were gaps in the coverage," Fix says. "Shortwave radio is the solution we came up with."

Shortwave radio is known in the United States as ham radio, which allows two-way communication. The Zabul transmitter is one-way. Most radios used by Afghans are receive-only.

"I was soliciting for bids for a transmitter and was referred to Don Butler to assist with the project," says Major William O'Neal, a member of the 116th. Butler, an Air Force Veteran from the '60s, is a ham radio enthusiast who provided design assistance for the transmitter.

"With this configuration, no matter where they are, there's no reason the Afghans can't get a signal," Butler says. "The frequency is close to, but not the same as, the one for the

BBC. That makes it easy to find and remember."

The transmitter owes its success to a technique called Near Vertical Incidence Skywave, or NVIS, which involves bouncing radio signals off the ionosphere—a layer of the atmosphere. Two NVIS antennas are placed horizontal to the ground, unlike a traditional vertical transmitter. The second part of the NVIS antenna is called a ground wire and helps to boost the signal by forcing it to go straight up instead of outward and limited by the curve of the earth.

"In a traditional shortwave broadcast, you get your antennas up as high as you can go," Fix says. "It bounces off the F2 layer of the ionosphere but gives you limited coverage with 'skip points.' Using NVIS and our reflector wire, the signal goes up at a very steep angle and straight back down, which can penetrate deeper into mountain valleys. When we were looking at this system, it was a no-brainer."

—SGT Francis O'Brien



# A Meeting of Minds

Guard Bureau, MIT host homeland security course

**LEXINGTON, MA** The National Guard Bureau Homeland Security Institute, in cooperation with MIT Lincoln Laboratory, recently hosted the first-of-its-kind Homeland Protection Course.

Fifty professionals from across the country and all branches of service (from the rank of lieutenant colonel to brigadier general) attended the five-day course designed to provide a broad understanding of homeland protection missions, technologies, architectures and current challenges. Held in January at Hanscom Air Force Base, the course consisted of lectures, tours and hands-on exercises. Each session was led by a leading expert at MIT Lincoln Laboratory. "The mission of MIT Lincoln Laboratory is technology in support of national security," says Dr. Israel Soibelman, head of the Homeland Protection and Air Traffic Control Division at MIT Lincoln Laboratory. "Our key roles are system architect engineering, long-term technology development and system prototyping."

Brigadier General Paul G. Smith, assistant adjutant general of the Massachusetts National Guard, says: "For 375 years, the National Guard has been in the business of homeland protection. This course will [help] our leaders to prepare for the unique challenges we may encounter in the future."

The course began with topics on homeland air defense and air security and future challenges. "This is a unique opportunity for Coast Guard members to get the latest information on technology for the homeland protection mission," says Rear Admiral Karl Schultz, director of Governmental and Public Affairs, U.S. Coast Guard. "It is a dual benefit for us particularly with the National Guard, as we have a shared interest in their support of defense. It's a win on both fronts; learn about the technology and network with the Guard."

Cutting-edge presentations in communications and cybersecurity were popular, and the course concluded with a real-world homeland protection exercise, which all class members participated in and deemed a success.

—LTC James Sahady



# Louisiana, Haiti Create Partnership

**NEW ORLEANS, LA** The Louisiana National Guard and the country of Haiti have officially announced the strengthening of ties through the State Partnership Program during a ceremony in Haiti, Jan. 18. The program builds on the Louisiana Guard's work in the Artibonite Department in 2010 and 2011 following the devastating earthquake two years ago. The partnership will work to strengthen the capacity of the Haitian government to prepare for and react to major natural events, to strengthen the capacity of the Haitian National Police, and to support the activities of the Haitian Coast Guard.

—Story by SSG Denis Ricou, photo from U.S. Army



# North Carolina Meets With Botswana

**GABORONE, BOTSWANA** Four U.S. military leaders met with top Botswana Defence Force (BDF) leaders during the AFRICOM Sponsored Intelligence Operations Seminar. Participants described how integrating military intelligence into operations led to successful missions and how the U.S. transitioned a stand-alone intelligence apparatus into one fully integrated into all operations. MG Edward Leacock, former Deputy J2 at AFRICOM, now with the U.S. Defense Intelligence Agency, said, "It was great for me to be here and see the effort that started several years ago . . . coming to fruition."

—Story & photo by MAJ Matthew Handley



# New Leader for North Dakota's LCC

**BISMARCK, ND** North Dakota's Land Component Command (LCC) welcomed a new leader recently when BG William Seekins handed command over to COL David Anderson at the Raymond J. Bohn Armory. The LCC is the Army component of the North Dakota Guard, with more than 3,350 Soldiers. "Brigadier General Seekins has served with great distinction throughout his career," said MG David Sprynczynatyk, the state's adjutant general. "He has effectively commanded at many levels during the past decade, when the Global War on Terrorism yielded record deployments for the North Dakota Guard."

—Story from North Dakota National Guard, photo by SPC Jennifer Joyce



# Veterans Attend New York Job Fair

**FARMINGDALE, NY** On Feb. 10, 175 service members and Veterans met with employers and attended a resume-writing workshop at the Veterans Job Fair held at the Armed Forces Reserve Center. The New York National Guard is making a statewide push to link employers with members of the Army and Air National Guard who are unemployed or underemployed. Eighty employers and agencies participated in the event, including the Suffolk County Veterans Service Agency. New York presented the agency with a crystal National Guard statuette as thanks for their support.

—Story & photo from New York National Guard



# New Security for Afghan PRTs

**EDINBURGH, IN** For Afghan citizens and troops deployed there, security is a serious concern. Providing security for the next rotation of Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) falls to 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry (Airborne), composed of Soldiers from the Alaska, Rhode Island and Texas Army National Guards. The mission of the security force is to help the PRTs be successful in their mission, said LTC Shawn McGrath of LaCoste, TX. The security elements provide the tactical expertise to allow the PRTs to oversee projects in the reconstruction under way in their assigned province, he said.

—Story & photo by SSG David Bruce



# Alaska to the Rescue

Snow storm relief is the most recent example of Soldiers saving citizens



■ **CAMP DENALI, AK** Alaska National Guard members helped the citizens of the small Alaskan town of Cordova dig out from a series of winter storms. By early January, more than 18 feet of snow had fallen in the area.

Called Operation Deep Dig, 57 Soldiers arrived on the state's ferry system with shovels in hand ready to assist, according to Captain Chad Ausel, commander, 761st Military Police Company.

"As soon as we got here, we identified a priority list for safety and familiarization training with Cordova. We asked for a subject matter expert on how they've cleared snow here safely and then completed training on harnesses, ropes and knots to make sure the Guard Soldiers are trained to do the mission safely," Ausel says.

After training was completed, Ausel focused on getting his Soldiers out in the community to assist wherever they were needed. City officials identified three locations in the morning, and squads were designated to clear those areas.

The Guard arrived at a crucial time to assist, since more snow and rain were on the way. City officials were concerned about heavy and wet snow on roofs, and some structures had already collapsed.

Mayor Jim Kallander of Cordova was grateful for the assistance the city received from the state and for the response to his community.

"I can't say how impressed I am with the homeland security response, the governor's office response, and now the National Guard is stepping up to the plate," Kallander says. "It's exactly what we needed."

As the first military responder in all domestic emergencies, the Guard is focused on doing everything it can to help the community. "I'm very proud of my Soldiers and the job they've done so far," Ausel says. "They are working with a sense of urgency and are very proud to serve the community down here. This is why they signed up to serve in the National Guard."

Snow removal, however, is far from the only type of rescue the Guard excels at. Last year, Soldiers in the state saved 79 lives in Alaska.

"Our search and rescue personnel are a valuable resource that are vital to supporting the Active Duty mission and Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex," says Major General Thomas H. Katkus, adjutant general of the Alaska National Guard. "We are very fortunate to have this response capability in Alaska to assist our Active Duty military and the citizens of Alaska."

Since 1994, Alaska National Guard Soldiers

have supported the 11th Rescue Coordination Center calls with search and rescue assets, flying more than 20,300 mission hours and earning more than 1,900 saves and 800 assists to safety.

Dealing with often treacherous terrain with rapid weather changes without warning, Alaska National Guard members provide a sense of security and hope as the last chance for survival.

"Soldiers are called on to perform rescues in conditions where no one else is able to reach, and they do that with a sense of duty and professionalism that few can," Katkus says.

In addition to performing day-to-day support in Alaska, Soldiers from the 212th Rescue Squadron were also deployed to Afghanistan to support combat search and rescue missions in the Global War on Terrorism and are credited with 25 saves while deployed in 2011.

"Whether it's here in Alaska supporting search and rescue efforts or defending our country overseas, Alaska Guard Soldiers are highly trained and recognized for their exceptional professionalism," Katkus says. "We have 104 people who are alive as a direct result of our Guard Soldiers' hard work."

—MAJ Guy Hayes and LT Bernie Kale

# Family Affair

Son gives re-enlistment oath to father

■ **PHOENIX, AZ** While it may be common for a parent or grandparent to swear a child into military service, it's quite unique for a child to give the oath to a parent.

Air Force First Lieutenant Marc Balaban was the enlisting officer for his father, Army Sergeant Ed Balaban, when he extended his military career for two more years in Phoenix, AZ, at a ceremony in December. "It was very special, considering that I had the honor and privilege of commissioning him almost four years ago," Ed said. "It had a 'circle of life' sense to it. I gave him his first oath, and he gave me my last."

"When he asked me to do it, I jumped at the opportunity," said Marc.

Ed, whose father served in the U.S. Marines during WWII, was a commissioned officer in the Navy and served on Active Duty from 1982–1993. From 1993–1996, he was a drilling Naval Reservist. He left the Navy as a lieutenant, equivalent to an Army/Air Force/Marine Corps captain. Prior to his Active Duty military career, Ed taught technology in New York. Upon his release from Active Duty, he became a school administrator, holding assistant principal and principal positions in both New York and Arizona. He joined the Arizona Army National Guard in 2005 and currently serves as a public affairs specialist at the Guard's Phoenix headquarters.

Marc was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Air Force upon graduation from the Rochester (NY) Institute of Technology in 2008. He has since successfully completed pilot training and is now assigned to a unit in Nevada, where he pilots the Predator, a remotely piloted aircraft.

"Our relationship is one built on mutual respect, love and admiration," Ed said about his relationship with his son. "We share many of the same interests, which now include our respective military careers. I am proud to not only call him my son, but also to consider him a friend."

—Story from the Arizona National Guard

## Family Unit?

Are you part of a family that boasts multiple Guard Soldiers? If so, send a photo of your clan to [editor@gxonline.com](mailto:editor@gxonline.com)—we'd love to publish it in an upcoming issue.



## Atterbury Raises the Bar

**EDINBURGH, IN** America's frequent use of fundamental weapons systems in combat for the past decade can lead units to take for granted that their Soldiers know these systems. The Small Arms Master Gunner Course, conducted in January at the Regional Training Institute at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center, targeted such complacency. Students were taught the ins and outs of advanced level maintenance, marksmanship and safety on several weapons systems, including the M4, M249, M240 and M2. Then they learned how to teach these skills to Soldiers in their home units.

—Story from Indiana National Guard, photo by SSG Matt Scotten



## Absentee Voting Streamlined

**WASHINGTON** Federal officials are urging military members and their families living outside the United States to register to vote and request an absentee ballot. Both can be done easily by downloading a federal postcard application on the Federal Voting Assistance Program website ([www.fvap.gov](http://www.fvap.gov)). A digital "wizard" takes applicants through the process in about five minutes, allowing them to avoid the 390-page federal voting assistance guide, and provides a preprinted, stamped envelope for the application that must be signed and mailed back to the appropriate voting registrar.

—Story by Lisa Daniel, photo by SSG Lynette Hoke



## Hawaii Trains for Cold Weather

**SNOWMASS VILLAGE, CO** The Hawaii National Guard's 93rd Civil Support Team joined the Colorado National Guard's 8th Civil Support Team in February to train on cold-weather survival tactics as part of its support role at the Winter X Games in Aspen, CO. The instruction included topics such as land navigation, snow shelter construction, first-aid and fire building. "We don't get this kind of cold weather survival training in Hawaii," SSG Noah Raymond says. "However, we are not just stationed in Hawaii—we're mobile too—so it's really good stuff to know."

—Story & photo by SPC Zachary Sheely



## State Partnership Program Praised

**WASHINGTON** A small but innovative National Guard program demonstrates the U.S. military's "very agile and flexible" capabilities in working with partners, the vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said recently. Navy Admiral James A. Winnefeld Jr. cited the National Guard's State Partnership Program as an example of an ongoing effort that lines up well with President Barack Obama's new military strategy. The program, which partners individual states with nations in Europe, Africa and Asia, has "proven to be a very, very valuable high-leverage tool for us," Winnefeld said.

—Story from American Forces Press Service, photo by SSG Jim Greenhill



## Nevada Fights Washoe Drive Fire

**RENO, NV** About 50 Nevada National Guard Soldiers and Airmen supported civil authorities fighting the Washoe Drive Fire south of Reno, NV, on Jan. 20. The Guard members primarily worked an 11-mile corridor of the affected areas as a security presence, helping local first responders. They ensured that no unauthorized personnel entered the areas and maintained general safety. Additionally, three Nevada Guard fire trucks and supporting personnel responded to help battle the wildfire, which affected at least 3,000 acres. No other Guard assets were requested.

—Story from Nevada National Guard, photo by SGT Mike Getten



## Show of Force

California demonstrates its power in the Mojave Desert



**FORT IRWIN, CA** In the barren landscape of the National Training Center, armored machines of the California Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 185th Armor Battalion, ground and clanked as their heavy steel tracks churned up the Mojave Desert. The sharp cracks of M4 carbine rifles echoed off the surrounding hills.

These noises, blended with a biting wind and pouring rain, were the sights and sounds that flooded the senses Nov. 4–5, as Soldiers sent bullets downrange during weapons qualification and ripped up the terrain in their Bradley Fighting Vehicles running maneuver exercises.

The training started as troops fired their rifles on the qualification range. "Shooting is a perishable skill," says Sergeant Thomas Wituschek, an infantryman and senior sniper for Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC). "They are the most critical skills a Soldier needs to survive."

Another group of Soldiers rolled out their preferred weapon, the M2A3 Operation Desert Storm - Situational Awareness Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle, or more simply put, the Bradley.

A Bradley commander's independent viewer enables him to scan for the enemy using both laser range-finder and direct-view optics without interfering with the gunner's acquisition and engagement of targets. They hunt. They find. They kill.

Sergeant Patrick Castillo, a forward observer with an HHC fire support team, or FIST, says the new Bradleys are able to track the battle better than ever. "The gunner can laser a target without firing and giving away his position, and then the [forward observer] in the back can take that data and use it to call down [an air] strike," Castillo says.

—SPC Nevada Smith

## Tools for Tots

Kentucky gives school supplies to hundreds of Afghan children

**KAPISA PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN** More than 600 children received a surprise here in December when Kentucky Army National Guard Soldiers showed up at their school with more than 50 boxes full of school supplies. Earlier, after visiting three of the local schools, Sergeant Heather Carrier saw many students without basic supplies and emailed friends in the Kentucky school system.

"Not even a day later a personal friend sent me a message to inform me she would make it this year's National Guard Youth Symposium community project," she says. Carrier wasn't alone in the effort. Sergeant Jerred Stevens also enlisted the help of teachers back home, including his mom, who organized donations.

Notebooks, pens, tablets, crayons and English textbooks were donated to Afghan youth. The donations came from many local businesses and were delivered to the sixth annual National Guard Youth Symposium in Louisville, KY, earlier in the year.

Carrier says Afghan students receiving the pencils or notebooks reacted "as if you just gave them a PlayStation 3 or an Xbox 360."

"It is great the Soldiers care about our education and have come to help my people rebuild my country," says Nagahia, a 10th-grade student at Nasaji Gulbahar Girls School.

—SGT Tamika Dillard



## End of an Era

The last North Dakota Guard member who served in Vietnam retires

**FARGO, ND** Most North Dakota Guard Soldiers are war Veterans, but one holds a special distinction: He was the last serving Vietnam War Veteran in the North Dakota National Guard.

When Master Sergeant Alan K. Peterson of West Fargo, ND, retired in November, he ended an era in both the Army and Air National Guard in the state. There's believed to be only one remaining Vietnam Veteran nationwide in the Air Force, and while it's unknown, there are presumably very few left in the Army.

Peterson enlisted in the Navy's delayed entry program shortly before graduating from Minnesota's Pine River High School in 1970. On April 28, 1971—barely a year after graduating—Peterson found himself involved in the Vietnam War.

He first headed to the Philippines to fulfill a 90-day "mess cooking" stint—similar to the Army's KP, or "kitchen patrol." After 60 days, he was attached to a ship.

He stayed in the airframes division for the length of that first, short cruise, then gained a position as a plane captain in a line division and was promoted to an E-4, or petty officer third class, a noncommissioned officer in the Navy. That made him second in charge in a squadron of 10 that managed 14 aircraft. In this role, he served on two additional cruises, working on the USS *Kitty Hawk* CVA-63.

Similar to a crew chief in the Army and Air Force, a plane captain in the Navy maintains and cleans the aircraft, monitors the work that's done on it, helps the pilot into the cockpit, and conducts a preflight turnaround for the aircraft.

His time on the ship doing 30- to 40-day stints in the Gulf of Tonkin off the Vietnam coast would be limited, though. Soon, Peterson was part of a group of 15 or so sent to shore in July 1972. For the next eight months, he stayed at Tan Son Nhut Air Base outside of Da Nang, replacing tailhooks, patching holes and repairing landing gear on aircraft that couldn't be recovered by the carrier ships.

"The amenities we have nowadays for creature comfort weren't there at that time," he says of his accommodations near Da Nang. "Any correspondence I had back home was letters, and usually that was about a two-week turnaround before I got one back."

When Peterson's Navy stint concluded, the young war Veteran did much the same as his



peers in the 1970s: grew his hair long and sprouted a beard. But by 1979, he was ready to don the uniform again.

He started as a combat engineer while working in a coal mine. After seven years as an engineer and traditional Guard Soldier, Peterson switched back into a maintenance job, but life outside of the Guard

took a major downturn. The house he grew up in was engulfed in fire, claiming his parents' lives. Plus, work in the coal mine had slowed, and in December 1986 he was laid off.

"That was a pretty tough year for me," he says. "I had a wife and three kids to take care of. What am I going to do?"

He saw a job posting for a maintenance position in Minot, ND, and before long embarked on a full-time career for the North Dakota Guard, first in the Minot shop and later at the Fargo shop, from which he retired Nov. 30.

During the years in between, he shared his knowledge as a maintenance supervisor, deployed to Iraq with the 142nd Engineer Combat Battalion and developed a unique connection with his middle son, who also

**Above:** MG David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota adjutant general, right, presents the Meritorious Service Medal to MSG Alan K. Peterson during Peterson's retirement ceremony Nov. 30 in Fargo, ND; **right:** Peterson poses on the USS *Kitty Hawk* in 1972.



deployed with him to Iraq in the same maintenance section.

Now, he's looking back at both deployments along with a decades-long military career, having already turned the mandatory retirement age of 60.

"Here now it's my turn [to retire], and I say, 'Wow, where did all those years go?'"

"I think the Guard for me has been a good choice. It has given me a direction in life and supported me quite well. I look back at all the experiences that I have had and all the people that I have either worked with or just crossed paths [with], and I feel it was well worth it."

—SSG Amy Wieser Willson



# Revved

LOUD AND PROUD, THE DIXIE THUNDER RUN ROLLS ON IN SUPPORT OF SOLDIERS



ON NOV. 19, 2011, a loud rumble filled the air in Tunica, MS, as hundreds of motorcycle engines roared to life. People had gathered with their Harley-Davidsons and Hondas to participate in the Ride for a Cure, organized by the group the Dixie Thunder Run. Started by Sergeant First Class Tony Shackelford, the 60-mile ride raises money for families of National Guard Soldiers. One fundraising method for the 2011 ride was selling raffle tickets. The prize: A Bourget Endeavor Bagger motorcycle.

What started as a low-key ride among friends six years ago has now become the largest motorcycle run in the state, raising thousands of dollars for families. Their motto "Soldiers Helping Soldiers" can be seen, heard and felt in the rows of bikes barreling down the interstate each year. And thanks to them, the theme keeps resounding long after the ride ends.

— Stephanie Inman

To learn more or to donate, visit [www.DixieThunderRun.net](http://www.DixieThunderRun.net)



The prize for the 2011 raffle was a Bourget Endeavor Bagger motorcycle. **Opposite Page:** Founder of Dixie Thunder Run SFC Tony Shackelford, left, with SSG (Ret.) David Bland, who has also been an instrumental force in the event since it began; Rock band 3 Doors Down shows its support by performing to a packed audience after the ride.



# Bring the Heat

**FIREFIGHTER & CAVALRY SCOUT  
ROB FOX STANDS  
READY FOR ALL  
KINDS OF DANGER**

by CHRISTIAN ANDERSON

**S**pecialist Rob Fox knows what it's like to be busy. A Soldier in the California Army National Guard's 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and firefighter with the San Diego Fire Department, Fox is "always on the clock." But he loves both jobs and wouldn't want it any other way.

"It's tough dividing my time between the fire department, the Guard and my family," says Fox, who is a husband and father. "It's a feeling of constantly being needed somewhere, but it's gratifying to know that I will be ready for any situation that pops up."

Growing up in New Jersey, Fox always knew he wasn't destined to work at an office job and sit behind a desk. Inspired by his father's service as a volunteer firefighter, he looked into becoming a firefighter not long after his move to San Diego, CA, in the late 1990s.

After being accepted to the fire academy, he tackled the training aggressively and graduated near the top of his class. Admitting his first day on the job was a bit overwhelming, Fox enjoyed the camaraderie of the firehouse and felt a sense of accomplishment every time he helped people out of dangerous situations. Looking back on his 10-year career, in which he has fought thousands of fires, Fox says his decision to be a firefighter gets reaffirmed especially when he helps kids.

"Anytime there's a situation that involves children, it really reminds me that I made the right choice," Fox says. "Having a young daughter at home doesn't make me second-guess anything. I still feel the same way about helping others, I still take the same risks, and it won't keep me from doing my job."

But Fox felt like he could offer even more to society, so he decided to enlist in the Army National Guard as a cavalry scout.

"One of my proudest days as a Soldier is when I raised my hand and took the oath, swearing to defend my country," he says.

Much like his experience at the fire academy, Fox breezed through OSUT (One Station Unit Training) and welcomed the challenge of being a Soldier. When he reported back for duty at Fire Station 11 after the 17 weeks of training, his fellow firefighters were proud of him for joining the military.

"Quite a few guys I work with are either prior service or are currently in the Guard and Reserve, [so] they understood the challenge I had accepted in becoming a Soldier," he says.

Contemplating the training it took to be able to work in two different service careers, Fox feels like a better person.

"Some of the character traits that I've learned are how to work in a team, and personal responsibility and pride in what you are doing," he shares. "Looking back on it all, I don't regret a thing." **GX**

## MILITARY:

**Rank:** E-4, Specialist

**Unit:** B Troop, 1/18th CAV, 79th IBCT

**MOS:** 19D, Cavalry Scout

**Length of Service:** 3 years

## PUBLIC SERVICE:

**Rank:** Firefighter

**Total Length of Service:** 10 years

**Current Unit:** Fire Station 11, San Diego Fire Department



# 10

YEARS OF  
SERVICE AS  
A FIREFIGHTER

# 2

Lifesaving  
Medals

# OVER 10,000

FIRE  
ALARM  
CALLS  
WITH THE  
SAN DIEGO FIRE  
DEPARTMENT

ARMY RESERVE  
COMPONENT  
ACHIEVEMENT  
MEDAL

NOMINATED FOR  
THE SOLDIER'S  
MEDAL



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# Family

■ EMPOWERING THE MOST IMPORTANT UNIT

Like any industry, the military has its own lingo—and lots of it. It's often incomprehensible to the outside world—and military spouses and children are the ones who most need to understand it. If your family seems left in the dust when you start talking, have them check out this hotlist of Guard slang. It'll help everyone speak the same language.

## MOS

### Military Occupational Specialty

A Soldier's job in the Army. Every member of the Army National Guard has a job. That job has a code, and the code is called an MOS. For example, a 68E MOS is a dental specialist. A 31B is a military police officer.

strikes fear into many hearts. This is the intense, 10-week course all newly enlisted Guard members must undergo as part of their transition from civilian to Soldier. Instills skills and qualities like discipline, teamwork and courage. Also known as Basic Training.

## BCT

### Basic Combat Training

The legendary training that

## ACU

### Army Combat Uniform

The official uniform of the U.S. Army. Consists of a jacket,

trousers, moisture-wicking T-shirt and brown combat boots. The ACU replaced both versions of the battle-dress uniform and the desert camouflage uniform. Specific rules about when and where to wear them apply. Sometimes referred to in casual times as "pajamas."

## APFT

### Army Physical Fitness Test

The test Soldiers take at least twice a year to gauge physical readiness for service. Soldiers cannot receive a promotion or re-enlist without passing.

## MRE

### Meal, Ready-to-Eat

Pre-packaged meal for Soldiers. Typical contents: entree, side dish, crackers, peanut butter/cheese spread, dessert, instant coffee/tea,

matches, toilet paper, spoon and a heater to heat the main entree. Can be eaten cold but tastes better warm.

## PX

### Post Exchange

An Army-run general store on a military base. Like a mall or department store, this is where Soldiers and their families can buy everything (tax-free) from necessities to luxuries, at prices much lower than those at civilian retail stores.

## AT

### Annual Training

Two-week training period Guard Soldiers are required to attend once a year. Activities include physical exercises and job (MOS) skills development. May take place on a military base or on location.

## PT

### Physical Training

The regular physical fitness exercises Soldiers do with their units. Routines and level of difficulty vary greatly among units, but generally involves push-ups, sit-ups and running.

## FOB

### Forward Operating Base

A military base overseas that's used to support tactical operations.

**Cracking** the  
Help your family  
speak your language **Code**

BY JULIE ZEITLIN



# A Touch of Home

From simple to simply unusual, these care packages made a special connection

When family and friends send a care package overseas, it relays a powerful message to the Soldier: “We appreciate you.” That sentiment alone can mean more than anything in the package itself. Of course, the contents within are welcomed, too, whether they’re basics such as deodorant, socks, soap and snacks, or more creative reminders of home.

We asked service members and family members alike to tell us their favorite care package items. From elaborate gifts to a simple kind word, they have one thing in common: They brought sender and Soldier just a little closer together.

—Stephanie Inman



## SMALL WONDERS

Packages of instant Starbucks coffee! Plus, travel-sized toiletries. Both of these items made running missions to Iraq bearable.

—Sarah Davis Gantenbein

## PERFECT FOR A WARRIOR

My husband says the best gift he ever received while serving in Afghanistan was a glow-in-the-dark tomahawk!

—Crystal Gauthier

## Grateful Greetings

Christmas cards. From everyone, even people I’ve never met. Oh, and cookies.

—Nicole Jessica Jensen

## MORE THAN WARMTH

The best item I received was a blanket. I was in northern Iraq in 2010 and the average temperature was around 115 degrees in March. But there was something very exciting and gratifying about getting something as simple as a homemade blanket in a care package from the USO. It gave me a great sense of pride in the American people. I was reminded that the general public had not forgotten about us “over there” and that our work was appreciated.

—Michael Duane Hankins

## Instant Christmas

I sent my husband and his unit a 1½-foot tall Christmas tree complete with ornaments, lights and presents. Nothing like having a little bit of home for the holidays!

—Pam Coop



## The Picture of Togetherness

I got a quilt from my sister. A portion of the quilt had photos of family and friends, along with letters and notes. —Seth Isbell

## STRAIGHT TO THE HEART

The most meaningful thing, which was given to me when departing to Iraq, was a letter from a boy around 7 years old that said, “Dear Mr./Ms. Soldier, thank you for keeping us safe.” That was six years ago and I will never forget! —Antony Bermudez

## Faith, Hope and Love

My husband got a patchwork quilt from people at church. On the back, all the kids had signed their names. The front featured different squares from families and individuals with messages written to my husband. —Lisa Schmid Dulaney



## A-PLUS

Before I deployed, I was a college student who did substitute teaching on the side. One class that I spent a lot of time with was a first-grade class at a local elementary school. The following year, their second-grade teacher had the entire class draw pictures and write letters, and sent them all in a care package.

—Warren Wright

## Holiday in a Box

I sent my two sons, while they were serving in Iraq together, hammocks to tie between the Humvees. Plus, a toilet seat for each of them so they wouldn’t have to sit on the metal toilets. Oh, and I sent my boys boiled eggs, egg dye, vinegar, etc. so they could color eggs at Easter, small pumpkins to carve at Halloween, and each a tree to decorate at Christmas (with boxes of lights, ornaments and a star for the top). —Teresa Cahill



## SWEET SURPRISE

I sent my husband a homemade coconut cake for his birthday while he was deployed to Mosul, Iraq. I froze the cake, packed it with bubble wrap and sent it in a box. It took six days to get there but was in perfect condition and still fresh when it arrived. He felt like it was a true piece of home. —Mary Mattheiss





# Be a Better Communicator

To make your relationship stronger, be sure to respect each other's needs, follow these dos and don'ts and—most important of all—make these tips a habit

BY MEGAN PACELLA

Communication issues occur in every marriage and relationship, but they can become even more pronounced in Guard couples, whether it's because of a deployment or just the everyday stresses of military life. To avoid tense arguments or misunderstandings, try these tips, and keep in mind that they need to become habits to ensure a healthy relationship.

**DO use the speaker-listener technique.** If you tend to argue repeatedly about the same subject, this approach could help you calm down and really listen to your partner and clarify your messages: When speaking, use short statements and then pause to allow the listener to absorb it all.

"Most often, when one spouse is talking, the other spouse is thinking, processing, evaluating, making judgments—so what the speaker is saying isn't necessarily what's heard," explains Viola Raschke, director of Psychological Health, Nebraska National Guard.

**DO validate your partner's feelings.** When we tell our partners that their feelings are not warranted, they may feel invalidated or hurt, and it can cause a quarrel. "Sometimes an argument starts out small, and then it becomes a one-upping contest, where the couple is just pointing fingers," Raschke says. "Try to stay on task, and allow your partner to feel the way they do."

**DO respond to criticism with empathy.** Nobody likes to be criticized. But if your partner gives you flak and you respond with angry words, you might spark an intense fight. Instead, listen carefully and respond with calm words and mannerisms. If you disagree with a critique, respectfully state



your point of view and give thoughtful reasons why you don't see eye-to-eye.

**DO take a time-out.** No matter how well you communicate, at some point in your relationship you'll have a difficult argument. If you and your spouse can't seem to resolve an issue, give each other some space.

"There has to be a level of commitment and trust between spouses, so you are respecting the other person's needs," Raschke says. "Sometimes that means allowing your partner [a time-out], so they can clear their head and come back to the conversation later." After a few hours, you can both come back to the discussion with a clear mind and willingness to work through the problem.

**DON'T make negative assumptions.** When your partner is unexpectedly late arriving home from work, it's tempting to become

suspicious. "Making negative assumptions is a common bad habit," Raschke says. "Identify that your brain wants to make a negative assumption, and use good communication instead. That means asking your husband or wife where they were [rather than starting] an argument."

**DON'T lose focus.** If you're talking about finances, don't bring up last week's disagreement about washing the dishes. By working on one problem at a time, you can actually resolve the issue. Throwing other troubles into the mix only results in more bickering—and lowers your chance of solving the current problem.

**DON'T try to "win" a discussion.** It's hard to get anywhere if you view an argument as a chance to prove that your position is the right one. Consider disagreements with your partner a chance to discuss both sides of an issue and to find a compromise. If you leave an argument without a potential solution, you both lose.

**DON'T be afraid to seek help.** If there are issues in your marriage or relationship that you can't seem to resolve on your own, try using a third party. "It doesn't have to be a therapist, but simply somebody who can help guide your discussions," Raschke says. "They won't necessarily have a lot of input, but they can help identify some of your communication problems."

Remember that attending marriage counseling is common and usually only temporary. "A lot of couples think that marriage counseling lasts for years," Raschke says. "But for some couples, it's only a few sessions where they learn simple communication techniques."

# Get Out of Debt in 6 Steps

BY JOSEPH MONTANARO CFP,  
USAA FINANCIAL PLANNER



Unless you've been living under a rock, you've seen our nation's struggles with its enormous debt play out on TV screens and front pages everywhere. The war on debt is also being waged in households across America. The key to succeeding in battle is having a well-thought-out plan executed with commitment and determination. Consider these six steps as you map out your strategy.

## MAKE CASH YOUR FRIEND

Nothing will improve if you continue to rack up charges. Stop. Now. Whether you freeze your cards, hide them in your sock drawer, or just leave them in your purse or wallet, become a cash buyer. If you need the convenience plastic offers, switch to a debit or pre-paid spending card. Draw a line in the sand.

## KNOW WHAT YOU SPEND

Credit is simply a tool that allows you to spend what you don't have. If we're talking about a home or car, this may be a reasonable approach. But your ongoing living expenses (utilities, groceries, entertainment) along with those home and car payments should be less than your income. To get a true picture of where your money goes each month, create a budget. And you

want the cold hard truth, not a pencil drill that doesn't reflect reality. Do you spend about \$5 per day on Diet Dr Pepper like I do? Put it down, along with all the details of where your money goes.

## CUT BACK AND SAVE UP

Look for creative ways to spend less and save more. Listing your true expenses will reveal plenty of opportunities: reduce your cable or satellite TV package or brown-bag it for lunches, for example. To add to your bottom line, consider getting a part-time job, holding a garage sale or providing simple services like dog-sitting to neighbors.

## STOW AWAY A LITTLE IN THE BANK

If you have a cash stash, it can prevent you from having to use

credit if something goes awry (car repair or a rusty water heater, for instance). This should be your first step with the "extra" money freed up in step three. Once your debt is behind you, one of your goals should be to build a full-blown emergency fund stocked with the equivalent of three to six months of expenses. For now, focus on setting aside a smaller amount—say, one month of expenses or maybe \$1,000.

## PICK YOUR TECHNIQUE

So far, you may be making the minimum payments on your credit cards or other consumer debt. With your "found money" and a cash cushion in place, step up your efforts to slam down your debt. There are two basic approaches. I would opt for a "highest first" approach. Make minimum payments to all your

credit cards except the highest interest rate card. To that one you apply everything you can until it is gone, and then begin work on the next highest interest rate card. This approach will minimize the interest you pay. The other approach, typically called the "snowball," works in a similar way except you pay minimums to all but your lowest balance card and then work your way up from there. This approach lets you pay off individual debts faster.

## TRACK AND REWARD

Regardless of your approach, set up a timeline with where you should be financially, then hold yourself accountable for making it happen. And remember, there's nothing wrong with a little celebration along the way—as long as it's cash only!

## ONCE YOU'RE OUT OF DEBT (OR CLOSE)

**BUMP UP YOUR EMERGENCY FUND.** Set up a separate savings account where you can save the equivalent of at least three months of expenses.

**SAVE FOR YOUR NEXT BIG PURCHASE.** While getting out of debt, there were probably some big-ticket items you put on hold. To keep your emergency fund intact and avoid going back into the red, start saving for them now.

**START TO BUILD YOUR RETIREMENT FUND.** Systematically saving in an employer retirement plan like a 401(k), or participating in the Thrift Savings Plan through the Guard are easy ways to build for the future.

**POLISH YOUR CREDIT SCORE.** Check this at least once per year and definitely far in advance of a major purchase like a home. Visit [SaveAndInvest.org/military](http://SaveAndInvest.org/military) to learn about getting your score for free or visit [AnnualCreditReport.com](http://AnnualCreditReport.com) to review your report and get your score for a few bucks more.

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# JUGGLING COLLEGE, FAMILY AND DUTY

## Getting that degree requires a team effort

BY JOHANNA ALTLAND,  
GRANTHAM UNIVERSITY



One of the best things you can do to prepare for your future is get a college degree. College graduates earn more money and are less likely to experience unemployment. But, you may be thinking, “How do I juggle a full-time job, Guard duty, raising a family and taking classes?” Here are a few ideas.

### FIND A “BATTLE BUDDY”

Because of your military service, you know the importance of having a battle buddy. You're each other's support system. Since this concept works so well in theater, you shouldn't be surprised to learn that it works really well while enrolled in college, too.

Your college battle buddy could be someone in your unit who's going to school or someone in one of your classes. You don't need to be in the same program or class to study together, help each other edit papers and keep each other motivated.

### MANAGE FAMILY EXPECTATIONS

Before classes start, get together as a family to discuss the coming changes. One of the biggest will be the investment of time. Set aside a block of time for “study hall” each evening. Make it clear that

during this time, the house will be as quiet as possible and free from distractions. Involve your children. Have them chart the study hall times on the family calendar and make a study hall sign that can be posted as a reminder that it's quiet time.

### MAKE STUDYING A PRIORITY

Remember those days in high school when you could get all of your homework done during eighth-period study hall? Attending college as an adult makes it a bit trickier to find time to study. Be creative. Do you commute with someone to and from work? When it isn't your turn to drive, bring your textbooks with you and get some reading done. If you get carsick or drive by yourself, no problem. Listen to a podcast on your study topic.

Even if you have only 30 minutes to an hour here or there to study, take advantage, because the time adds up. Or get up a few hours early on Saturday and Sunday mornings to study while the house is quiet. If you find yourself in a rut, try changing your study spot. Head for the local library or coffee shop, or take your textbooks outside when the sun is shining.

### GIVE YOURSELF A BREAK

There's no doubt that juggling family, work and college classes is hard, and you're bound to make mistakes. Cut yourself some slack. You are doing a great thing for yourself and your family. Who cares if the lawn doesn't get mowed each week or if there are a few dirty dishes in the sink? Instead, treasure the quality time you spend with friends and family, and focus on your schoolwork. The rest will get done eventually.

### EASY WAYS TO DE-STRESS

Smile and laugh often.

Nurture your hobbies.

Spend time with family or a pet.

Enjoy the outdoors.

Splurge on a massage.

Sing in the shower.

Take a staycation.

Clear your mind and breathe.



# Downrange

■ STORIES FROM THE FRONTLINE

## Taking Charge in Kuwait

BY CHRISTIAN ANDERSON

The 29th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) traces its lineage back to the 29th Infantry Division (ID), which was organized in WWI. The 29th ID was nicknamed the “Blue and Gray” because it was made up of units from Virginia and Maryland, both of which had Soldiers fight for the Union and Confederates during the Civil War. The 29th ID saw ferocious combat during the final weeks of WWI and came home triumphant but weary.

The 29th was deactivated after WWI but was quickly reactivated in 1941, several months before Pearl Harbor. The 29th trained extensively in preparation for war and were put to the test during Operation Overlord on D-Day. They were instrumental in taking the beachhead at Omaha, and fought hard through the breakout from Normandy.

Formed in 2005, the 29th CAB carries on the tradition of the 29th ID through spirit, sacrifice and success. The 29th CAB has deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation New Dawn, Kosovo and Bosnia.



### Current Operations

**Deployed to:**  
Camp Airfjan, Kuwait

**Current Mission:**  
The 29th provides command and control for all aerial security and support operations for the nearly 18,000 U.S. forces in Kuwait. It also has Chinooks supporting combat operations in Afghanistan.

**6,507 miles** | Aberdeen, MD, to Camp Airfjan, Kuwait

**Home Station:**  
The 29th Combat Aviation Brigade, Maryland Army National Guard, is stationed at the Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Aberdeen, MD.



### HISTORY OF THE INSIGNIA

The 29th Infantry Division, the “Blue and Gray” Division, was so nicknamed to recognize the units descended from the Union and Confederate regiments from Maryland and Virginia during the Civil War.

Since arriving in Kuwait in September of 2011, the 29th CAB has reached the following milestones:

940+ | Completed air missions

12,300+ | Passengers transported

455,900+ | Pounds of cargo lifted



# Changing on the Fly

## COLONEL DAVID W. CAREY

Brigade Commander COL David Carey talks about building a team from several units, his relationship with the Kuwaitis and being prepared for constant adjustment

- > Assumed duties as commander of the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade, one of the three major subordinate commands of the "Blue and Gray" Division, in October 2010.
- > Commissioned as second lieutenant in 1986 through the Officer Candidate School program at Fort Benning, GA.
- > Holds a business management degree from the University of Maryland.
- > He has held the following leadership positions: attack helicopter platoon leader, aeroscout helicopter platoon leader, cavalry troop commander, air traffic services group headquarters and headquarters company commander, cavalry squadron commander, aviation brigade executive officer, deputy chief of staff for personnel of the Maryland Army National Guard.



What is the 29th's primary mission during this deployment? Our main mission is to support all aerial operations in Kuwait as well as support certain missions in Afghanistan. We deployed to the region with a task force from over 20 states. Our units are from as far north as Rhode Island, as far south

as Puerto Rico and as far west as Hawaii.

When our CAB got here in late September of 2011, we started building a base in Kuwait of logistics and people. We had folks throughout Iraq supporting operations through the end of New Dawn. After the last troops were out of Iraq, we came to Kuwait and continued to extend our base of operations.

What are the challenges of deploying with so many different units from across the country? I knew which battalions were coming to me two years before we deployed. When you're mobilizing a Guard aviation unit, you're building it from scratch, so the advance notice from the folks at the National Guard Bureau really helped us out with plenty of time to prepare. I knew my battalion commanders two years out and was able to travel around the country, meet them and start building a team.

And that just continued all the way through mobilization at Fort Hood. When we got there, we were in the walk phase, but by the time we left Fort Hood we were ready to run, and we needed to be, because Operation New Dawn, in its closing days, was a very, very intense environment. I'm extremely proud of where we sit today.

What is the highlight of your mission so far? We were the last combat aviation brigade in Iraq, and we continued combat operations up until the last day of Operation New Dawn. The last CH-47 to fly out of Iraq was a 29th CAB helicopter from the Mississippi National Guard, and its headquarters was from the Florida National Guard. I was actually in the CH-47 leaving Iraq as a crewmember, and it was very exciting to be part of such a historic mission.



**“THE BIGGEST KEY TO OUR SUCCESS IS THE ABILITY TO ADAPT TO A CHANGING ENVIRONMENT AND A CHANGING OPERATION.”**

like getting out of an SUV and driving a sports car. They are all fun for different reasons, and I've certainly enjoyed my time in every one of them.

How do Kuwaitis feel about the American presence there? We are partnering with the Kuwaitis, so I've been able to meet a

Which airframe is your favorite, and why? I've been a pilot for over 25 years, and I've flown pretty much everything. Every aircraft has a different mission. Attack aircraft are fun because they shoot. Assault aircraft are fun because you are part of an air assault and supporting a ground commander.

Scout aircraft are a blast to fly because they are much smaller and more maneuverable, kind of



lot of people in their military. They are grateful for the partnership and eager to learn from us. At the end of the day, Kuwait remembers what we did for them in the early '90s, and they are a consistent partner with the United States.

How has your domestic mission, including Hurricane Gustav and the Southwest border, prepared you for this mission? It absolutely helps us to prepare for overseas, and what we do overseas helps us prepare for what we do back home. Essentially, when you're reacting to a domestic mission, you are reacting to change and to a changing environment. You are going out and helping people, and building [strong] partnerships, which is very in line with what we are doing. The biggest key to our success is the ability to adapt to a changing environment and a changing operation.

Is it inspiring to see your Soldiers taking such a large part in this mission? I'm proud of our Soldiers each and every day. The 29th CAB is a microcosm of the National Guard because it comes from so many different units from so many different states and our Soldiers come from so many different walks of life. There are Soldiers here with three, four or five deployments already. They stay in the Guard because they like their job and they like being Soldiers. They knew what was coming from them. Everybody knew what was expected of [them].

What do you do to keep the morale up? If you talk to aircrews, they don't like a day off because that means they aren't flying. If you are talking to maintainers, they don't like to take a day off either because they like their

Soldiers from the 1/111th Aviation Regiment celebrate their place in history as passengers of the last American helicopter to leave Iraq on the final day of Operation New Dawn. **Opposite page:** COL David Carey and CSM Thomas Beyard proudly display the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade's battle flag after they took command of operations in Kuwait.

job. I've found the harder they work, the happier they are. It's when they don't have a mission that morale begins to suffer. However, we do have something called a reset day, where Soldiers are given a day to recover—usually about one day a week.

Before 9/11, the Guard didn't have the same airframes as the Active Army. How crucial is it for your aviators to have the latest technology? The Army aviation branch is made up of about 51 percent National Guard units. So there is no way the military could have pulled off the missions in Afghanistan and Iraq without the National Guard.

That being said, we can't be part of the total force unless everybody gets the same type of Christmas gifts. So if we aren't equipped and trained just like our brothers and sisters in the Active Duty, we will rapidly become a Reserve component.

Do you still get to fly? I am a pilot-in-command in the UH-60 Black Hawk, so I get to fly one day a week at a couple of hours a clip. My mantra is that I lead from the front, and am as technically and tactically proficient as anyone in the brigade. My sergeant major makes sure I fly at least once a week because I start to get grumpy if I don't.

How do the families back home support your troops? I am still in awe of how many care packages we get on a daily basis. We certainly appreciate it, and they lift our people up and remind them that support is still out there for the Soldier. We get letters from school-children, and we certainly appreciate all of it. We are so grateful for all of the support back home. **GX**

## AWARDS AND BADGES

- Master Army Aviator Badge
- Army Superior Unit Award
- Meritorious Service Medal With One Silver Oak Leaf Cluster
- Army Commendation Medal With Three Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters
- Army Achievement Medal With One Bronze Oak Leaf Cluster
- Air Force Achievement Medal
- Air Force Training Ribbon
- Noncommissioned Officer Professional Development Ribbon
- Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal
- National Defense Service Medal With One Bronze Service Star
- Global War on Terrorism Service Medal
- Armed Forces Reserve Medal With Silver Hourglass
- Army Service Ribbon



# HIGH-TECH

# WARRIOR

FROM OPTICS TO BODY ARMOR TO VEHICLES, SCIENTIFIC ADVANCES IN EQUIPMENT GIVE TODAY'S SOLDIERS AN EDGE LIKE NEVER BEFORE.

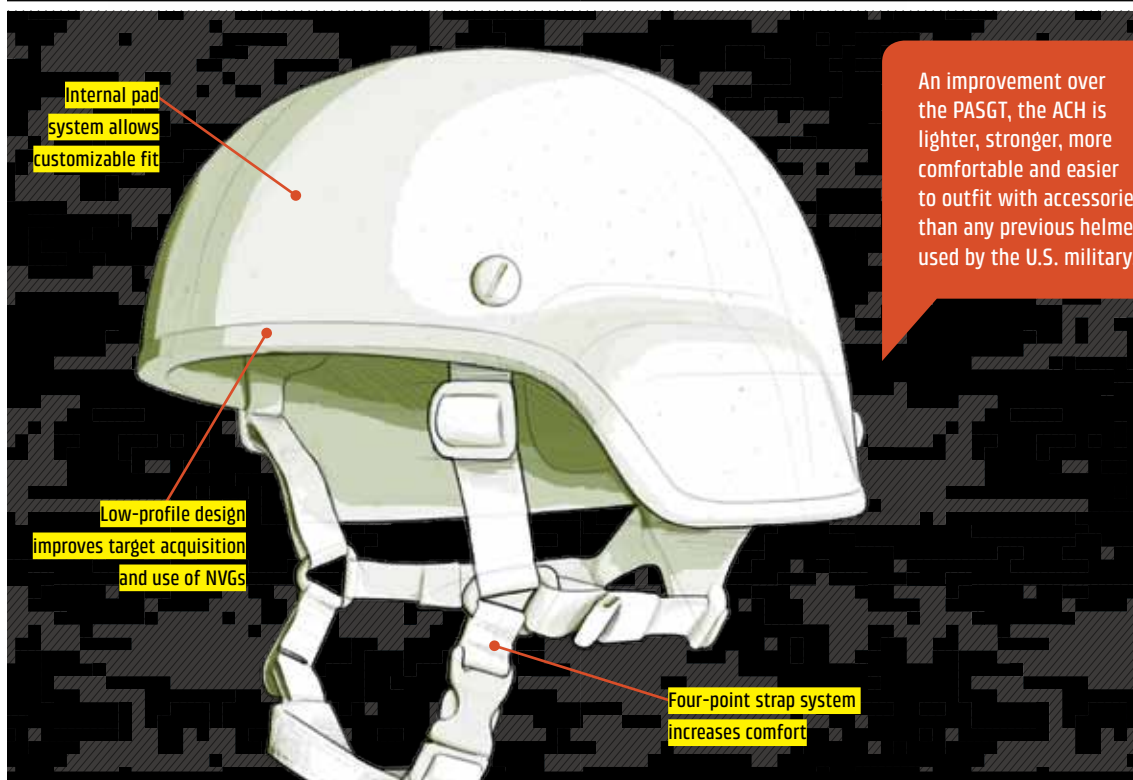
Since 9/11, the United States has fought two unconventional wars, different from each other. The learning curves were neither quick nor easy, and the lessons gained over time led to changes in the tools Soldiers were given to fight and protect themselves. Probably nowhere are these changes more evident than in the National Guard. Always an integral part of the Army's force structure, the Guard has shifted over the past decade from a strategic reserve to an operational force. As a result, the technologically advanced equipment that today's Soldiers wear or carry into combat is far different from what those in the Guard saw 10

years ago—and practically nothing like the gear Soldiers used during WWII. The GI's kit in that war consisted of a uniform, boots, rifle, bayonet, canteen, mess kit, entrenching tool, steel pot helmet and a few other items. Together, they weighed 35.8 pounds and cost the American taxpayer \$2,446. Those who fought in Vietnam had the same helmet, an M16 rifle, a flak vest, and equipment that totaled 35 pounds and cost \$1,586. Today, the kit of each Soldier going into Afghanistan costs \$19,454 and weighs 75 pounds, more than twice what their predecessors had to carry. Sharper, sleeker, stronger and more powerful than ever, these items can be overlooked at times, but they're critical to Soldiers' safety and success.

## ADVANCED COMBAT HELMET (ACH)

FIELDED IN 2002

WEIGHT: 2.93–3.77 LBS



## HELMETS

The old steel pot helmet used during WWII, Korea and Vietnam was good for a lot of things—carrying eggs or fruit, washing socks, cooking—but stopping bullets was not necessarily one of them.

“The old steel pot wouldn't take a round,” recalls Master Sergeant William E. Shipman of the South Carolina National Guard, who first wore one during a stint with the Marines in Vietnam. “A ricochet round might bounce off it. A dead-on round shot from the front or the back or the sides would go straight through it.”

After just short of 40 years in the Army inventory, the steel pot was replaced in the early 1980s by the Personnel Armor System for Ground Troops, or PASGT, which Soldiers mostly just called the “Kevlar.” (The helmet contains multiple layers of it.) Slightly heavier than its predecessor, the PASGT was highly effective at stopping any shrapnel or even a glancing 7.62 round. Stopping a dead-on round, however, was still unlikely.

What Soldiers didn't like about the PASGT was that it wasn't comfortable and slid around the head. “People used to stuff washcloths in them to make it halfway comfortable,” says Captain Rob Conner of the Mississippi National Guard.

By the late 1990s, the Army began developing a replacement for the PASGT, which would be lighter yet provide greater ballistic protection. First came the MICH—the Modular Integrated Communications

Helmet. It used a more advanced form of Kevlar and was slightly smaller than the PASGT, lacking a brim in the front and covering less of the area around the ears so it wouldn't obstruct vision and hearing as much. It was seen as a dramatic improvement over the PASGT and went into production in a slightly different form, as the Advanced Combat Helmet, or ACH.

“You get a much more comfortable, secure fit with the ACH,” says Conner, referring to the four-point chin strap. “You can also customize it with pads that you can add or subtract so that it fits right.”

“I don't have any complaints about it,” says Sergeant Steven Dvorak of the Indiana National Guard, who served with a military police unit around Fallujah in 2007 and 2008. “I wore mine the entire time over there, and it worked just fine.”

The ACH has a mounting bracket built into the front for attaching the PVS-14 Night Vision monocular. There is also a strap for attaching an add-on Kevlar “nape pad” that protects the neck area between the helmet's back edge and the top of the Interceptor Body Armor's collar. It is available in five sizes, weighing from 2.93 pounds for the small, up to 3.77 pounds for the extra-extra large. The ACH helmet cover comes in both the Universal Camouflage Pattern and the newer Operation Enduring Freedom Camouflage Pattern.

As good as the ACH is, a successor helmet is already on the horizon. The Enhanced Combat Helmet, currently being developed, will be lighter and stronger and will carry sensors for collecting data on head injuries.

## EVOLUTION OF THE HELMET

During the first year of WWI, the British, French and German armies were noticing an astronomical number of traumatic head injuries due to lack of head protection. Each country began producing helmets and rushed them to the frontline.

As the United States geared up for WWI in 1917, the Army began looking at the British “Brodie” helmet as a viable solution and used that as a model in creating the M1917. Resembling a giant soup bowl on top of the Soldier's head, the M1917 was designed to protect the head and shoulders from shrapnel falling from above.



The M1917 served the U.S. Army well and even experienced some modifications in 1936, including a new liner and an adjustable chin strap. But in 1942, the military switched over to the M1 helmet. It was lighter, but more important, it wrapped around the head more so than the M1917, giving troops more protection from the side and not just from above.

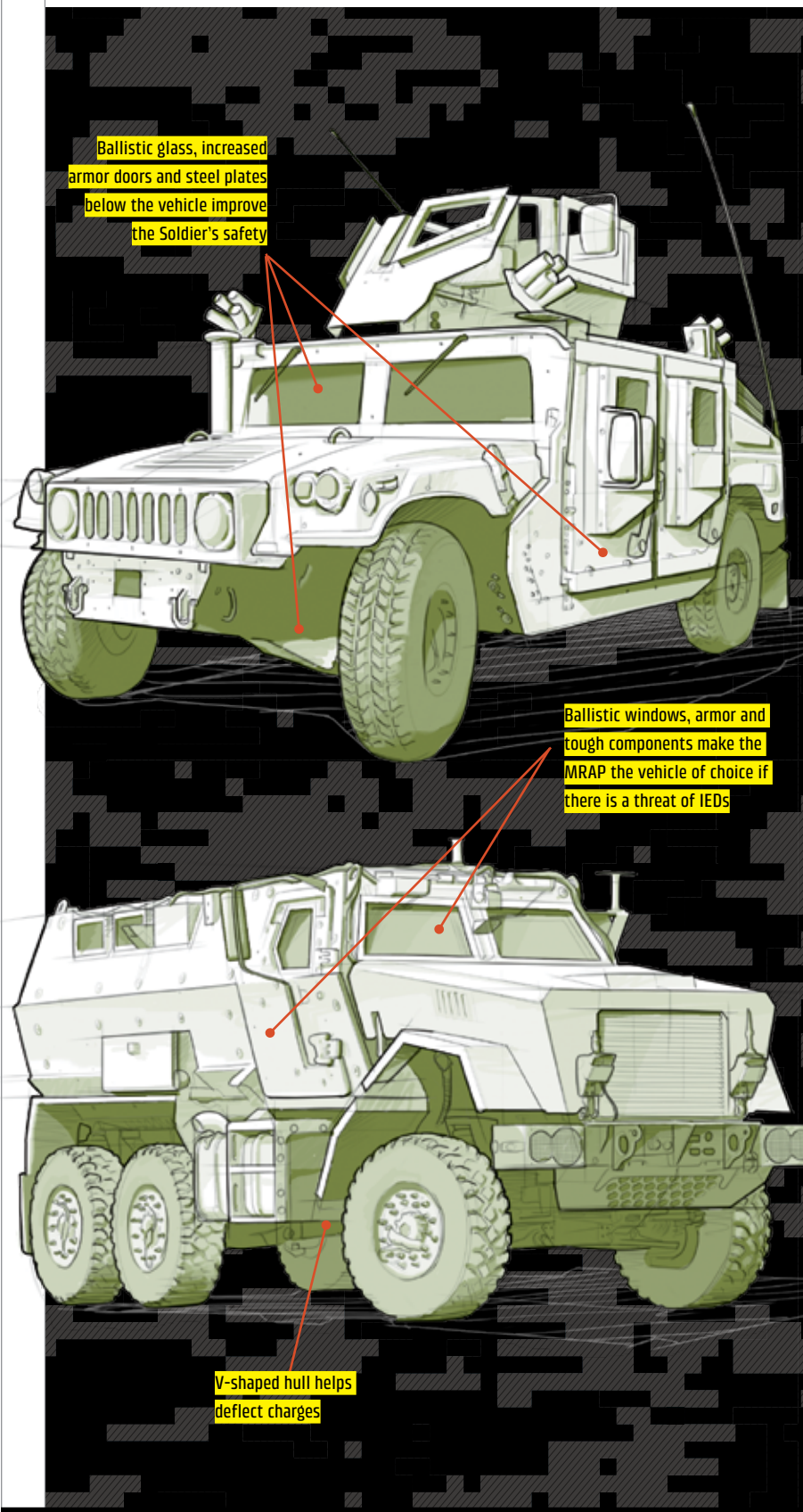




## UPARMORED HUMVEES / MRAP VEHICLES

FIELDED IN 1984 (ORIGINAL HUMVEES) AND 2002 (MRAPS)

WEIGHT: 5,200–6,500 LBS (UPARMORED HUMVEES),  
28,000–60,000 LBS (MRAPS)



## VEHICLES

Two things you certainly didn't see 10 years ago were uparmored HMMWVs (Humvees) and vehicles called MRAPs. But then, when the United States went into Iraq, no one had any idea how bad the IED problem would become.

Humvees weren't designed to be frontline combat vehicles. Also, their large, flat underside makes them particularly vulnerable to IEDs and other explosives detonating underneath or near them. Too many casualties were coming from these weapons.

The first uparmored kits consisted of steel plating and ballistic-resistant windows. The steel plate, added to the vehicle's underside, protected it against up to 8 pounds of explosives. Subsequent uparmor kits added upwards of 2,000 pounds to the vehicle's weight, greatly reducing deployment flexibility. Armored doors also have a tendency to jam shut. As a result, uparmored Humvees are now fitted with hooks on their doors, so that if an accident occurs, a friendly vehicle can rip them off and free the troops inside.

"The [Humvee] is obviously a great vehicle," Conner says. "But all the add-on armor increases the maintenance strain. The axle is rated for a certain amount of weight, not several thousand pounds more."

Uparmored Humvees may require much more maintenance, but they definitely save lives. During his second Afghanistan tour, Shipman saw an uparmored Humvee get blown up. "It got hit outside the gate by a drive-by suicide bomber," he says. "The occupants survived with only mild concussions and some cuts and scrapes. The Humvee survived too, though one of the wheels got blown off."

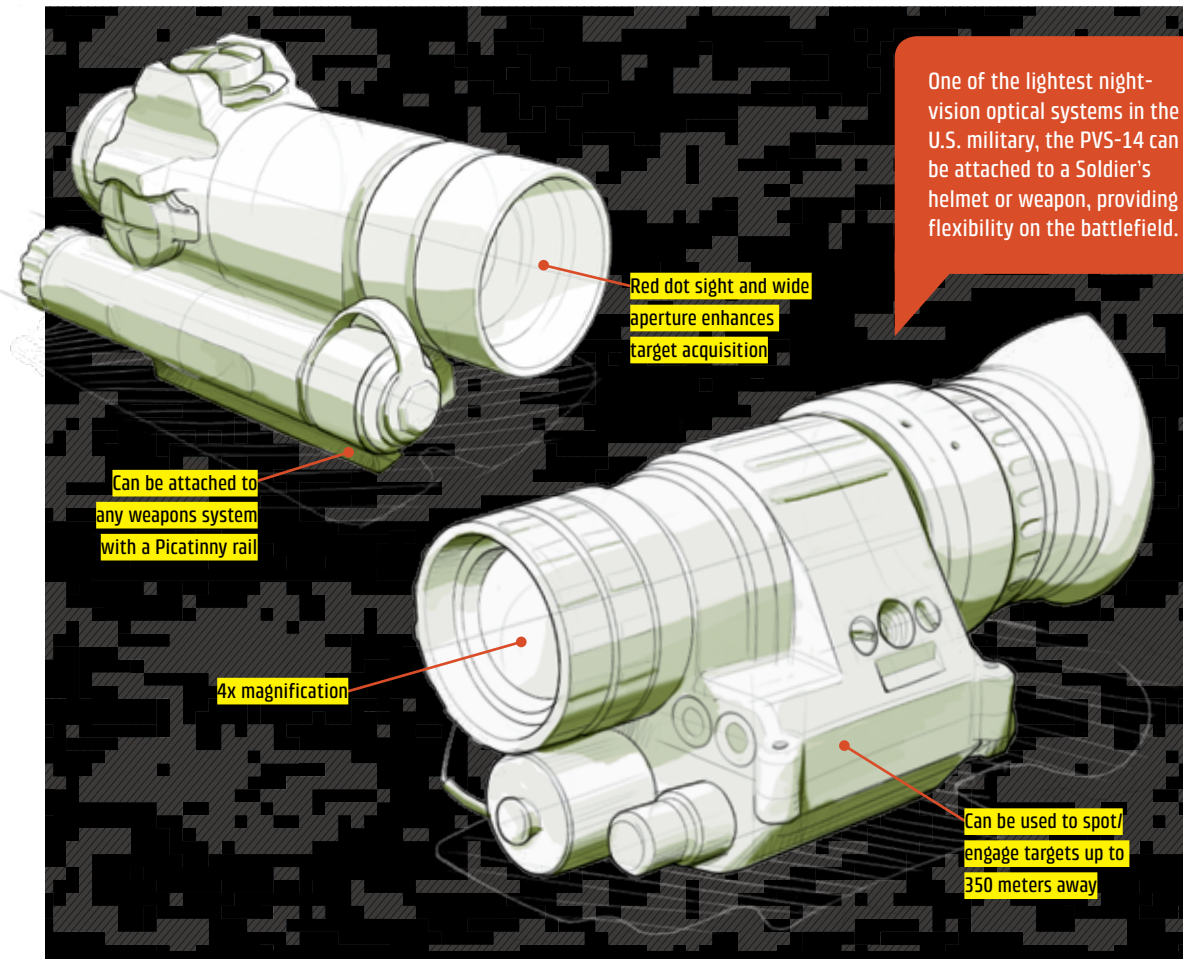
MRAP stands for Mine Resistant Ambush Protected and refers to large, wheeled vehicles that have different names and come from different manufacturers. What they have in common is that they're robust, heavily armored and survivable. Nearly all have V-shaped hulls under the axles for deflecting bomb blasts away from the vehicle's underside.

Fatalities and injuries from roadside attacks decreased significantly after MRAPs were put into use. Dvorak remembers hearing about a Marine MRAP getting hit and being blown 10 feet in the air, only to come down still fully functional and its Soldiers uninjured.

"I used the Caiman," Conner says. "We pushed the others out of our inventory because Caiman was far superior." According to Conner, one of the other MRAPs he rode in "rode like a dump truck," because it was literally based on one. "Soldiers know they're not in for a plush life, but bouncing around in the back of that thing just wasn't good. It wore us out."

## M68 CLOSE COMBAT OPTIC / PVS-14 NIGHT VISION MONOCLE

FIELDED IN 1997 (M68) AND 2000 (PVS-14) | WEIGHT: 0.5 LBS (M68), 0.9 LBS (PVS-14)



One of the lightest night-vision optical systems in the U.S. military, the PVS-14 can be attached to a Soldier's helmet or weapon, providing flexibility on the battlefield.

## OPTICS

The two optics systems that Soldiers overseas are most familiar with are the M68 Close Combat Optic mounted on the Picatinny rail of their rifles and the PVS-14 Night Vision monocle on the front of their helmets.

One thing these two wars have taught the military is that, while binocular night vision systems might do a spectacular job of turning off the night by eliminating shadows, they can also seriously impair your depth perception. "It's inherent with night vision systems," Connor says. "Without the shadow, you can't see the little difference in terrain. And you end up having to slide your feet along the ground."

"I prefer the monocular over the duals, but I had to learn to work it," Dvorak says. "My right eye had the night vision on it, the left eye was night-vision-free, and I'd swap back and forth between the two."

Having served in the Marines, the Regular Army and the National Guard, Shipman says he's used many night vision systems over the years. Everything before the PVS-14 was a two-eye system.

"I don't remember the name of the first night vision system I used, but it covered both eyes, with a plastic

box all around it. Then it changed to the PVS-7, which had two different sights. It changed to the 7-B, which was a single sight coming out of the middle but with both eyes covered." Each system had its strengths, but none of them addressed the depth perception problem. "The PVS-14 is great. I used it [my] first time and second time in Afghanistan."

Shipman also gives high marks to the M68 Close Combat Optic, which he calls simply "The Red Dot," because "once it's zeroed with the weapon, you put the red dot on the target, and it's a hit," he says. "You can't miss."

"I have zero complaint about that scope," Dvorak says. "It's immaculate. It runs off one single battery, with a little compartment for a spare battery. And basically it's got numerous clicks to adjust the brightness. If you're in pitch dark, you don't want that red dot turned all the way up. You're going to get a lot of flare from that red dot, and instead of having a one-millimeter red dot, it looks like it's three millimeters—that much more area to miss your target."

"The M68 attaches to the Picatinny rails on our rifles in a matter of seconds," he adds. "The scope itself doesn't require too much maintenance, either. Just a dry cloth and some soapy water clean off the lenses. Turn it back on, and it's ready."

## SHOTS IN THE DARK

The world's first night-vision scopes were used in WWII, as the German, British and American militaries were racing to afford their troops an advantage for nighttime. The initial night vision scope used by U.S. Soldiers was rudimentary compared to today's standards. According to the Army's Night Vision and Electronic Sensors Directorate, these scopes "used near-infrared cathodes coupled to visible phosphors." The scopes were hardly effective, since they could be used only about 100 yards out.

Rapid improvements came in the 1960s, necessitated by the Viet Cong's choice to move forces at night in Vietnam. The Small Starlight Scope, a "First Generation Image Intensifier," was given to Soldiers in the field with great success. Although a considerable upgrade from the scopes of WWII in range and clarity, the Small Starlight was bulky and heavy.

Night vision systems continued to advance into the 1980s as the image intensification systems improved. U.S. forces used night vision optics in Operation Just Cause in 1990 (Panama), Operation Desert Storm in 1991 (Kuwait and Iraq), and Operation Restore Hope (Somalia) in 1993 with remarkable success.

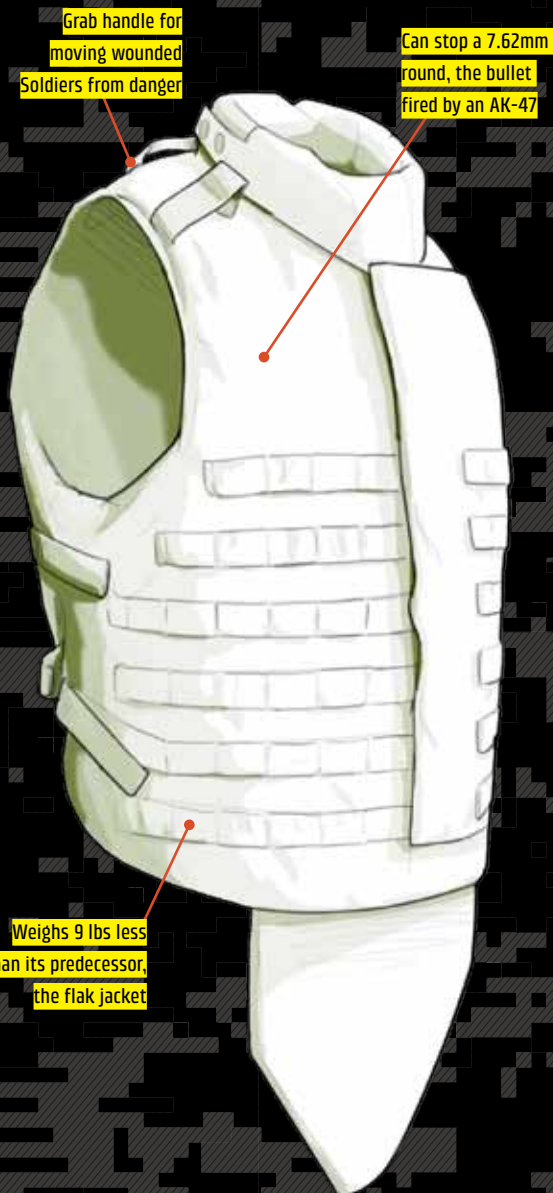


## INTERCEPTOR BODY ARMOR (IBA)

FIELDIED IN 1999

WEIGHT: 16.4 LBS

A step forward in personal protective armor, IBA provides a "shield-like" effect for Soldiers against bullets and shrapnel, including fragments from improvised explosive devices (IEDs).



## THE BEGINNING OF BODY ARMOR

A predecessor to IBA, the flak jacket was initially developed in 1942 by Colonel Malcolm C. Grow, a surgeon in the Air Force, as way to keep aviators safe from anti-aircraft flak guns. During WWII, German flak rounds would explode midair, sending shrapnel everywhere. Not only were the rounds damaging Allied bombers and fighters, they were severely wounding men.

In the Korean and Vietnam wars, Soldiers and Marines began wearing flak jackets in theater. Although cumbersome and hot, the jackets protected them from shrapnel, small-caliber rounds and even some larger-caliber rounds fired from a great distance. American service members even occasionally wore flak jackets in Panama, Somalia and Iraq, though many elite units opted not to wear them due to their extra weight and awkward fit.

## BODY ARMOR

Interceptor Body Armor (IBA) has been the subject of much political controversy over the last 10 years. But, during that period, it has also taken more than its share of 9 mm and 7.62 mm rounds.

Dvorak and his buddies once decided to see how good it really was. "We took a plate and shot it with a 5.56 round three times in the same area from 60 meters, and it wasn't until the fourth that it penetrated and would have hit someone's skin," he says.

Shipman has experienced firsthand the effectiveness of IBA plates. Right at the end of his first tour in Afghanistan, he and

his unit were assisting in a "snatch and grab" mission in a remote mountain village. The operation went badly and before it was over, Shipman took a 7.62 round. Luckily, he was wearing his IBA.

"It hit my heart level in the back, and the plate stopped it," he says. "I know that for a fact because my colonel brought the plate back from Afghanistan and gave it to me with the bullet still in it. I've got it at home in my display case."

"We get stories like this from Soldiers all the time," says Lieutenant Colonel Jon Rickey, head of the Soldier Protective Equipment division for PEO Soldier, the Army agency responsible for nearly everything a Soldier wears and carries. "Many Soldiers have been shot several times while wearing their IBA and come out OK."

IBA is a modular protective system consisting of an outer vest (OTV), protective plates and attachable components. Since first being fielded in 1999, it has undergone many changes and improvements, including Enhanced Small Arms Protective Insert (ESAPI) plates, which protect the wearer in front and back, and Enhanced Side Ballistic Insert (ESBI) plates for additional coverage for the sides. Both ESAPI and ESBI plates are capable of withstanding small-arms hits, including armor-piercing rounds. There are also deltoid and axillary protector plates to protect upper arms from fragments and 9 mm rounds, as well as groin and kidney protectors.

Now, all the ground troops going into Afghanistan are issued IBAs. But back in 2001, it was a different story.

"When the 10th Mountain Division went into Afghanistan, they immediately sucked up our entire IBA inventory," recalls Rickey. "IBA production ramped up, but even so, there was still a shortfall. When Operation Iraqi Freedom began in March 2003, only three out of every 10 Soldiers in the 3rd Infantry Division were equipped with IBA."

It would be several years before there were enough IBAs for everybody. What everyone wore until then was a combination of the old PASGT flak vest and the newer Interim Small Arms Protective Overvest, or ISAPO. The PASGT vest weighed 9 pounds and provided protection against ballistic fragments, but not bullets. The ISAPO, which consisted of a carrier vest and two protective ceramic plates, could stop a 9 mm round, but at 16.5 pounds, it brought the total weight of the PASGT vest to over 25 pounds, and many considered it too cumbersome for the degree of protection it provided.

## XM25 "PUNISHER" COUNTER DEFILADE TARGET ENGAGEMENT (CDTE) SYSTEM

FIELDIED IN 2010

WEIGHT: 14 LBS

LENGTH: 29.5 INCHES



## A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

By Mark Kakkuri

Imagine a weapon that, when fired, could render an enemy's protective cover useless. It's no longer a dream, and it's viewed by some as a game-changer.

The recently introduced XM25, an individual semi-automatic airburst weapon system, can fire a 25 mm air-bursting round programmed to detonate at a precise moment, usually just above an intended target, making an enemy's cover pointless.

"For centuries, combatants have been trained to protect themselves from direct fire by seeking cover behind a rock, tree, wall, trench or anything that could stop a projectile. Soon this rule will no longer apply," says Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Lehner, product manager, individual weapons at Program Manager (PM) Soldier Weapons at Picatinny Arsenal, NJ.

Designed and produced by the Advanced Weapons Division of ATK in Minneapolis, MN, the XM25 is a counter defilade target engagement (CDTE) system. Shoulder-fired and man-portable, it enables a Soldier to use basic rifle marksmanship to engage targets in seconds.

Lehner says the XM25 system is also less expensive, more precise and quicker to deploy, and causes less collateral damage than mortars, artillery or airstrikes. "This makes the weapon especially valuable in Afghanistan, where protecting the lives and property of the civilian population is critical," he says.



ACTUAL SIZE

Constructed with lightweight material composites, the XM25 significantly increases an infantry Soldier's lethality and range. At 14 pounds and 29.5 inches long, the weapon offers a four-round magazine capacity.

Major Christopher Conley, assistant program manager for PM Soldier Weapons, says the XM25 allows a Soldier to quickly and accurately engage targets by producing an adjusted aim-point based on range, environmental factors and user inputs.

This is accomplished, he says, via a target acquisition/fire control system that integrates thermal capability with direct-view optics, a laser rangefinder, compass, fuse setter, ballistic computer, laser pointer and illuminator, and internal display. The rate of fire is as fast as a Soldier can aim and pull the trigger.

When fired, the 25 mm round measures the distance it travels by counting its own rotations after leaving the barrel. In other words, Soldiers can determine the distance to the enemy's protective barrier and program the round to detonate at a desired point. Current ammunition for the XM25 includes a high-explosive air-bursting round, an armor-piercing round and a training round.

Five XM25 weapons have been in Afghanistan since November 2010. Sergeant First Class Carlos Smith, Soldier Requirements Division, Maneuver Center of Excellence at Fort Benning, GA, says the response from trained Soldiers has been very good. "Firefights that would normally last 15 to 20 minutes with standard arms would be over in just a few minutes with the XM25," he says.

Although there is no official name for the weapon yet, Brigadier General Peter N. Fuller, head of PEO Soldier, says some Soldiers who've used it in Afghanistan have already come up with one. "The kids," he says, are calling it 'the Punisher.' **GX**



# FIRST TO



Massachusetts doesn't just carry on the rich tradition of the National Guard—it created it.

BY JASON HALL

# FIGHT

It isn't difficult to trace the legacy and appreciate the impact of the Massachusetts National Guard. All you have to do is look at the storied origin of the United States itself.

"The shot heard round the world," the 54th Regiment, the "Yankee" Division. There is no part of the annals of the American military that does not include the contributions of the Massachusetts National Guard. From Lexington and Concord to the Battery Wagner to the trenches of France and the Battle of the Bulge, the Soldiers of Massachusetts have fought and led and sacrificed to preserve freedom at home and abroad.

Massachusetts is the birthplace of the National Guard. It

formed militias as early as 1621, organized official regiments in 1636, and is the cradle of the American Revolution. But the firsts don't stop there.

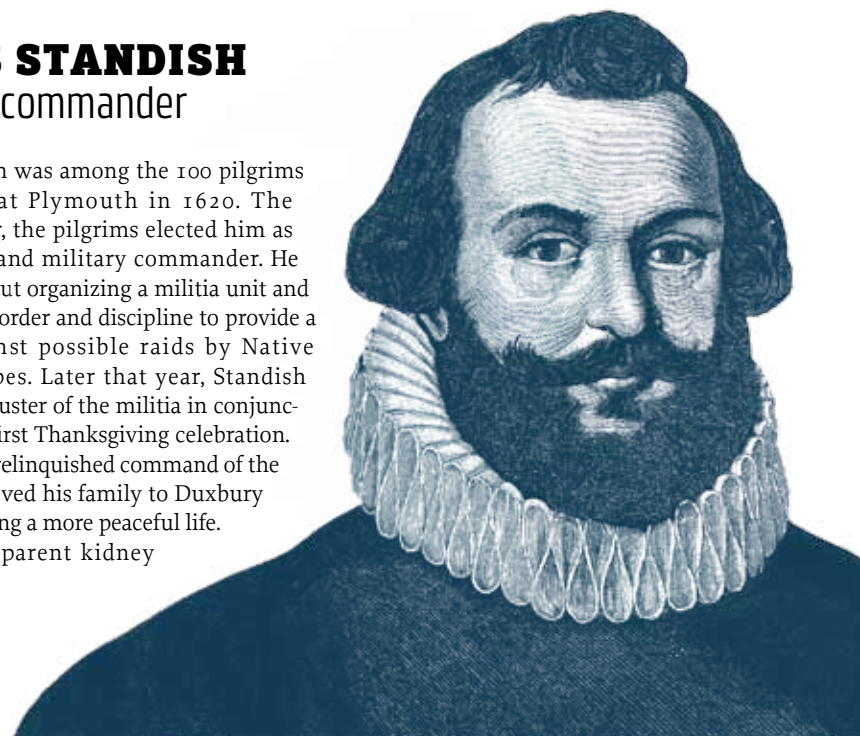
Soldiers from the Bay State made up the first Union regiment to shed blood in the Civil War. In World War I, they were among the first to shell German positions. And they were among the first to see combat in World War II.

Uniforms and weaponry have vastly changed over the years, but today's Minutemen—the men and women of the Massachusetts National Guard—possess the same determination, sense of sacrifice and commitment as their forebears.

## MYLES STANDISH

### The first commander

Myles Standish was among the 100 pilgrims who landed at Plymouth in 1620. The following year, the pilgrims elected him as their captain and military commander. He quickly set about organizing a militia unit and imposed strict order and discipline to provide a defense against possible raids by Native American tribes. Later that year, Standish conducted a muster of the militia in conjunction with the first Thanksgiving celebration. He eventually relinquished command of the militia and moved his family to Duxbury in hopes of living a more peaceful life. He died of apparent kidney failure in 1656.



Every man therefore that wishes to secure his own Freedom, and thinks it his Duty to defend that of his Country, should, as he prides himself in being a Free Citizen, think it his truest Honour to be a Soldier Citizen."

A passage from the "Exercise for the Militia of the Province of Massachusetts Bay," Boston, 1758.

## HISTORY IN BRIEF

### 1636

Though small militia units existed in the Massachusetts Bay Colony since 1621, the first official regiments of militia were the North, South and East Regiments, organized on Dec. 13, 1636. The first of these to muster was the East Regiment, which did so in Salem in early 1637. Today the lineage of the East Regiment is carried on by the 101st Engineer Battalion.



### 1775

"The shot heard round the world" occurred on April 19 when Massachusetts Militiamen confronted

British troops at Lexington and Concord, sparking the American Revolution. Standing alongside his small force of Minutemen on Lexington Green, facing the British column, Captain John Parker exclaimed to his men, "Stand your ground! Don't fire unless fired upon! But, if they mean to have a war, let it begin here!"

### 1814

With its transatlantic trade-centric economy, Massachusetts did not want America to go to war with England in 1812. However, in September 1814, approximately 20,000 Militiamen were mobilized to defend the Massachusetts and Maine coasts against a possible British invasion.

### 1861

April 19, 86 years to the day after Lexington and Concord, the 6th Infantry Regiment,



Massachusetts Volunteer Militia, became the first Union regiment to shed blood in the American Civil War. The regiment was attacked by a pro-Southern mob in Baltimore, MD, as it marched through the city from one train station to another on its way to Washington, DC. Four Soldiers were killed and 36 wounded.

### 1898

Approximately 6,000 members of the Massachusetts Volunteer Militia were mobilized for the Spanish American War. The 2nd and 9th Infantry Regiments fought in the Santiago Campaign, with the 6th Infantry Regiment

participating in the Puerto Rico Campaign.

### 1907

The Massachusetts Volunteer Militia was redesignated as the Massachusetts National Guard.



### 1917

In August, the National Guard units of New England were organized into the 26th Infantry Division, containing Massachusetts' 101st and 104th Infantry Regiments, the 101st Field Artillery Regiment, and the 101st Engineers. Adopting the moniker "Yankee" Division, the 26th was the

first U.S. Army division to deploy to France and the second to enter combat, fighting in six campaigns during the war. However, the 372nd Infantry, consisting of African-Americans from Boston, served with the French army.

### 1968

The 1st Battalion, 211th Artillery, was mobilized for service in Vietnam but not deployed. Many of the unit's members volunteered to serve as replacements in other units and fought in that war.

### 1990

Five units of the Massachusetts Army National Guard deployed to the Persian Gulf, with the 181st Engineer Company, the 1058th Transportation Company, and the 772nd and the 972nd Military Police Companies receiving the Army Meritorious Unit Citation.



# THE BATTLE AT THE CROSSROADS

How the 26th "Yankee" Division held the road that controlled the Battle of the Bulge

<b>Date:</b> Dec. 27, 1944, to Jan. 2, 1945	<b>Conflict:</b> WWII, The Battle at Mon Schumann Crossroads	<b>Who:</b> 26th "Yankee" Division, German Wehrmacht	<b>Where:</b> Near present-day Bastogne, Belgium
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The German army's last major assault of WWII, the Ardennes Offensive, began on Dec. 16, 1944, and would last a little over a month. As the battle was beginning, the 26th "Yankee" Division was moving eastward against Metz, France, as part of General George S. Patton's Third Army. The Germans advanced rapidly, creating a "bulge" in the 85-mile-long Allied line, which resulted in the Ardennes operation being known as the Battle of the Bulge. (That battle would be the bloodiest in American history, with a toll of roughly 80,000 U.S. casualties.) The 101st Airborne Division was moved from Reims, France, to Bastogne, Belgium, where it ultimately became enveloped as the Germans pressed forward.

right. The 26th attacked the Germans on Christmas Day at the village of Eschdorf, Luxembourg, near the Sure River. In subfreezing temperatures and heavy snow, they fought valiantly to link up with the 80th Division and drive the enemy from the town. Once Eschdorf was taken, the 26th secured a bridgehead across the Sure, which allowed Patton's 4th Armored Division's tanks to drive toward Bastogne. The next day, the besieged men of the 101st Airborne Division saw American tanks coming toward them; the German stranglehold on the town had been lifted.

From Eschdorf, the 26th quickly moved to seize a critical crossroads near the town of Nothum, Luxembourg, just six miles east of Bastogne. At the time of the battle there were only two hard-surfaced roads leading from Germany to Bastogne, and they both converged at the crossroads, known as Mon Schumann. The dense forest and mountainous terrain of Luxembourg, and the area around Belgium, necessitated that the Germans use the Mon Schumann Crossroads in their attack in the Ardennes. With Bastogne liberated, the crossroads became even more vital for the Germans in their resupply efforts and later in their retreat back to Germany. In an effort to cut off those German forces still in Belgium, the 26th was tasked with taking and holding the Mon Schumann Crossroads at all costs. Between Dec. 27, 1944, and Jan. 2, 1945, the Germans fought desperately to hold onto the crossroads.

## THE BULGE BY THE NUMBERS

**200,000** German troops launched the initial assault in Belgium and Luxembourg on Dec. 16, 1944, marking the beginning of the battle.

**85 mi.** The front of the battle, stretching across the Ardennes, Luxembourg, Belgium and Germany.

**1,000,000** Troops fighting on both sides during the peak. The Americans suffered 80,000 casualties; the Germans suffered over 100,000.



**GENERAL GEORGE S. PATTON**

Known for his eccentricities and outspokenness, Patton is regarded as one of the most successful American generals of all time. His unrelenting approach in attacking the enemy during the battle is best summed up by American Sergeant John Beck, cited by historian Don Moore: "On the way to Bastogne, we would see Patton along the side of the road waving us on. I don't know how he got ahead of us all the time, but he did. The only time he stopped in the field was when he ran out of gas. He was a relentless man ... and a great general."



**FIELD MARSHAL GERD VON RUNDSTEDT**

Von Rundstedt fell out of grace with Adolf Hitler following the disastrous invasion of the Soviet Union. However, von Rundstedt was recalled in 1942 and put in charge of the German army command in the West. He believed that as long as Hitler was the leader of Germany, the war would be lost. Though von Rundstedt was in charge of the entire Ardennes Offensive, he completely disagreed with the operation. In March 1945, he was relieved of duty after saying that instead of fighting a hopeless war, Hitler should sue for peace with the Allies.

PHOTOS FROM U.S. ARMY, GERMAN FEDERAL ARCHIVES



Although the Belgian National Battle of the Bulge Monument is located in Bastogne, it is a testament to the bravery of the men of the 26th Division that Luxembourg has placed its Battle of the Bulge Monument at the Mon Schumann Crossroads.

MAP & ILLUSTRATION BY BAKER VAIL, PHOTO BY CORNÉ KLJUS

## DECISIVE MOMENTS AT MON SCHUMANN

**DEC. 27, 1944**  
The "Yankee" Division held off the first German attack at the crossroads and counterattacked the next day, capturing more ground. A few days later the "Yankee" Division attacked again, this time capturing 105 prisoners.

**DEC. 28-30, 1944**  
Over the following days, the two sides continued to batter each other, with no side gaining the upper hand.

**DEC. 31, 1944**  
The Germans attacked the American line three times, penetrating the perimeter on the second charge. Seeing his lines crumbling, Lieutenant James Creighton, commander of F Company, 101st Infantry, ordered artillery to fire on his own position. The officer in charge of the artillery objected, saying, "For God's sake, I can't do that! It's inside the safety limit." Creighton yelled back, "Damn it, bring it exactly where I call for it — it's our only chance. We're in foxholes and the [Germans] aren't." The American artillery fire decimated the exposed German forces.

**JAN. 2, 1945**  
The "Yankee" Division held on, and a final counterattack pushed the Germans from the Mon Schumann Crossroads, cutting off several German units.

**AFTER THE BATTLE**  
From the crossroads, the "Yankee" Division went on to liberate 31 towns in Luxembourg. The exploits of the 26th Division came at a price, with F Company, 101st Infantry, which began the fight at the crossroads with 176 men, having only 27 soldiers left at the end of the battle. Creighton was wounded in the artillery fire he directed on himself. For his valor, he was awarded the Silver Star.



## SERGEANT STUBBY A Soldier's best friend

While training for war at Yale University in 1917, Private J. Robert Conroy of the 26th Infantry Division noticed a young pit bull-terrier mix watching nearby. Conroy named him "Stubby" for the dog's short tail, and taught him the unit's marching commands and even how to salute. Conroy snuck Stubby onto the SS *Minnesota* as they steamed toward France.

On the frontline, Stubby was wounded during a gas attack, but he recovered and was a huge morale booster. In a later gas attack, he raced through the trenches, barking at sleeping soldiers. Hundreds were spared. After spotting and helping capture a German spy, Stubby was "promoted" to sergeant. Overall, he was with the 26th for 17 engagements.

After the war, Sergeant Stubby led the men in parades, met President Woodrow Wilson and General John Pershing, and was honored by the Humane Society. Stubby died in 1926 of old age in Conroy's arms.

—Christian Anderson



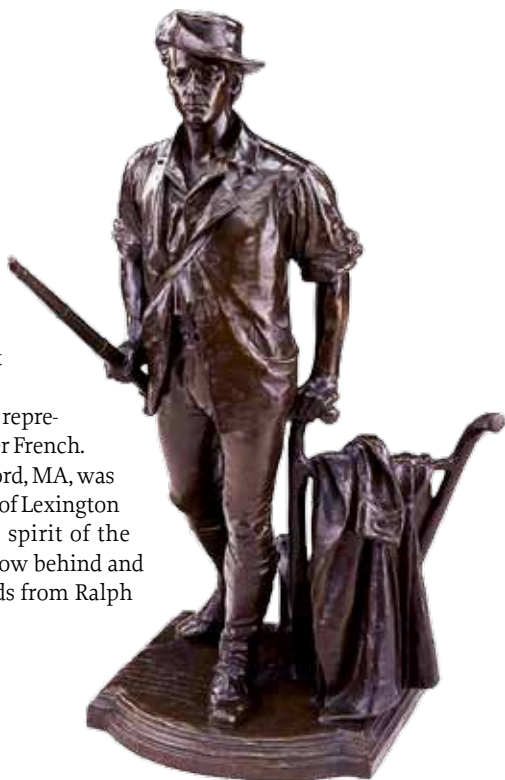
## THE MINUTEMAN

THE IDEA OF THE MINUTEMAN DATES TO 1645, when Massachusetts legislators passed a law dictating that a third of each militia unit "shall be ready at half an hour's warning" to answer any alarm. The term became famous following the "midnight ride" of Paul Revere alerting the Minutemen that the British Army was moving on Lexington and Concord.

Now the symbol of today's National Guard, the Minuteman is represented by the statue of the same name sculpted by Daniel Chester French. The Minuteman statue, located at the Old North Bridge in Concord, MA, was dedicated in 1875 during the centennial celebration of the Battle of Lexington and Concord. French, himself from Concord, embodied the spirit of the Citizen-Soldier in his statue by showing a farmer leaving his plow behind and carrying his musket to war. Inscribed on the pedestal are words from Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Concord Hymn":

*By the rude bridge that arched the flood,  
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,  
Here once the embattled farmers stood,  
And fired the shot heard round the world.*

In 1952, at the height of the Korean War, the National Guard Bureau began using a stylized likeness of the Minuteman in its marketing material.



# 69

THE NUMBER OF MEDALS OF HONOR AWARDED TO MEMBERS OF THE MASSACHUSETTS NATIONAL GUARD. THE 101ST ENGINEER BATTALION HAS RECEIVED SEVEN OF THOSE MEDALS—MORE THAN ANY OTHER NATIONAL GUARD BATTALION.

## 54TH MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT

**DURING THE CIVIL WAR,** John A. Andrew, governor of Massachusetts, authorized the formation of a new regiment, the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, which would "include persons of African descent . . ." The person chosen to command the regiment was 25-year-old Colonel Robert Gould Shaw, the son of a wealthy abolitionist family in Boston. The regiment consisted of all African-American enlisted and noncommissioned officers, while all commissioned officers were white. Shaw's men faced discrimination in their own Army and faced execution if captured by the Confederate army.

On July 18, 1863, Shaw led his men in a heroic assault against Battery Wagner on Morris Island outside of Charleston, SC. Just before the charge, Shaw exclaimed to his men, "I want you to prove yourselves. The eyes of thousands will look on what you do tonight." In the attack, almost half the regiment was killed, wounded or captured. The actions of the 54th was immortalized in the 1989 feature film *Glory*.

In recent years, the Massachusetts National Guard's Honor Guard was redesignated as the 54th Massachusetts



Volunteer Regiment (Selected Honor Guard). The regiment is utilized for a variety of ceremonial duties, including Veterans' funerals. Massachusetts is one of only three states that have Department of the Army recognition for a Special Ceremonial Unit. The regiment proudly marched down Pennsylvania Avenue, along with Civil War re-enactors representing the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, on Jan. 20, 2009, as part of President Barack Obama's Inauguration Parade.

## MAJOR STATE UNITS



### 26th MANEUVER ENHANCEMENT BRIGADE

The "Yankee" Brigade is a modern day combat support brigade and carries on the tradition and battle honors of the famed 26th "Yankee" Division. In June 2011, over 200 members of the brigade deployed to Afghanistan for a yearlong tour of duty.



### 101st ENGINEER BATTALION

Established as the East Regiment in 1636, the 101st's heritage dates to the first muster in Salem, MA, in 1637. The battalion mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2009, where it earned a Meritorious Unit Commendation.



### 101st FIELD ARTILLERY

The oldest field artillery regiment in the U.S. Army, the unit traces its lineage to the South Regiment, which was organized on Dec. 13, 1636. The 101st served as an infantry regiment for the first 250 years of its existence before becoming an artillery unit.



### 211th MILITARY POLICE BATTALION

The 211th descends from the First Corps of Cadets that was formed in 1741. With the motto "It Points the Way," the First Corps of Cadets was an institution that produced officers for regiments from the American Revolution to WWII.



### 181st INFANTRY REGIMENT

The 181st served during the American Revolution, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, WWI and WWII. In July 2011, the regiment returned home after serving in Afghanistan for a year.



### 182nd INFANTRY REGIMENT

It served during the American Revolution, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish American War, WWI and WWII. The regiment was expected to return home this March after serving in Afghanistan for a year.

## REBUILDING IN AFGHANISTAN

STORY AND PHOTO BY SSG JAMES LALLY

**A SCHOOL WAS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY** of a Massachusetts Army National Guard Soldier on the outskirts of Kabul on Dec. 27, 2011. It was named in honor of Sergeant Michael J. Kelley, 101st Field Artillery Battalion, who was killed June 8, 2005, when his helicopter-landing zone came under enemy fire in Shkin, Afghanistan.

The school was built approximately six miles from another incident, where 30 International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) service members, one civilian interpreter and seven Afghan commandos were killed when a Coalition CH-47 Chinook was brought down by insurgents August 6, 2011.

After an exhaustive manhunt that yielded multiple intelligence leads and tips from local citizens, Special Operations forces located Mullah Mohibullah, the Taliban leader believed to be responsible for the attack, and the insurgent who fired the shot associated with the downing of the Chinook. ISAF forces then conducted an airstrike that killed the two insurgents.

Just three months after both attacks and in a spirit of peace and reconciliation, Task Force Yankee, Massachusetts Army National Guard, used the commander's Emergency Response Program to build the school, which was

opened in cooperation with Afghan government officials. The eight-classroom school will benefit more than 700 children ages 5 to 13, from 200 families.

Before the opening ceremony, Brigadier General John A. Hammond, commander of Task Force Yankee, 26th "Yankee" Brigade, Massachusetts Army National Guard, and Command Sergeant Major William M. Davidson handed out donated gift packages filled with candy and school supplies to the students.

Hammond addressed the students, village leaders and Afghan officials who gathered for

the event, saying, "The school supplies we handed out today came from children in America as a gift of friendship and peace to the children here in Afghanistan."

Hammond added, "Without teachers and students, this school is just a building. I am happy to see all of you here today because I know that this school is supported by its village."

Aman Gul, a teacher at the school, told Hammond, "You have brought light here and you have given us hope."

In response, Hammond said, "We have lit the match, but you must keep the candle lit."



CSM William M. Davidson of the 26th "Yankee" Brigade poses with Afghan children in front of the new school.





**Staffed by experts schooled in the art of war-fighting, New Mexico's Combat Training Unit prepares Soldiers to take on—and take down—an enemy in any situation.**

BY LIESL MARELLI

# MASTERS OF ENGAGEMENT

**CTU**

**Opened:** 2004  
Based in Santa Fe, New Mexico  
**Official designation:**  
Combat Training Unit,  
2nd Battalion, 515th Regiment  
(Regional Training Institute)

**NUMBER OF SOLDIERS TRAINED:**

**KFOR-14:** 550  
**Afghanistan/OEF:** 70  
**M-Day Soldiers:** 500  
**Sinai, Egypt deployment:** 400



# “Trust me,”

Sergeant First Class Patrick Williams says. It's more of a statement than a question.

“I have trust issues,” I tell him, half-joking. But deep down inside I'm overcome with trepidation. I follow him into a hallway inside the shoot house of the New Mexico National Guard's Combat Training Unit (CTU). In this building, Soldiers conduct shooting drills in rooms that contain closets, trap doors, attic space and more. Soldiers can never guess what awaits them behind a door.

Standing by in the hallway are four instructors geared up with weapons, helmets, vests and loaded M4 carbines. I wonder what they're up to as Williams leads me into a room where a small black chair sits against the wall. Above it hang posters of Osama bin Laden.

“Take a seat,” Williams says. He hands me a face mask to put on. I'm not feeling good about this, but I do it. Suddenly, the Soldiers in the hall burst in, and the sounds of rifle fire fill my head. The rounds rain down on me as the shooters engage and eliminate the “threat” above me. After “clearing” my room, they move into the adjoining room and clear that one as well, leaving me in awe.

I've just made it through the initiation called the “hot seat,” a team-building exercise for new trainers. At CTU, highly skilled professionals teach Soldiers how to handle virtually any combat situation. That includes identifying and

eliminating threats while protecting everyone else—like me. But first, a newcomer must be confident in all the team members.

Mission accomplished.

## NO ORDINARY TRAINING

CTU, which opened in 2004, and was formerly known as the Combat Arms Training Company, is nestled between the Santa Fe National Forest to the north, the Sangre de Cristo to the east and the Valles Caldera National Preserve to the west, in picturesque north-central New Mexico. At more than 7,000 feet above sea level, the sunrises and sunsets magnificently paint the sky. But Soldiers don't come for the scenery.

CTU conducts intense and realistic combat training that goes far beyond typical war-fighting preparation through a diverse program that includes urban operations, convoy operations, combat lifesaver training, squad-level tactics, rappelling, evasion and survival techniques, and advanced weapons tactics.

Perhaps the only Guard unit that provides this type of broad yet advanced combat training to other Guard units (the Warrior Training Center in Georgia provides highly specialized training), CTU boasts a staff of 16 hand-selected, combat-proven Veterans with different backgrounds, skills and MOSs. With an average of three combat tours per instructor, they have a wealth of knowledge to share.

“We teach what's practical—what works for us versus the doctrine,” Williams says. “We are set up to teach all these specialized skills and can do

that in the most effective and efficient way possible.”

First Sergeant Eric Giles, who instructed with CTU from 2004–2007, says: “We were the pioneers for this type of training, and I think we've evolved with time as we gained combat experience.”

Units contact them to request the training they'd like and explain how much time they have, and the CTU instructors draft a schedule that fits those parameters.

Last year, CTU achieved astounding success by training deploying units on 93 percent of their required pre-mobilization tasks. In 2011 they trained more than 1,995 Soldiers and civilians (such as police officers). Many pre-mobilization efforts nationwide achieve only 30 percent of their required training tasks, according to CTU instructors. CTU has lifted the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command doctrine (TRADOC) to new levels in training troops thoroughly, so they're more likely to come home from combat unharmed.

## FINISHING THE FIGHT

Four of the instructors are Level 4 combatives—certified, five are Level 2 and the others are Level 1. As with most combatives classes Army-wide, the CTU instructors train on the fundamentals: Close the distance, gain a dominant body position and finish the fight.

Staff Sergeant Luke Triviz, a medic who's Level 4—certified, rhetori-



All CTU instructors are certified in combatives, so they often get on the mats themselves to put Soldiers to the test.

Newcomers to CTU are quickly shown the “hot seat,” a front-row demonstration of how to properly clear a room to eliminate the threat. The instructors are highly vetted, educated and experienced.



## THEY'VE DONE IT ALL

The collective schooling of the CTU cadre is comprehensive. The staff's combined training includes:

AIR ASSAULT SCHOOL • AIRBORNE SCHOOL • U.S. ARMY RANGER SCHOOL • SURVIVAL, EVASION, RESISTANCE AND ESCAPE (SERE) • GRYPHON GROUP • ADVANCED OFFENSIVE DRIVING (UNDISCLOSED SCHOOLHOUSE) • COMBAT DIVER COURSE • GUNSITE CARBINE COURSE • GUNSITE PISTOL COURSE • GUNSITE THREAT WEAPONS COURSE • COMBATIVES • MOUNTAIN WARFARE • SMALL ARMS MASTER GUNNER COURSE • GROUND RECON COURSE PHASE 1 & 2 • BASIC RECON COURSE • AMPHIBIOUS RECON COURSE • SNIPER SCHOOL • NEW MEXICO SEARCH AND RESCUE CERTIFIED (ALL 16) • EMERGENCY MEDICAL TECHNICIAN, INTERMEDIATE • 18D (SPECIAL FORCES MEDIC) • TACTICAL SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS I • TECHNICAL RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS • TECHNICAL EXPLOITATION OF MOTOR VEHICLES IV • DEFENSE AGAINST ELECTRONIC TRACKING OPERATIONS • VEHICLE OPERATIONS – COUNTER TERRORIST IV & V • PHYSICAL SURVEILLANCE OPERATIONS II (ELECTRONIC TRACKING) • INTERMEDIATE SURVEILLANCE DETECTION (VEHICLE) • ADVANCED URBAN OPERATIONS (CQB) • SPECIAL OPERATIONS MASTER BREACHING COURSE





Soldiers training at CTU's shoot house never know what's waiting behind the next door. More often than not, it's a battle-hardened CTU instructor who is ready to fight.

cally asks: What happens if a Soldier's weapon fails or he isn't even in a position to use his weapon? That's why combatives is so important.

"Everyone needs to know some fighting skills because they need a basic way of taking care of themselves," he says. "Our goal is to give them fear inoculations, so they get a taste of it. [So that] hopefully they won't [be shocked] when it actually happens in combat."

But Triviz is quick to point out that the goal isn't to turn Soldiers into MMA fighters. It's about self-defense, self-preservation and winning the battle, whether it's hand-to-hand combat or with weapons drawn.

"If I had to describe CTU in one word, it would be 'necessary,'" says Sergeant Nicolas Escandon, a Level 2-qualified instructor. "[Missions] are evolving, so we have to keep up our training. I think it's very important ... because leadership has to look at what's new—what has to change—and I believe CTU does that."

CTU has a progressive method for combatives training. First, it brings everyone to a basic understanding of it. Then it moves everyone forward to having an attacker wearing a

padded suit, then other scenarios including multiple Soldiers and multiple attackers, with trainers incorporating weapons and the shoot house.

"There are steps to it," Triviz says. "It's hard to take someone with no previous fight experience and tell them, 'Go fight that guy.' Even those who have been through the training still get nervous." Adding weapons to the scenarios increases Soldiers' anxiety as well as helping to heighten their awareness of a fight's dynamics.

The weapons are an essential twist to CTU's realistic training. Instructors use dummy rifles, dummy pistols and a knife that shocks on low, medium and high voltage—enough pain to motivate a Soldier to take the training seriously.

"You have to be in good shape, or get yourself to the point where you are actually able to learn this and effectively demonstrate it to others," Escandon says. "If you don't physically prepare for this, you're going to get injured. There's no tapping out in combat."

Escandon, dressed in a full-body padded suit called a Blauer suit, complete with helmet and face cover, was

playing the bad guy during the combatives training. The outfit covers approximately 70 percent of the body, so the Soldiers can execute a full-speed takedown without injuring him. The CTU instructors often conduct their own training—similar to that of the students—so they can stay on the top of their game.

Triviz was giving instructions to the Soldiers as they executed scenarios against Escandon, with each one increasing in aggression and danger. Eventually, Escandon was lunging at the Soldiers full force with the shock knife, and it became clear that anyone in possession of the knife had an advantage.

Specialist and trainer Matthew Lovato smiled like a kid in a candy shop when he gained control of the knife and used it on Escandon.

I heard the zap from the shock knife but wondered how effective it was, so I tested it on low voltage on my lower leg. After that, no need to find out what medium or high felt like. I knew immediately why the Soldiers fight like mad to gain control of it.

For Soldiers who opt for the highest-level combatives training, what's next is using the shock knife in the shoot house.

### PREPARE FOR ANYTHING

The battlefield doesn't grant Soldiers comfortable fighting positions, so neither does CTU. You train like you fight.

"You don't get to dictate the battlefield—it's just going to happen," Williams says. "You'll have to shoot in, out, above and below. And most important of all, you'll have to do it fast."

CTU works with awkward shooting positions in a manner that Soldiers can bring back to their unit. They use ply board, cutting diagonal slots, squares and a

Humvee silhouette. They have Soldiers practice partially standing—too high to kneel but too low to stand comfortably—having to tilt their weapons and heads a bit to shoot accurately.

"Shooting paper is a good way of assessing marksmanship out of the gate, but the reality is that we teach people to shoot until the target is down and is no longer a threat," Williams says.

Again, it's all about progression. First, Soldiers need to master the fundamentals of marksmanship. Then they practice awkward positioning. Once they get the hang of that, the instructors turn up the volume even more.

"We take it to another level in the shoot house. We made up our own targets that are hung by balloons," says Williams. "Once you hit the [target], the balloon pops and the target drops. Now you start desensitizing the mind to engage a target and see it fall, so [theater is] not the first time you see it. It also trains you to shoot until the target goes down."

Some of the targets are full of fake blood so Soldiers learn to desensitize to that as well. It's about training the body and the mind to get the job done.

"You worry about the effects of battle and what happens when the guys get home," Williams explains. "Because of the [CTU] training, it's not as much shock on the battlefield. [We] set them up psychologically for success. I think that's one of the biggest things for resiliency, and this way, we won't see as many psychological casualties."



## MEDICAL TRAINING

**Combat medical care** is another facet of the training, and the drills can be difficult for a Soldier to see for the first time. One of the scenarios CTU gives trainees: The building is already secure, there were friendly troops inside that got ambushed, and now they are tasked to go into the shoot house and get them out.

"The students come in and have to find everybody—we place them all over [the shoot house]," says SGT Richard Baca, a combat medic. "It's mad chaos in there. We flood them with emotions and panic to get them to think about the basic, simple things."

Practice might not make perfect, but it makes it easier for them to adjust to the stress and maintain their cool—even under the most extreme pressure. "You have to put someone under that stress so we can get what we call muscle memory," says Sergeant Nicolas Escandon, a CTU instructor. "Every reaction you do is because that's your instinct. It should become a part of your instinct."

How long does a unit have to devote to CTU for this type of training? Two days is what the guys need to drill it in enough for them to bring it back to their unit and drive on with the training.



# CTU'S OLD HAUNT

**For some of its training exercises,** CTU has used the long-abandoned New Mexico State Penitentiary. In 1980, before it was shut down, the facility was the site of one of the most violent prison riots in American history. The incident resulted in 33 inmate deaths and more than 200 injured. Legend has it that unsettled spirits haunt the facility, and the CTU staff and facility security guards tell stories that keep the mystique alive, from lights turning on and off to moving objects.

The prison has been an ideal setting for CTU's urban operations because of its many rooms and obstacles. But this year, it's being converted into a museum, so the CTU team is getting a newly constructed facility.



In the shoot house, Soldiers build muscle memory by performing repetitive exercises.



## URBAN OPERATIONS

CTU's application of urban operations is nothing short of phenomenal. Its approach begins with basic marksmanship and moves to advanced. In the shoot house, instructors begin with a single team clearing a single room, and then progress to a single team clearing multiple rooms, and other situations. They call these "flow drills" because the teams flow in and out of the rooms and the hall.

"The bottom line is we are never passing a threat," Williams says. "They figure out where they need to go, what their sectors of fire are and rapid target acquisition."

The CTU instructors record units on video cameras throughout the shoot house, critiquing them every step of the way. There's no arguing with video footage, so when Soldiers need a reminder of what they did right or wrong, the footage reinforces the training. Plus, they can take it home and watch it multiple times to further reduce the learning curve.

Precision shooting is emphasized, because the instructors know that merely engaging a target doesn't mean eliminating the threat. The CTU team trains troops not to move on until the target is down.

Even if the training room of the shoot house doesn't change, the scenarios do. There may be one enemy or two. They may both be armed aggressors, or one may fake surrendering, then lunge at a Soldier's weapon. One might even be an innocent bystander—and they all may be dressed alike. This way Soldiers don't train to see a particular uniform and attack it. They have to process the environment and gauge their response accordingly. The trick is to process information as quickly and accurately as possible so the threat is identified and eliminated, and collateral damage is minimized.

CTU doesn't stop there. Inside the shoot house, the instructors will dim the lights and blast music to add to the element of surprise and confusion.

## EXCLUSIVE TEAM

Applications to be an instructor at CTU aren't readily available. In fact, Soldiers interested in joining have to interview with a CTU staff member before they are even given a chance to apply. The team is small, so it's selective about who comes aboard. Qualifications are important, but that's not all that matters. Personalities have to blend, and applicants must be willing to follow the demanding schedule—which means knowing how to balance work and family life.

"I think it takes a special spouse to adapt to the timelines and constraints," Williams says.

The ranks range from E-4-promotable to E-7. CTU values a Soldier's leadership and deployment time. Once a Soldier is selected and assigned to the team, they'll do the hot seat exercise, says Williams. "The leader goes first," he says, explaining that it's the leaders' responsibility to show that they trust their team's ability and skill. "I [as the leader] sit in the chair first to show my guys I trust their ability to shoot and that I trust them. I'm going to let them come in on me first and shoot targets all around me."

The bullets, ultimate training munitions (UTM), are ideal for force-on-force training. If shot, it'll hurt, but that's about it. Nonetheless, the team uses UTM rounds to shoot at targets in very close proximity of their leader. Once the targets are dropped, the next team member is up. And so it continues until this trust is effectively earned and given by everyone on the team.

"The whole team goes through that process," Williams says. "It's confidence-building and team-building. And, it's not only about trust for the guys sitting in the seat, but for the team to trust that they can shoot around a live person and still accurately engage their targets. It has a strong psychological value to it."

"If you are ever in a bad situation, and these are the guys coming to get you, you can rest assured they've got it covered," Williams continues. "You're coming out alive. I want them to be the best instructors ... in ... the nation. I want their confidence to be there. These guys are surgical marksmen."

No doubt about that. Trust me. **GX**



**IF YOU ARE EVER IN A BAD SITUATION AND THESE ARE THE GUYS COMING TO GET YOU, YOU CAN REST ASSURED THEY'VE GOT IT COVERED ... YOU'RE COMING OUT ALIVE."**

SFC Patrick Williams  
CTU Instructor



# Leaders Wanted

THE SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES TEACHES MOTIVATED OFFICERS HOW TO MAKE THE BEST DECISIONS IN THE MOST COMPLEX SITUATIONS.

BY CHRISTIAN ANDERSON

Retired General and former U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell once said, "Great military leaders are made, not born."

In that spirit, the Army offers several elite institutions for higher military education. One of the most intense is the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS), where Guard officers and others who graduate receive a master's degree in military arts and science, and become some of the most sought-after leaders in the military because of their ability to think critically at strategic and operational levels, and to solve complex problems. It's said that whenever a general needs a problem fixed ASAP, he asks for a SAMS graduate. During Operation Desert Storm, General (Ret.) Norman Schwarzkopf referred to its alumni as "Jedi Knights."

One of the five schools that make up the core of the United States Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC), SAMS is located at Fort Leavenworth, KS, 25 miles west of Kansas City, MO. It graduated its first class—13 officers—in 1984 and has since grown significantly due to a high demand by the Army's top generals.

Among the toughest military schools to get into, and open to commissioned officers only, SAMS has a multiple-step application process. First, to even become an applicant, a Soldier must be nominated by their commanding officer. This requires approval from the state command. Next, candidates have to embark on a series of applications, interviews and examinations that will determine whether they are qualified to attend. If they're accepted into the school, they're in for some of the military's hardest training.

In the 1987–1988 academic year, SAMS began accepting officers from other branches of the U.S. military. The first non-Army graduates were from the Air Force. In less than two years, officers from the Navy and Marines began attending as well. In 1989, Major Linda Linden became SAMS' first female graduate.

Then the school opened up to accept civilian federal employees from government agencies such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). In 1998–1999, officers from Allied Forces began attending SAMS, starting with service members from



**“ IN MY EXPERIENCE, THE TRAINING THAT I RECEIVED AT SAMS IS ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL, BUT IT WAS THE EDUCATION THAT REALLY CAME TO THE FORE WHEN I FACED PROBLEMS THAT I HADN'T FACED BEFORE ... OR WHEN I WAS ASKED TO DO SOMETHING NEW. IT WAS MY EDUCATION IN THEORY AND HISTORY, IN ITS PURE SENSE, THAT HELPED ME THE MOST.”**

LTG (Ret.) James Dubik

Norway and Canada. Many other countries sent officers to SAMS in the following years, including Germany, Spain and the United Kingdom.

SAMS' curriculum and professional development are designed to hone students' thinking processes to prepare them for challenges they haven't faced. According to SAMS, they do this by:

- Building leaders who have a firm understanding of peer leadership and the courage to lead from behind, beside and below; they are physically and mentally tough.
- Building operational planners grounded in doctrine, and who use critical thinking to identify and solve problems; they can effectively communicate recommendations to commanders.
- Teaching students how to think, not what to think.
- Building teammates who have the ability to form a cohesive team that collaborates effectively and doesn't care who gets the credit.

SAMS is divided into two programs: the Advanced Military Studies Program (AMSP) and the Advanced

Operational Arts Studies Fellowship (AOASF). AMSP educates students in military arts and science, while AOASF concentrates on planning and executing full-spectrum operations in coordination with other government and nongovernment agencies.

The classes, commonly referred to as seminars, consist of 12 to 16 students. All are experts in their respective fields, which will include a variety of MOSs such as infantry, artillery, aviation, military intelligence and transportation. Students will be presented with a problem by the instructor and approach it from various angles. Each student's unique perspective helps the others to see the problem in a new light.

A Soldier who's accepted and attends both CGSC and SAMS will be stationed at Fort Leavenworth for about 20 months. After graduating from SAMS, they'll be experts in strategic and operational thinking and will return to their units as substantial assets. Based on the current global political turmoil and continuing threats of terrorism, SAMS graduates will be needed for a long time to come. **GX**

## CGSC: MOLDING TOMORROW'S OFFICERS SINCE 1881

Since its inception in 1881, originally called the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry, the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) has evolved to meet the educational and operational needs of the U.S. Army. Following WWII, it became known as the school for Army majors, though it contains other schools and educates officers from other military services and other countries. Since 2008, the CGSC has been part of the Combined Arms Center's Leader Development and Education program, as well as a number of other schools and centers whose missions are centered on leader development and education. The school educates and develops leaders for full-spectrum joint, interagency and multinational operations; acts as lead agent for the Army's leader development program; and advances the art and science of the profession of arms in support of Army operational requirements.

Admiral Mike Mullen speaks to the SAMS student body in 2011, just before his retirement. Part of the Soldiers' experience at SAMS is to listen and learn from those who have commanded at the highest level.







## THE WHO'S WHO OF LEAVENWORTH



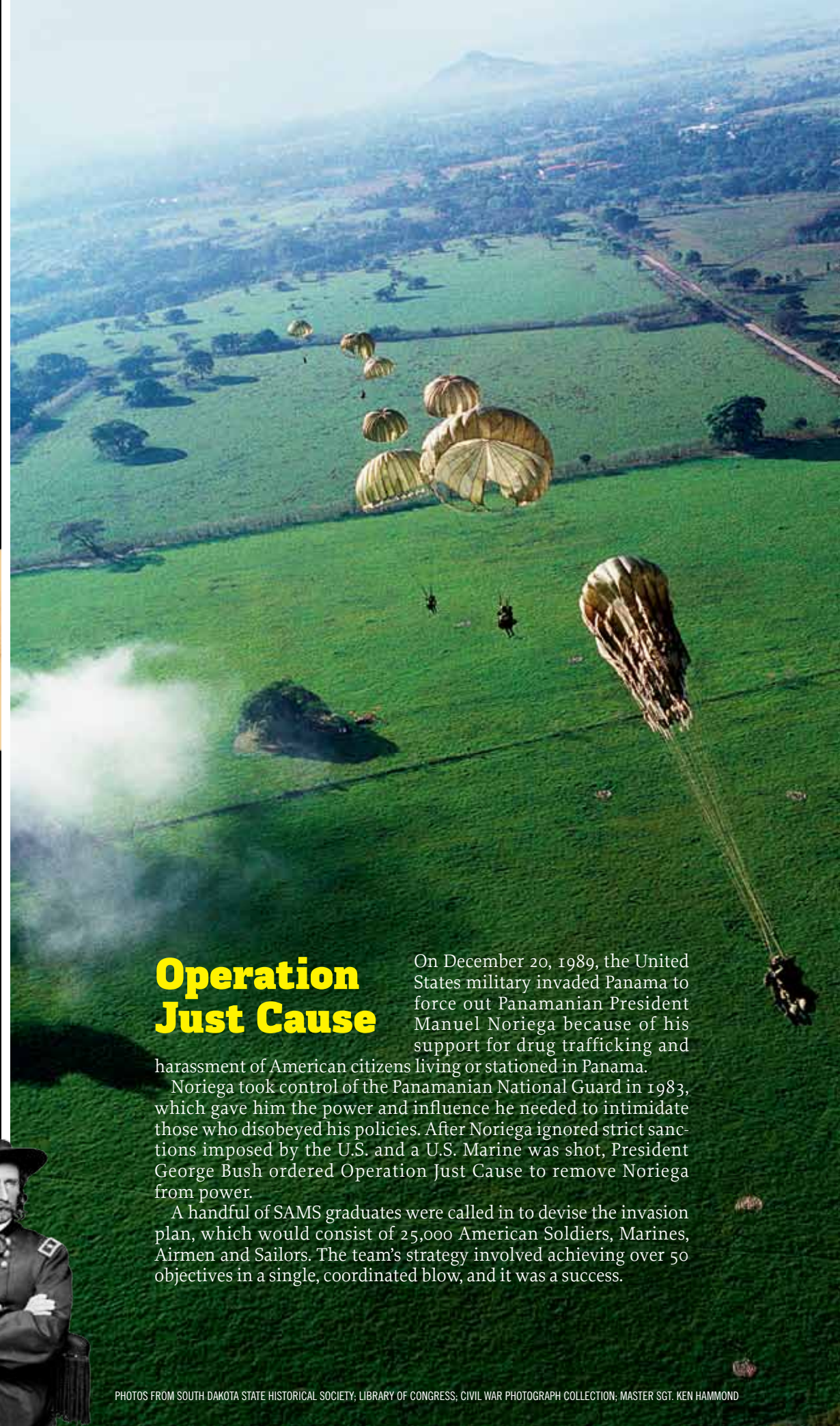
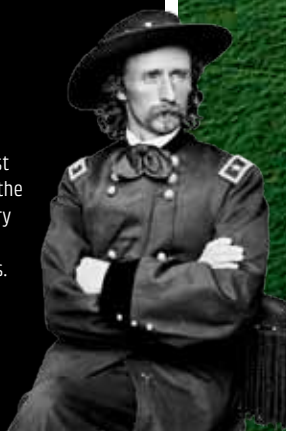
◀ **GEN HENRY LEAVENWORTH**  
 Veteran of the War of 1812 and established Fort Leavenworth in 1827.

▼ **GEN BENJAMIN GRIERSON**  
 Court-martialed at Fort Leavenworth and remained on post for one year.



▲ **GEN WILLIAM TECUMSEH SHERMAN**  
 Established the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry, the predecessor of the Command and General Staff College.

► **GEN GEORGE ARMSTRONG CUSTER**  
 Became the first commander of the 10th U.S. Cavalry Regiment, or Buffalo Soldiers.



## Operation Just Cause

On December 20, 1989, the United States military invaded Panama to force out Panamanian President Manuel Noriega because of his support for drug trafficking and harassment of American citizens living or stationed in Panama.

Noriega took control of the Panamanian National Guard in 1983, which gave him the power and influence he needed to intimidate those who disobeyed his policies. After Noriega ignored strict sanctions imposed by the U.S. and a U.S. Marine was shot, President George Bush ordered Operation Just Cause to remove Noriega from power.

A handful of SAMS graduates were called in to devise the invasion plan, which would consist of 25,000 American Soldiers, Marines, Airmen and Sailors. The team's strategy involved achieving over 50 objectives in a single, coordinated blow, and it was a success.

PHOTOS FROM SOUTH DAKOTA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY; LIBRARY OF CONGRESS; CIVIL WAR PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION; MASTER SGT. KEN HAMMOND

## ▲ FORT LEAVENWORTH

The third-oldest U.S. military installation still in use, Fort Leavenworth was built by Colonel Henry Leavenworth in 1827 and was one of several bases guarding the Western frontier. The fort became a training ground for Union Soldiers during the Civil War and continued training troops until 1891, when the Indian Wars ended. Training resumed on a grand scale during WWII, and the fort was given its name in 1946. Today, Leavenworth is home to the Combined Arms Center, which is part of the U.S. Army Training Doctrine and Command (TRADOC), and continues to change the way we fight overseas.

## ► BUFFALO SOLDIERS

The 10th Cavalry was formed and activated at Fort Leavenworth in 1867 and remained there until WWII. The first African-Americans to serve in the military during peacetime, the unit saw extensive service during the Indian Wars. Around 1867, the Indians gave them the name Buffalo Soldiers, reportedly as a result of the buffalo skin coats they were issued and their prowess on the battlefield. Their proven service in the field paved the way for other African-American units in the years to come.



## ◀ UNITED STATES DISCIPLINARY BARRACKS

The only maximum-security correctional facility in the Department of Defense, the United States Disciplinary Barracks (USDB) at Fort Leavenworth opened in May of 1875. It is the oldest penal institution in continuous operation in the federal system and has housed some of the Armed Forces' worst criminals.

The prison's mission: Incarcerate U.S. military prisoners sentenced with long terms of punishment. In 2002, the original prison was retired and replaced with a modern 515-bed facility.

PHOTO FROM FORT LEAVENWORTH PUBLIC AFFAIRS



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 or email - Phillip.t.carroll@us.army.mil

# Strength

■ IMPROVING BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT

## FIERCE AND FIT

p. 82

Cool, collected and cross-fit to the max, Staff Sergeant Irving Cortes is driven to be an MMA fighter. When he's not out in the community keeping the Guard strong as a recruiter, he's training non-stop and setting his sights on his next bout. A wrestler since seventh grade, he now works out up to three times a day and constantly raises his own bar. What's behind this passion? GX spent time at the gym with him to find out.

PHOTO BY  
 EVAN BAINES







# Power Up WITH THE PULL-UP

There's no better way to develop upper-body strength. An Olympic athlete outlines three ways to build some serious muscle.

BY SGT JUSTIN OLSEN

I'm a member of the USA-1 Olympic gold medal four-man bobsled team and a private in the New York National Guard. A great bobsled athlete must have not only foot speed and lower-body power, but also upper-body strength to propel the sled forward. In less than a second and from a static start, we have to move a sled that weighs at minimum 350 pounds.



To increase upper-body strength, I use the pull-up. It gives bobsled athletes the upper-body power to thrust the sled off the starting block but still minimize the size of musculature to maximize aerodynamics. According to Jason Hartman, a strength and conditioning coach who works with Special Forces at Fort Campbell, there is no better exercise than the pull-up to develop upper-back and bicep strength.

## THERE'S MORE THAN ONE WAY TO DO A PULL-UP. Three methods to try:

### REGULAR PULL-UPS

When performing a pull-up, always work through a full range of motion. A common mistake is not lowering yourself back to the starting position with elbows locked out. This causes inconsistency between repetitions and could lead you to believe you're making progress when you're just shortening your range of motion. Once body weight pull-ups become easy, try adding weight to maximize strength gains. Hartman says that heavy weighted pull-ups performed for a small number of repetitions will increase strength. I perform pull-ups on Mondays and Thursdays, which allows two full days of recovery between sessions. My program is mainly lower-body focused, so if you want to increase upper-body strength, three sessions a week with at least one day of rest in between will allow enough recovery to improve performance.

this position before lowering into the hang position. A common mistake is lowering yourself quickly during the initial descent, since we are weakest at this position. Go slowly from the start of the movement, and consistently lower yourself at the same rate until your arms are extended. Negative pull-ups are more taxing than regular pull-ups and will cause greater soreness, so minimize the number in your workout to something like three sets of 3-5 repetitions per set.

### ASSISTED PULL-UPS

Assistance lets you perform a greater number, which eventually enables you to do a pull-up without help. There are three ways to perform an assisted pull-up: an exercise band, an assisted pull-up machine or manual assistance from a training partner. If you're using a band, the placement depends on your current strength. For more assistance, loop the band around your foot. For less, you can loop the band around your knee. Work toward a repetition goal. Once that is achieved, you should be able to perform several pull-ups without assistance. For example, once you're able to perform three sets of 10 repetitions with assistance, try to perform three sets of five repetitions without assistance.

### NEGATIVE PULL-UPS

Some Soldiers may not be able to properly execute a regular pull-up, and it can be frustrating for beginners. If this is the case for you, you can improve your strength quickly by doing negative pull-ups. Have a trainer spot you, or use a bench for assistance to get into pull-up position with your chin above the bar. Hold

SGT Justin Olsen, a member of the Army World Class Athlete program, has been on the U.S. bobsled team since 2007.

# The Damage From Drinking

Understand the dangers of alcohol abuse before it's too late

BY BRENDAN MCNALLY

Although tobacco use has been declining for several decades now, sadly, the same can't be said about alcohol. Excessive drinking is a common problem for Soldiers, especially those suffering from high levels of stress, boredom, loneliness and fear.

In 2008, a large research project called the "Millennium Cohort Study" began. It observed Soldiers' health both during and after military service, and concluded "alcohol abuse is the most prevalent problem and one which poses a significant health risk."

"A study of Army Soldiers screened 3 to 4 months after returning from deployment to Iraq showed that 27 percent met criteria for alcohol abuse and were at increased risk for related harmful behaviors [e.g., drinking and driving, using illicit drugs]," the study continued. "And although Soldiers frequently report alcohol concerns, few are referred to alcohol treatment."

Guard Soldiers who were deployed to combat zones had nearly twice the risk of becoming involved with new-onset heavy drinking, binge drinking and alcohol-related trouble in their personal and professional lives when compared with fellow nondeployed Soldiers.

## Severe Issues

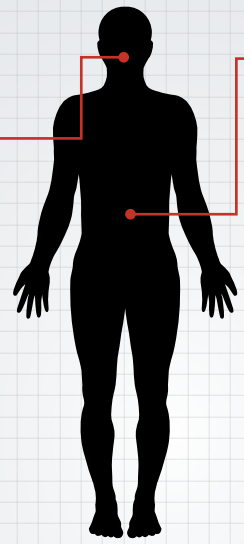
Some of the most devastating effects of alcohol abuse are immediate. Because it lowers inhibitions and clouds judgment, it can increase the likelihood of violence and car accidents. But it's also a precursor to a host of cancers and other illnesses. Colonel Frank Yang, chief flight surgeon for the Virginia National Guard, has seen the damage that drinking can

cause to the body. He specializes in treating patients with severe health issues resulting from alcohol abuse. "I have had many patients with liver failure and pancreatitis [or inflammation of the pancreas] from alcohol," Yang says. "Right now, I have a patient who has had multiple readmissions to the hospital. She'll stay off alcohol for a while, and then

## Heavy Toll

### CANCER CONCERNS

Alcohol is the cause of most cancers of the oral cavity. Having alcohol in your mouth means the toxins get absorbed into the lining of the mouth, which causes inflammation of the tissues in the mouth and throat. Over time, the tissue could become cancerous, and that could affect the breathing and swallowing mechanisms of the body.



### LIVER DAMAGE

When the liver becomes damaged by alcohol, the damaged parts get replaced with scar tissue, which can't metabolize proteins. This makes it harder for your body to fight infections. If you stop drinking, the undamaged parts of your liver will largely regenerate and you have a good chance of recovery. The parts that are damaged will not recover. But once your organs are chronically damaged, it doesn't take much to push them into the failure state.

## Moderation is essential. Try these tips.

The first strategy is to set limits about how much you're going to drink at any one outing, and stick to it. Some people suggest writing down that amount before you go out, as a way of defining it in your own mind. When you hit that amount, stop. Don't let the people you're with change your mind. One key to drinking moderately is not making it the center of your life. Find other things to do that don't involve having a drink in your hand. This usually means adopting a more active lifestyle, making positive choices and not sinking into old patterns of behavior.



CALL FOR HELP

Military OneSource provides 12 free private counseling sessions. Call (800) 342-9647.

If you or another Soldier is in crisis, call the Joint Operation Center at (800) 237-2850, ext. 3320.





# How to Help a Troubled Friend

When those close to you need advice, your counsel can sometimes be more effective than any professional's. Here are a few pointers.

BY CHAPLAIN (MAJ) MARK PHILLIPS



**L**ife will never be free of disappointments, fears or tough decisions. So when setbacks come our way, we often need someone to talk to, to help ease our burden. Numerous psychology studies have shown that just being able to talk about our issues and feelings with another person can be great therapy. You may even be thinking of a few close friends at this moment who have helped you through hard times.

Let's turn the tables. Suppose a friend, family member or coworker tells you they're facing a difficult situation. It could be a financial, vocational or relationship problem. Perhaps they tell you they're depressed and don't know where to turn. They need someone to talk to. You have now become the "counselor."

What are some thoughts that come to your mind? You may be thinking, "I have no idea how to help this person. I am not a professional. I do not feel I am adequate to help them deal with their issues." Granted, there are difficulties that are best suited for licensed counselors, clergy, chaplains or mental health professionals. But perhaps this person's need is immediate. How will you respond? An ancient proverb states, "Ointment and perfume rejoice the heart; so doth the sweetness of a man's friend by hearty counsel."

Here are some tips on how to help a friend through rough times.

## BE A GOOD LISTENER

I listed this tip first because it's the most important aspect of helping those in need. Listening well makes the person feel valued and respected. Give the person your undivided attention. Maintain eye contact. Occasionally, repeat back to the person what they've told you, so they know that you're actively listening. In my own experiences, 90 percent of effective counseling is being a good listener. If you strive to be one, you will not need to find people to help. They'll find you.

## LET THEM KNOW YOU CARE

Often, just being with the other person during their struggles is therapeutic. Try to avoid the pressure of being the "problem solver" or intimidated by moments of silence during the conversation. Remember, our actions speak louder than our words. We can tell someone we care for them, but when we spend time with them, we prove it.

## SHARE YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES

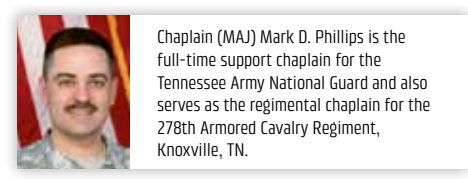
Our lives are made up of unique events, with the outcomes frequently determined by our own personality, desires and life goals. You may feel led to share the experiences of your own struggles and how you overcame them. This can be a great source of optimism. Be careful, however, to not let your experiences

become the focus. Try encouraging the person to see the problem as only one part of their entire life. Sharing your own experiences will help the person realize that they're not alone, and there's hope.

## DON'T FORGET TO FOLLOW UP

After your initial encounter, make an effort to check back in with the person later. I always try to get a phone number or email address for just that purpose. In our tech-savvy world, texting is a great way to say, "I haven't forgotten about you. You matter to me." Personal visits are always the best, but try to use whatever means available to intentionally follow up with the person.

You don't have to be a licensed clinician educated in the latest psychological theories or counseling modalities to reach out to others in need. You simply need a passionate heart that is willing to help others. In this way, everyone becomes a counselor.



Chaplain (MAJ) Mark D. Phillips is the full-time support chaplain for the Tennessee Army National Guard and also serves as the regimental chaplain for the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Knoxville, TN.

# The Signs of PTSD

Knowing what to look for can help you save a buddy

BY RACHEL GLADSTONE

**A**fter experiencing a traumatic event, symptoms of stress can present themselves immediately or several months later. The side effects of stress, usually diagnosed under the umbrella of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), can also be caused by living in a stressful environment for a period of time, such as during deployment, and can affect a person's ability to cope with ordinary day-to-day tasks. If there has been any kind of shift in how someone close to you normally functions, and that person has been thinking, acting or feeling in

ways that are of concern to family members, friends and coworkers, they might have PTSD and not know it.

Dr. Meredith Charney, a clinical psychologist with the Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital Home Base Program, works with Veterans and service members to diagnose and treat PTSD, which is characterized by reliving a traumatic incident repeatedly. With Dr. Charney's assistance, here are some warning signs that will help you recognize the symptoms of PTSD.



## STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE

The Red Sox Foundation and Massachusetts General Hospital Home Base Program was established in 2009 and provides clinical care for Veterans, service members and families from New England who are affected by PTSD or TBI, and does a great deal of community outreach and education. For more information about PTSD, TBI and their work, visit them at [www.HomeBaseProgram.org](http://www.HomeBaseProgram.org).

**RESOURCES**  
If you suspect you or someone you know is suffering from PTSD, the first thing you should do is to contact your primary care physician. If you don't have one, the following resources are good places to start:  
**Veterans Affairs:** [va.gov/health](http://va.gov/health) **Wounded Warriors:** [WoundedWarriorProject.org](http://WoundedWarriorProject.org)

## SYMPTOMS OF PTSD

### TROUBLE SLEEPING

Someone may have difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep due to nightmares or a heightened level of anxiety. Lack of sleep not only interferes with relationships, work and physical health, but can make it hard to handle the normal events of the day.

### ALCOHOL/DRUG ABUSE

Drinking or using drugs excessively is a common method of coping with stress. Even though

### self-medicating can seem like a way to combat depression or uncomfortable feelings, it can actually make symptoms worse.

### IRRITABILITY

When people become more short-tempered, it can hamper their energy level and mood throughout the day, not to mention negatively affect others.

### DEPRESSION

An increased need to sleep,

loss of appetite and a tendency to avoid activities that used to be enjoyable are a few signs.

### HYPERVIGILANCE

Signs might include thoughts like: "The world is generally not a safe place to live," or "Nobody can be trusted." Thoughts like these can seem very real, and not only interfere with one's quality of life but can easily lead to withdrawal and isolation. Loneliness and depression are often close behind.

### BEHAVIORAL CHANGES

Becoming withdrawn and

moody are usually the first signs of behavioral changes. One may also feel like they have lost the ability to enjoy the company of others and feel disconnected.

### TROUBLE CONCENTRATING

This can affect memory and organizational skills, performance at work, and simple, everyday tasks like driving or carrying on conversations.

### AVOIDANT BEHAVIOR

If interacting with others makes someone

uncomfortable and anxious, or fear arises when the person enters a crowded room, or if they avoid talking about the traumatic experience, it might mean the person is re-creating the feelings that accompanied the original trauma.

### WEIGHT CHANGE

If physical illness has been ruled out, a sudden change in eating habits and lack of desire to engage in physical activity can be a side effect of the depression and anxiety associated with PTSD.



BY SFC PATRICK WILLIAMS AND SFC WILLIAM DAVI, COMBAT TRAINING UNIT, NEW MEXICO NATIONAL GUARD

# COUNTER ATTACK

WHAT TO DO WHEN FACED WITH A HEAD-ON ASSAULT

When you are confronted with a potentially life-threatening attack, it's crucial to implement a technique that is simple and effective. The answer: the post/frame/hook with head control, a defensive technique developed by the Modern Army Combative Program. The maneuvers will establish an immediate foundation for the fight, and create enough space and time for you to mentally process your next moves. Remember: Confidence, decisiveness, speed and aggression are the keys to survival.



## POST

**Keep feet more than shoulder-width apart, turn hips so weapon is away from the enemy, tuck chin and use flat palm with thumb down to push enemy.** If armed, put your body in between the attacker and your weapon so it's not stripped from you. Tucking in your chin prevents the attacker from isolating this weakness and getting their arms around your neck. Also, when posting, it's critical to keep your thumb pointed toward the ground. This will prevent the attacker from collapsing your elbow and closing the distance.



## FRAME

**Keep feet, hips, chin and weapon positioned similar to the post. Extend forearm beyond 90 degrees with fingers spread across enemy's collarbone or with hand cupping the back of the head.** The frame will be used either when the attacker is too close to use the post technique or when they have successfully collapsed your post due to improper technique. Important: Your weapon will now be in reach of your attacker, and if you opt to use it, your offensive space will be decreased immensely.



## HOOK WITH HEAD CONTROL

**Place the nonfiring arm underneath enemy's arm so your hand cups their shoulder. Push your forehead into their chin. Legs should straddle their closest leg.** Make sure to keep your feet roughly shoulder-width apart while bisecting the side of their body with yours. Ensure that you cup the shoulder instead of grabbing it while placing your thumb in their armpit, since your grip will be stronger. When cupping the attacker's shoulder, your fingers and thumb should be together. Finally, by placing your forehead into the attacker's chin, you will cause them discomfort and hinder their ability to effectively look in your direction and plan their next move.

## THE NEXT STEP

*This effective chain technique sets up multiple follow-up moves, like knees and strikes, depending on how the situation develops. If armed, remember to follow force continuum or rules of engagement procedures leading up to deadly force, and never allow the attacker to use your weapon against you.*

# STEEL YOUR SPINE

From warm-ups to exercises, these tips from an Olympic luge athlete will help strengthen the back and prevent injuries.

BY SGT PRESTON GRIFFALL

Luge athletes know the importance of maintaining a healthy spine. Our backs are placed under a tremendous amount of stress both at the start of the race and while sliding down the track pulling up to 5 Gs in tight corners. Flexibility in the back is essential too, because the more you can compress your body, the greater range of motion you have to accelerate the sled. In a sport timed to a thousandth of a second, everything counts. To build a stronger spine and avoid injuries such as herniated discs, you have to strengthen the muscles surrounding the spine and your body's core.



## WARMING UP/STRETCHING

These are two commonly overlooked, critical elements in reducing the risk of back injury. Some athletes on our team spend nearly equal amounts of time warming up and training.

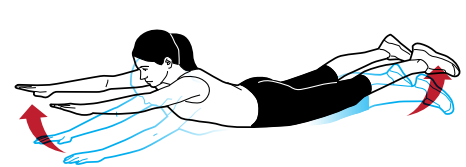
**An average warm-up should last 15 to 20 minutes,** and you should definitely break a sweat. I start out riding a stationary bike, but when that's not accessible, I jog.

**After that, it's on to some short static stretching.** Some stretches I'll do: a t-spine rotation with hold (lie on the ground face up with your arms extended and rotate your hips over to one side while pulling the knee of your top leg in toward your chest); a lunge with a hold at the bottom of extension; a stretch across the body with each arm, with a hold; a behind-the-head triceps stretch; and a butterfly (sitting on the ground, pull your feet in toward your groin and lean forward). Hold each movement for a minimum of 15 seconds.

**After stretching, do a dynamic warm-up to get the muscles firing properly.** Do a minimum of 15 reps/movements of some of these: high knees, lunge with rotation, front and lateral leg swings, body-weight squats, side lunge with a skip, wall push-ups, or forward and backward arm circles.

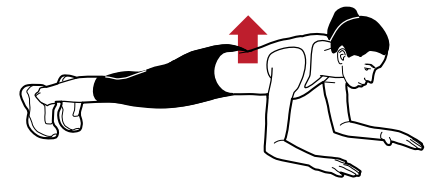
SGT Preston Griffall, who serves in the Utah National Guard, competed this season in the World Cup luge tour and was a member of the U.S. luge team in the 2006 Olympics.

## EXERCISES FOR A HEALTHIER SPINE



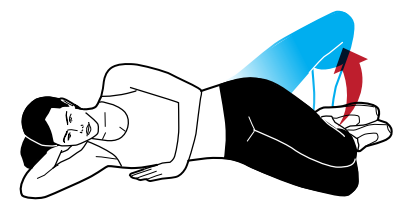
### SUPERMAN

Lie flat on your stomach and arch your back upward. Try to raise your feet and arms at the same time, avoiding a jerky motion. Do sets of 10 to 15, and hold each rep at the top of the movement for a second or two. This will make it much harder, and you're sure to gain a lot more from each rep.



### PLANK

Start by holding the position for 30 seconds, then extend the time as you get stronger. Don't forget that you can also do side planks. While doing planks, it's extremely important to keep your body rigid and on one plane. By doing so, you maximize the exercise and work out the intended muscles.



### CLAMSHELL

Luge athletes usually do this with their back against a wall, knees bent, while opening and closing the legs. It's important to make sure your back is straight against the wall and that your hip doesn't open up. Do sets of 10 to 15, and remember to hold the rep at the top of the movement.

» To make things more interesting, make a circuit out of all these exercises, and even add an abdominal exercise or two. With a circuit, you should do three sets of 10 to 15 reps, or 30 seconds of holding (for the plank) with no rest in between. Take a two- to three-minute break in between sets.

» **SAMPLE CIRCUIT:** 15 supermans, 15 clamshells, 30-second plank and 15 crunches.



# CAGED FURY

BY JAMES SULLIVAN + PHOTOS BY EVAN BAINES



*Guard recruiter and wrestling standout Irving Cortes fought his first MMA bout last year. Now, he's itching for another fight, and he's training like there's no tomorrow.*



**HE MAY NOT BE A BIG MAN, BUT HE'S RIPPED.** Pinched at the waist and absurdly broad at the shoulders, his back is shaped like a funnel, which is fitting: Staff Sergeant Irving Cortes is 10 gallons of rocket fuel packed into a quart-size container.

In one corner of the gym, the 5-foot-5, 153-pound former wrestling captain is setting the pace, as he usually does, in his strength and conditioning class. A group of mixed martial arts (MMA) cross-trainers are doing AMRAPs—"as many rounds as possible"—of a grueling 15-minute cardio set of combined exercises that feature push-ups, sit-ups, squats and more. As the minutes tick by and his classmates, one by one, begin to falter, Cortes maintains his punishing pace. When the coach calls time, Cortes looks like he could go another quarter-hour.

"He's a tank, man," says Kevin Doyle, co-owner of this bustling MMA and CrossFit gym in Hartford, CT. As a trainer tallies each athlete's total on a whiteboard, Doyle marvels at Cortes from across the room.

"He always wins," he says. Lately, this career Soldier, recruiter, community leader and father has been in the gym for two and sometimes three training sessions a day, in addition to his regular conditioning. And he's not about to stop anytime soon, because he's consumed with succeeding in his newest role: MMA fighter.

After being introduced to the sport almost by accident more than a year ago while helping an MMA fighter work on his wrestling technique, Cortes agreed to a fight. His opponent won, but just barely, and Cortes was bitten by the bug. The fight was on a Saturday. On Wednesday he was here at the gym, telling the owners he was ready to train seriously in MMA. And he remembers thinking one thing: "Somebody's gonna get their [butt] kicked."



# THE WORKOUT

One of Cortes' routines consisted of 15-minute AMRAPs—as many rounds as possible—of these combined exercises.

- ▶ **15 Push-ups**
- ▶ **10 Burpees\***
- ▶ **15 Double Unders\*\***
- ▶ **10 More Burpees**
- ▶ **15 Sit-ups**

\*Burpee = drop to squat, drop to "front plank" position, return to squat, leap to standing position. \*\*Double Unders = (in jumping rope) two rotations for one jump.



## HITTING THE MAT

For Cortes, actually, it's not so much about the combat as it is the preparation. Since that first fight, he has competed in several wrestling tournaments around New England—in late January he was training for the regional championships of the North American Grappling Association—and his second MMA fight, on April 20 in Chicopee, MA, is never far from his mind.

Cortes has wrestled since seventh grade and was a three-year captain on his high school team, routinely placing in the top three in regional tournaments. "I've been a competitive person my whole life," says the preternaturally self-possessed 28-year-old.

After serving a tour in Kuwait as a helicopter mechanic, he became a full-time recruiter for the Guard in 2007, working out of the Hartford area, where he grew up. With the births of his second and third children (the baby is now a year old), the young father wasn't finding as much time as he wanted to stay fit.

"I was walking around at about 160 (pounds)," he says, sitting at his desk in ACUs at the end of a workday in the Guard recruiting office. "I was kind of soft."

Cortes lets a faint grin slip across his face. It's difficult to imagine this driven Soldier in anything but tip-top shape. Still, it wasn't until his oldest son, Nehemiah, expressed interest in MMA training that Cortes relaunches his own fitness regimen.

They'd been horsing around together since the boy was old enough to grab his dad's leg. Now, however, the elementary school student declared himself ready for some real training.

"That's what got me motivated," Cortes says.

He soon found himself preparing for a fight. Popularized by the national television presence of the UFC—the Ultimate Fighting Championship, the ongoing series that has gained the sport a hardcore following in recent years—MMA combines striking and grappling techniques in a full-contact combat sport in which participants can draw tactics from boxing, wrestling, kickboxing, judo, jiu-jitsu and many other styles of martial art.

A friend asked Cortes to help coach a mutual acquaintance who was preparing for an MMA bout. The acquaintance was trained in judo, but he wanted to work on his "ground game." In return for teaching his new friend some wrestling fundamentals, Cortes, who already had

a bit of boxing training under his belt, learned some additional striking skills, and he quickly—perhaps rashly—agreed to his first MMA bout.

Last April, Cortes stepped into the cage at the University of Massachusetts Amherst against Sam Nadeau, an experienced featherweight (145 pounds) fighting out of western Massachusetts. Like Cortes, Nadeau was a compact, muscular 5-foot-5. Having won his first three bouts, he had earned himself a nickname: "The Bull."

When the two men bumped fists in the middle of the octagon and the fight began, Nadeau quickly tried a succession of leg sweeps, one kick landing solidly on Cortes' thigh. Less than a minute into the fight, Nadeau lunged and missed with a right cross, and Cortes seized the opportunity, surging forward, grabbing his opponent around the chest and body-slaming him to the mat. He spent the rest of the round on top of Nadeau, driving his shaved head into the other man's neck as he attempted unsuccessfully to wrestle his opponent into submission.

The second round was less propitious for Cortes, as he spent nearly three minutes backed against the octagon's chain-link fence, trying to break Nadeau's upper-body hold while the two men traded knees to the midsection. After Cortes found himself on the bottom of a takedown in the third and final round, he stood barefoot in the middle of the ring, awaiting the judges' decision. When Nadeau was awarded a narrow victory, Cortes clenched his jaw and nodded in agreement. He knew he had some work to do.

## A WORLD OF PREPARATION

Squeezed into the near corner of Hartford's Underdog Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu CrossFit gym is an MMA octagon. Inside the cage, 8-year-old Nehemiah Cortes is doing push-ups and throwing practice kicks with his classmates. The smiling boy is being teased by his coach, a beefy, baldheaded bruiser who towers over the young athletes.

"What's in your pockets?" the coach barks at the student, suppressing



Cortes was able to parlay his wrestling background into a formidable MMA package that impresses even the most experienced trainers.



**IF YOU HAVE TO BE ANGRY TO FIGHT MMA, YOU'RE GONNA LOSE. GOOD MMA IS CHESS. IT'S AN INTELLIGENT, STRATEGIC BREAKDOWN OF YOUR OPPONENT. YOU LOOK FOR FLAWS AND TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM."**

Kevin Doyle  
Gym co-owner

a smile. Nehemiah sheepishly produces a small fistful of coins from his sweatpants and hands them over.

"Start running," bellows the coach. "You'll get your six cents back later, maybe."

Cortes and Nehemiah are getting far more than their money's worth from the gym. On this cold day in January, the Soldier has already been at the gym once today, for a lunch-hour workout. When his strength and conditioning class ends at 6 p.m., he'll jump directly into a fighting lesson with more than a dozen other MMA trainees of all sizes. Nehemiah, meanwhile, will sit on a weight bench with his backpack, doing homework while he waits patiently for his father.

Beyond the octagon are stacks of free weights and PVC pipe used for exercises. Several types of heavy punching bags hang in a row, dividing the floor into two workout areas.

The owners greet new arrivals in the corner office, a makeshift space built from two-by-fours and plywood. The opposite wall is painted graffiti-style, in vivid purple and orange, with the words "Better. Faster. Stronger."

Doyle, the gym co-owner, is a gregarious former college football player who first got into MMA training when his own weight ballooned. Cortes, he says, is fight-shape ready.

"Has he told you his nickname yet? We call him the 'Hefty Smurf.'"

The Soldier has earned a blue belt in jiu-jitsu, and he has been training in kickboxing with the gym's other co-owner, Russell Leak, a martial arts master whom Doyle affectionately calls "the black Bruce Lee."

"His conditioning was great when we met him," Leak says, "and it's even better now. He's around the same weight, but his body composition has changed significantly." The wiry trainer looks over toward the MMA class, which has just begun. The athletes are warming up by circling around the mat doing "gorilla" crawls—scrambling on elbows and knees under the man squatting in front of you—and leapfrogging. For the latter, Cortes springs over each man from a standing position, without making contact.

"Irv is actually what we aspire to," says Leak, whose gym, located in the back of a nondescript building anchored by a store that sells nutrition supplements, has established itself as the premier MMA training facility in central Connecticut. "We train combat athletes here."

One critical component of the sergeant's makeup, notes Doyle, is his uncommon poise.

"If you have to be angry to fight MMA, you're gonna





lose,” he explains. “Good MMA is chess. It’s an intelligent, strategic breakdown of your opponent. You look for flaws and take advantage of them.”

Really, says Doyle, the challenge is less about overcoming your opponent than it is getting the best of your own limitations. If you go into a fight angry, he says, “at some point, your anger will disappear, and you’re not going to want to whip anyone—you’re going to want to go home.”

Having wrestled competitively more than half his life, Cortes is matter-of-fact about his attitude before a match. “I train hard and often, so I’m confident in my abilities,” he says. “I like to be calm before I compete so I can be under control, not running off too much adrenaline and emotion.”

## KEEPING HIS COOL

The fight class splits into small groups to work on ground-game advantages. At one point, Cortes takes over as lesson instructor, showing several men how to apply pressure to a move known as an arm triangle on an opponent you’ve pinned.

He loves the adrenaline rush of competition. Each day in the gym brings a new challenge, one more chance to prove his mettle.

“A lot of guys rush into fights,” Cortes says earlier in the day, en route to the gym. “I’ll fight when my trainers say it’s time to fight.”

In truth, his family is in no hurry to see him fight again. For his first bout, he had to cut a deal with his wife, Anarelis, a bright-eyed school secretary who met her future husband in church, when both were still in elementary school. She’d agree that Irving could fight, Anarelis said, if she could get laser eye surgery—a procedure he’d been opposed to.

“She got it done, like, a week later,” he recalls, smiling. “She didn’t waste any time.”

For Cortes, family is everything. He is close with his wife’s parents, who live nearby and often watch the children. His own mother lives a few towns outside the city, and his older brother, Ricardo—also a Guard Soldier—was an assistant coach for the wrestling team when Irving was in high school. Ricardo served in Cortes’ corner for that first MMA fight, as his cut man.

Their parents separated when Cortes and his brother were teenagers. Their father, Isain Cortes, was a firefighter for Hartford’s Engine 5, stationed right around the corner from the storefront recruiting office where his son now works. After retiring from the fire department, the elder Cortes moved back to his native Puerto Rico, though he soon grew tired of it. Now working as a security guard for the Smithsonian Institution, he lives in northern Virginia, where he’s remarried and has another son. The boy is a year older than Nehemiah.

As Cortes prepares to check out of the office and hit the gym for his evening session, he talks with his recruiting partner, Sergeant First Class Khalise Thomas, about the prospects for two young men who’d just stopped in.

Though he says he was fourth in the state last year in terms of enlisting new members, Cortes isn’t driven by quotas. Not every potential recruit is an ideal candidate for the Guard, he says. He concentrates less on walk-ins than the young men and women he seeks out at schools, job fairs, community events—“anywhere there’s people,” as he puts it. In talking to recruits, Cortes emphasizes options and opportunities.

“In an economy and society where jobs are scarce and education is almost unaffordable by many, the National Guard will train you in a skill that will allow you to market yourself in the working world.

“It will also afford you the opportunity to attain a college degree tuition-free all the way through a graduate degree,” he says.

After searching for his cell phone amid the paperwork strewn across his desk, Cortes calls his wife. They make arrangements to meet at his father-in-law’s apartment, where he will pick up Nehemiah.

Whether or not his son becomes an MMA fighter is almost irrelevant, Cortes says. “If he does fight someday, it’s not going to be for years. I don’t care either way.” What he does care about is that his children grow up with discipline, confidence and mental toughness. He’s seen too many young people who lack some, or all, of those qualities.

With his oldest son attending a magnet school a half-hour outside of town, logistics make up a big chunk of the Cortes’ days. Anarelis now takes private workouts with Doyle, so the family spends an inordinate amount of time at the gym. Cortes also somehow finds time to coach Little League and play bass guitar in the band at his church.

The place itself is like family, Cortes says as he pulls up to the gym. Nehemiah rushes from the car and bounds up the stairs, where he turns the corner into the gym.

“Look at this dude,” Doyle hollers. “Bring it!”

If the boy has inherited anything from his father, oh, he’ll bring it, all right. **GX**

## FUEL FOR THE FIGHT

Cortes attributes much of his impressive energy to good nutrition. His diet consists of a high protein intake, fruits, nuts and vegetables.

### Breakfast

- 6 hard-boiled egg whites
- Banana
- Water

### Lunch

- Salad with tuna or chicken
- Kiwi

### Dinner

- Chicken breast
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Baked potato

### Between-meal snacks

- Fruit
- Almonds
- Greek yogurt



# Careers

■ YOUR WORK, YOUR FUTURE



## WHEN IN DOUBT, APOLOGIZE

Even if you avoid major workplace mishaps, chances are you'll do something less than appropriate at some point. Whether you say something rude to a coworker or get caught spending work hours on Facebook, there's one good way to handle it: Own up to your mistake.

"More often than not, your employer isn't interested in excuses," Orndorff says. "Admit that your actions are unprofessional, and give apologies where they are due. But after that, the key is to change your behavior."

Apologies go a long way, but make sure you hold up your end of the bargain by following through with any promises you make.

## 1 GOSSIPING ABOUT COWORKERS

Nobody likes to be talked about—especially if it's negative. So instead of heading for the break room to vent about a coworker, consider discussing the problem directly with that person. "When there is good communication throughout the company, it helps squash the rumor mill and the gossip, and leads to better employee engagement," says Lisa Orndorff, manager of employee relations training at the Virginia-based Society for Human Resource Management.

Not only will you avoid looking unprofessional, you'll come across as a responsible employee by going straight to the source.

## 2 ARRIVING LATE

Getting to work on time is one of the most important habits of a good employee. If a rare circumstance—say, a sick child—is going to make you late, discuss it with your supervisor as soon as you know. If you are repeatedly late without an excuse, it may be considered a performance problem. Not only will your coworkers feel frustrated that you aren't upholding your work commitments, before long your boss will notice, too.

## 3 DISREGARDING THE COMPANY'S DRESS POLICY

Few things are more unprofessional than showing up to work in jeans and a T-shirt when the rest of the office abides by a business-casual dress code. "For people who are going into a new job, get a feel for the company dress code on your first few days," Orndorff says. "Remember that your version of casual might not match up to your employer's definition." When in doubt, err on the side of caution—overdress until you figure out the custom.

## 5 UPDATING YOUR SOCIAL MEDIA

Chances are your employer doesn't want you spending work hours on Facebook or Twitter. Steer clear of social media while you're on the clock. Also, never post updates that could cast a negative light on your employer. "A lot of cases have been through the news where an employee says something bad about their employer on Facebook and it results in a firing," Orndorff says. "Social media is not a bad thing, as long as you use it the right way."

# Five THINGS TO Avoid in the Workplace

Impressing your employer starts with conducting yourself properly. Don't fall prey to these blunders.

By Megan Pacella

## 4 ENABLING POOR WORKING RELATIONSHIPS

Tension between you and your coworkers can harm your reputation. If you work with someone who upsets you, try to overcome your differences. Instead of firing off angry emails or showing frustration, try to work out your differences with respect and kindness. If that's not successful, go to your human resources manager for advice or help. And if all else fails, just do your job well, and leave the rest alone.

GET HELP FINDING A JOB NOW!

p. 91



# The Path to Becoming a WARRANT OFFICER

For NCOs who want to become an officer but continue as a specialist, trainer and expert in their field, the **warrant officer (WO)** career path is the way to go. Unlike basic branch officers—who focus on increased levels of command and oversight—**technical warrant officers** remain in a single specialty and progress within their field, providing guidance to both superiors and subordinates. **Aviation warrant officers** are the Guard's pilots and helicopter experts. BY RONNIE BROOKS



### ELIGIBILITY

#### REQUIREMENTS

- Be a U.S. citizen by birth or naturalization.
- Be proficient in the English language.
- Score 110 or above on the General Technical Area of the ASVAB exam.
- Be a high school graduate or pass the GED.
- Be able to obtain secret security clearance.
- Successfully pass all events on the Army Physical Fitness Test.

#### TECHNICAL WARRANT OFFICERS:

"Tech warrants" are considered subject matter experts in their specific fields and military occupational specialty (MOS), able to lead/teach subordinates and advise commanders.

- Appoint before age 46.
- Be a current National Guard or Reserve member, transitioning Active component Soldier, or a current or former warrant officer.
- Be E-5 or above (for almost all specialties).
- Meet technical qualifications for your specific career path.\*

» [Find details and feeder MOS info for all technical warrant officer positions at: www.NATIONALGUARD.com/careers/become-a-warrant-officer/warrant-officer-careers](http://www.NATIONALGUARD.com/careers/become-a-warrant-officer/warrant-officer-careers)

#### AVIATION WARRANT OFFICERS:

Aviation warrant officers fly Black Hawks, Apaches, Chinooks and reconnaissance helicopters in combat missions, and during disaster assistance or emergency rescues.

- Appoint before age 33 (some states may be lower).
- Take the Alternate Flight Aptitude Selection Test (AFAST).

### APPLICATION / SELECTION

#### APPLICANTS WILL NEED TO:

- With your warrant officer mentor, prepare your Predetermination Packet.
- Interview/board with state aviation officer or Command Chief Warrant of state.
- Interview with Federal Recognition Board.
- Be approved by both boards to qualify as warrant officer candidate.

#### TECHNICAL WARRANT OFFICERS:

- Be able to fill an existing or projected unit MOS vacancy.
- Hold a primary or secondary MOS (PMOS/SMOS) or applicable area of concentration (AOC) in a listed feeder MOS.
- Have the option to apply for appointment in another unit if no opening exists in current unit.
- Demonstrate the ability to make good decisions under pressure.

#### AVIATION WARRANT OFFICERS:

*Initial Entry Rotary Wing (IERW) positions vary by state. There is no Warrant Officer Flight Training (WOFT) program exclusively for the National Guard. WOFT is Active Duty only.*

- Be a current National Guard member in good standing.
- Appoint before age 33 (some states may be lower).
- Vision: 20/20 Near / 20/50 Distance – Corrective eye surgery is accepted.
- Score 90 or above on the Alternate Flight Aptitude Selection Test (AFAST).

» [Learn more about the AFAST. Download the AFAST Information Pamphlet: www.NATIONALGUARD.com/downloads/542](http://www.NATIONALGUARD.com/downloads/542)

### SCHOOLS

#### WARRANT OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL (WOCS) (THREE OPTIONS)

- E-5s (and below) who have not graduated from Primary Leadership Development Course (PLDC)/Warrior Leaders Course (WLC) will attend the **Phase I and Phase II Resident Active Component WOCS** (seven weeks, two days) at the Warrant Officer Career College (WOCC) at Fort Rucker, AL.
- E-5s who have finished WLC, and E-6s or higher, will complete the **WOCS Phase I Distributed Learning (DL)** and attend the five-week **Phase II Resident Active Component WOCS** at the Warrant Officer Career College (WOCC) at Fort Rucker, AL.
- For Reserve Component Soldiers, you can attend the **WOCS-Reserve Component program** at the State Regional Training Institute (RTI). You'll complete the same **Phase I DL**, followed by a five-month **Phase II Drill** (Inactive Duty Training) in selected states, then finish with a 15-day **Phase III Annual Training** at either Fort McClellan, AL, or Camp Atterbury, IN.

Upon completion of Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS), the WOC is appointed as a W01, for a period of up to two years (until completion of the Warrant Officer Basic Course).

#### FLIGHT SCHOOL

*Following your interviews and board selection, you'll enter flight school at Fort Rucker, AL. Schedules may vary, depending on your state and aircraft.*

##### Phase I (approximately 40 weeks):

- Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS): 4–7 weeks
- Warrant Officer Basic Course: 6 weeks, 3 days
- Helicopter Over-water Survival Training (HOST): 2 days
- Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE): 3 weeks, 1 day

##### Initial Entry Rotary Wing (IERW) Core Course (22 weeks):

- Basic Pre-flight, Contact and Instrument Skills
- Basic Warfighter Skills

##### Phase II (46–51 weeks, depending on aircraft):

During Phase II, you'll learn to defend and fight from the air, assist Soldiers in combat and help civilians during emergencies and natural disasters. During this phase, you'll train exclusively in your chosen aircraft.

#### ADVANCED SCHOOLS

##### Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC)

The W01 has two years to attend Warrant Officer Basic Course (WOBC) in a specific MOS. After two years as a W01, and after completing WOBC, the W01 is eligible for promotion to CW2. WOBC is required for promotion to CW2.

##### Action Officer Development Course (AODC)

After promotion to CW2, you'll be required to take this online course prior to attending the Warrant Officer Advance Course and promoting to CW3. Focusing on management and communication, AODC must be completed within 12 months of enrollment.

##### Warrant Officer Advance Course (WOAC)

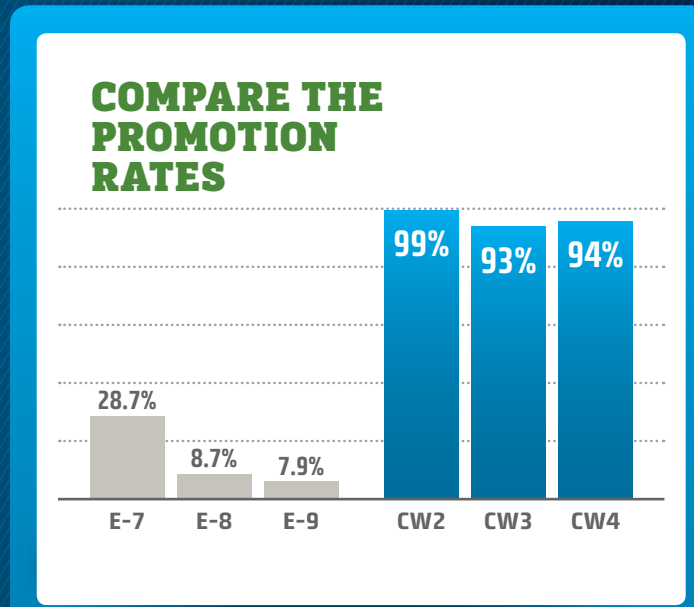
WOAC consists of both core and MOS-specific, advanced-training courses, with nonresident and resident training. You must have at least three years' time in grade at CW2 to apply for WOAC, which is required for promotion to CW3.

##### Warrant Officer Staff Course (WOSC)

WOSC is a four-week resident, professional development course taught at Fort Rucker. It also includes a 47-hour, distance-learning (DL) component. You must have at least three years as CW3 to apply. WOSC is required for promotion to CW4.

##### Warrant Officer Senior Staff Course (WOSSC)

WOSSC is a two-phase, master-level course consisting of Phase I (DL) and a four-week Phase II (resident). The CW4 may apply for WOSSC after four years' time in grade and after selection by a selection board for promotion. After five years' time in grade, selection for promotion to CW5 and completion of WOSSC, a CW4 is eligible for promotion to CW5. Command chief warrant officer must be appointed by the state adjutant general.



Start your application. Download the Warrant Officer Application Guide: [www.NATIONALGUARD.com/downloads/23](http://www.NATIONALGUARD.com/downloads/23)



# ULTIMATE DRIVE

As one dedicated, crime-fighting sergeant shows, becoming a warrant officer can be highly satisfying

BY RACHEL GLADSTONE

**B**ECOMING A WARRANT OFFICER is as challenging as it is rewarding. In order to pursue this career path, candidates must be top-notch in their field. Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jonathon Molik of Saratoga Springs, NY, knows just how much drive and enthusiasm it takes.

Before joining the Guard in 1997, Molik had an interest in military intelligence, so when it was time to choose an MOS, he naturally gravitated to that specialty.

In 2003, deciding to remain with the Guard full time, Molik moved up in rank to staff sergeant and began working with the Counterdrug Task Force as a supervisor for intelligence Soldiers. He often collaborated with state and federal law enforcement officials in his job, and upon deploying to Iraq in 2005, also began working closely with warrant officers for the first time.

"I really got a clear understanding of what warrant officers did during that deployment," Molik says. "First of all, they're technical experts; the [best] in their fields. And since [they] don't have as many administrative responsibilities as commanding officers, they have the time to focus on their job. After seeing them in action, I really understood the impact [they] could have on day-to-day operations, and I knew I wanted to become one myself."

## COUNTERDRUG EXPERIENCE

Upon returning home, Molik continued working with the Counterdrug Task Force as a Soldier and narcotics analyst, and he began the process of becoming a warrant officer. Meeting the minimum requirements wasn't difficult; he had to have been working in his particular field for several years and needed the recommendations of his company commander and a warrant officer, all of which he had.

"After that I had to go through an interview process," he explains. "Then I had to write a paper discussing why my becoming a warrant officer would be of benefit to the Army, and why I had

## BEFORE YOU APPLY

The most effective warrant officers are the ones who have the most passion for their jobs and strive for excellence in their field. When deciding whether to pursue the field, ask yourself these questions:

enough experience to do that. That was the time-consuming part."

Putting his packet together took Molik about six months—relatively fast—and he credits his drive and determination as the major factors in completing the process so quickly. It then took an additional six months before he was approved and able to begin warrant officer candidate training—a 6½-week commitment. But because of the level of experience he'd attained in his field, Molik was able to complete his first two weeks of training online. And eventually, after another 4½ weeks of training at Fort Rucker, AL, he graduated as a warrant officer 1 in 2008.

Coincidentally, later that year an investigator's position opened up in the New York state attorney general's (AG) office, and Molik decided to apply. "Because the team I work for [concentrates on] organized crime and gangs, I'd developed a working relationship with the AG's office," Molik says. "So when a job in their office came up, I applied for it and got it. Since I'd worked with them, they knew me, which certainly helped. But because of the training I'd received as a warrant officer, I could talk about leadership and management in a way I couldn't have ... before, and that ... really helped me get the job."

## THE RIGHT PATH

Molik feels his decision to become a warrant officer is one of the best he has ever made. To prepare for an upcoming deployment with the 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team out of Syracuse, Molik recently went through a National Training Center rotation, serving as a senior intel analyst, another step forward in his career.

"I had a lot of responsibility, but a lot of freedom to choose how the shop ran, how Soldiers worked, when they worked, what their priorities were and what they should focus on, which is, of course, based on the guidance of my S2 major," he says. "And I was able to see quickly, in a two-week period, how I could leave my mark on this intel team that supported our brigade commander. I'm really proud of that."

Molik's advice to anyone thinking of pursuing this career path is simple. "To be the best of the best, it takes passion and drive, and you have to be willing to ... commit to it 100 percent," he says. "I hope that every Soldier who's considering becoming a warrant officer looks at it that way. You get out of it what you put in."

Is my MOS really important to me?

Do I have the work experience and recommendations necessary to begin the application process?

Am I prepared to put in the extra time and effort the pursuit requires?

Is this a career I can see myself in for life?

# Need a Job?

The Guard Support Center can help with everything from career counseling to resume writing to interview advice

BY MARK KAKKURI

**AFTER RETURNING HOME** from deployment or leaving Active Duty, many Soldiers need to find work. To help them land jobs, the Guard Support Center has, since 2002, provided services for full- and part-time Guard Soldiers, their family members and any civilian employee of the Guard at any time in their career.

Although a struggling economy makes finding jobs for anyone more difficult, Amanda Valdivieso, a senior employment counselor at the Guard Support Center, says that's only one factor that adds to the complexity for Soldiers.

Because rank determines salary in the military, the pay can be a lot higher than the civilian equivalent of their military occupation. Also, civilian employers don't understand military language or acronyms if those are used on a resume. **(For resume tips, see story on Page 96.)** In addition, employer misconceptions can affect the job search—some employers think Soldiers may not be able to transition to a civilian work environment.

But what employers may not realize is that there are a number of great skills that a Soldier brings to the workplace, such as a sense of responsibility, leadership skills and poise under pressure.

The Guard Support Center benefits Soldiers in two key ways: 1) It provides them with a product (a resume worksheet and resume) that they can use later in their job search on their own; 2) It helps them find direction and move toward their career goals.

Guard Support Center counselors are knowledgeable in all of the different Army National Guard education programs, and Valdivieso says the center also has subject matter experts on hand who can assist with any in-depth questions. This helps if, say, a Soldier wants to become an accountant but doesn't have a bachelor's degree, or if a Soldier wants to become a plumber but isn't licensed. "We know how to get them to those points," says Valdivieso. "Moreover, center counselors teach Soldiers so that later on they can employ for themselves the advice and training we provide for them."

## GUARD SUPPORT CENTER SERVICES

### RESUME WRITING SERVICE

When the center first meets Soldiers, the staff will gather information on the Soldier regarding their previous civilian work history, their military experience and other information pertinent to a resume.

### RESUME WORKSHEET

This is a "master resume" compiling all of the necessary information a Soldier may need to create different targeted resumes or fill out a variety of job applications. It also translates military service into civilian-equivalent terms and job titles. "Many Soldiers are unsure of

what civilian careers they can pursue with their military experience, and this worksheet helps them figure it out," Valdivieso says.

### TARGETED RESUME

This is a resume specifically geared toward a chosen career field or objective. As a Soldier goes through the job search process, the center will modify the targeted resume as necessary toward the jobs they apply for.

### CAREER COUNSELING AND JOB SEARCH ASSISTANCE

The center will identify and evalu-

ate Soldiers' career goals, training and experience, any gaps in skills and knowledge, and help them find resources to get affordable training or education if needed.

### COUNSELORS

Soldiers have access to counselors assigned to different regions in the country who are knowledgeable in local employment programs or resources.

### INTERVIEW COACHING

The center walks Soldiers through typical interview processes so that they know what to expect and how to answer certain questions.

## BACK TO SCHOOL?

For Soldiers who desire or need to go back to school before they go back to work, the Guard Support Center offers several resources to facilitate an easy transition to the classroom.

Amanda Valdivieso says education counselors at the center can guide Soldiers through the process of getting their federal tuition assistance set up, and seeing which GI Bills they're eligible for and how to apply. The center counsels Soldiers on military-friendly schools, offering research on degrees offered, costs, withdraw policies, accreditation and credit transfers—"all very important issues for a Soldier when going to school," she says.

## CONTACT THE GUARD SUPPORT CENTER

Call the Guard Support Center at (866) 628-5999, or send an email to [gsc-employment@ng.army.mil](mailto:gsc-employment@ng.army.mil)

## MORE RESOURCES

[ONETONLINE.ORG](http://ONETONLINE.ORG)  
for civilian occupation equivalency of military experience

[VETCENTRAL.US](http://VETCENTRAL.US)  
job search engine with searches geared toward the military

[EMPLOYERPARTNERSHIP.ORG](http://EMPLOYERPARTNERSHIP.ORG)  
job search engine for military-friendly employers



# Keeping the Force Strong

SSG Craig Wester became the 2011 National Guard Recruiting and Retention NCO of the Year with a relentless drive and a winning personal style

BY CAMILLE BRELAND

**P**PRIVATE ALISHA JOHNSON, 19, DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO EXPECT when she first walked into the Arizona National Guard recruiting office in October 2010. She was greeted by a smiling recruiter, Staff Sergeant Craig Wester, who explained to her the benefits—and challenges—of being a National Guard Soldier. She took the ASVAB in that first meeting and, with Wester's guidance, completed almost all of her paperwork within one week.

"He's honest and upfront with you, and that's what I respected about him the most," says Johnson, a 74D (chemical operations specialist) and college freshman, about the Arizona recruiter. "[Joining the National Guard] is one of the best decisions I've ever made, and I thank Sergeant Wester for helping me make this decision."

Johnson is just one of thousands who decide to join the National Guard each year. While they may join for different reasons—family legacy, service to their country, education benefits—they all start in one place: with a recruiter.

It takes a unique, motivated leader to be a successful recruiter. They have to build trust and rapport with a prospect before helping them make a momentous decision. Wester is one of these great recruiters.

Although Wester has been in the Guard only for about 2½ years, he has quickly worked his way to becoming a top recruiter, culminating in being named the 2011 National Guard Recruiting and Retention Noncommissioned Officer (RRNCO) of the Year. Achieving the honor required a highly organized approach, exacting discipline and a flexibility in adjusting to the digital age.

## WORKING THE WARRIORS

Wester, 43, joined the National Guard in July 2009 after a 10-year break in service. He originally enlisted in the Regular Army in 1989 as an Infantryman before becoming a recruiter. Wester served on Active Duty for about 10 years, deploying during Desert Shield and Desert Storm, before leaving for a civilian job in Chandler, AZ.

He spent the next 10 years as a sales representative for a moving and storage company. During that time, a friend began talking to him about the National Guard and invited him to attend a Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) drill. Wester loved the energy of the new Warriors, so he enlisted as a recruiter and became an RSP instructor one weekend a month.

For many of these new Soldiers, Wester is the first RSP leader they see during their first weekend in the National Guard. He's the team leader for the Red Phase, the first of three phases in which new privates learn the basics of the Army National Guard, such as rank structure, history, and how to address officers and noncommissioned officers.

Wester builds a lasting relationship with his recruits, helping them make the transition into the Guard even after the enlistment papers are

signed. In fact, Wester says one of the more rewarding aspects of his job is seeing the new Soldiers return from Basic Combat Training, changed for the better. The shy recruits have often gained confidence, and many who were slightly out of shape have improved their fitness dramatically.

There's another benefit to maintaining a relationship with his recruits: They often lead him to new prospects through their friends, family and coworkers. In fact, Johnson says she recently referred one of her friends to the National Guard. "I [sent] her to Sergeant Wester because he's such an amazing recruiter, and I knew he wouldn't lead her in the wrong direction," she says.

## KEYS TO EFFECTIVENESS

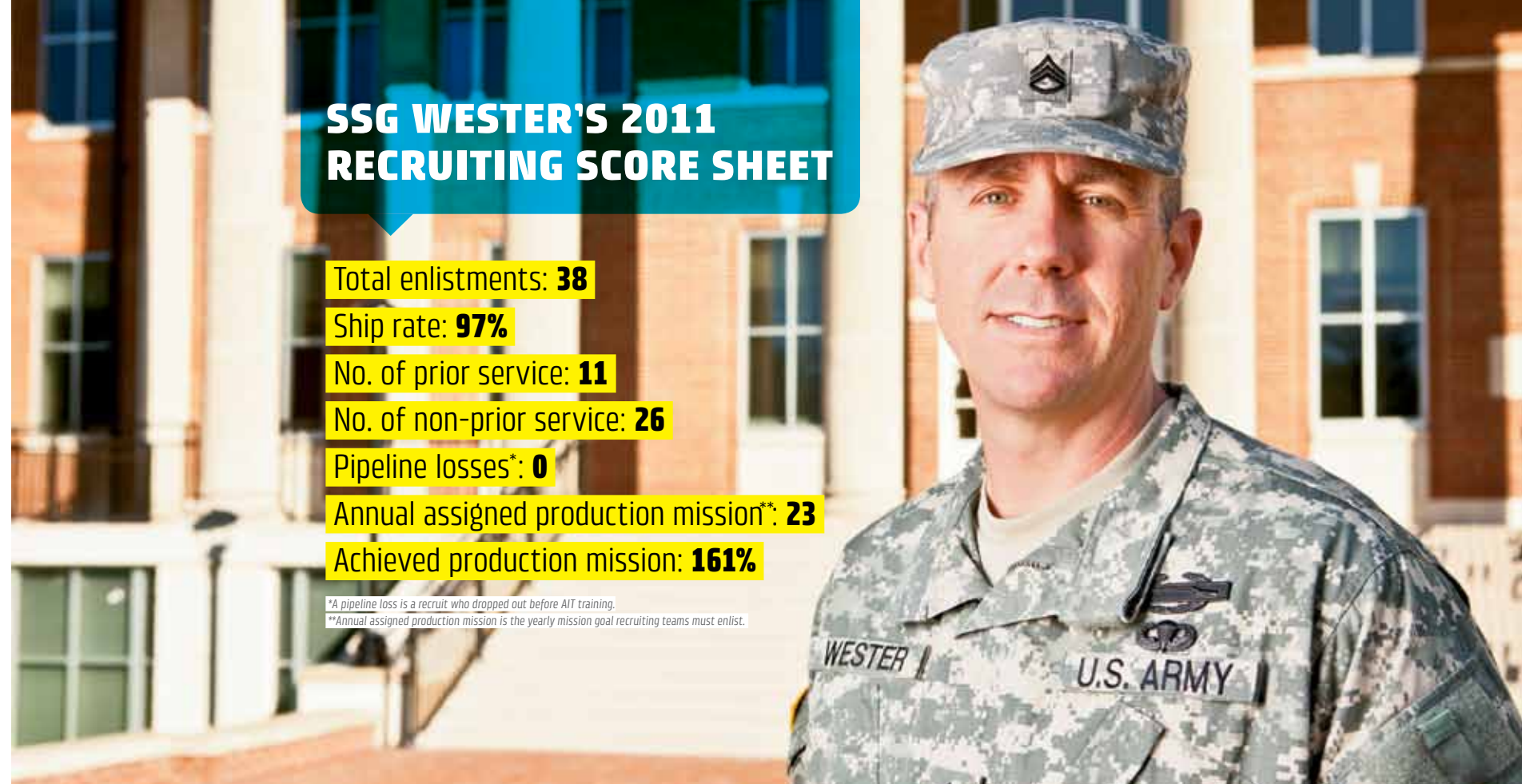
Wester now leads a section of recruiters in Team Sun Devils, the Guard recruiting team for the territory around Phoenix. That group has been the top Guard recruiting unit in Arizona for the past seven years. Wester alone enlisted 38 new Warriors into the Guard last year.

So how does he do it? For one thing, through time management, which he feels is the most important aspect of recruiting. Every day, he outlines a plan and lists daily goals, and then does everything possible to achieve those goals.

Wester says he strives to keep his "funnel full," meaning he has applicants in every stage of the enlistment process. To achieve this goal, he must constantly be prospecting and meeting the requirements to move recruits along in the process.

Wester has adopted a systematic approach to recruiting—which his noncommissioned officer-in-charge (NCOIC) considers the key to his success. Wester always strives to set three new appointments on Monday of every week, secure 10 appointments to take the ASVAB per month, and prospect for new recruits every day.

"The challenge of the systematic approach is the discipline it takes to do it time after time, even though you may not want to," says Master Sergeant Robert McMahon, NCOIC for Team Sun Devils. "Recruiting is a very self-driven profession. You can be given all the tools, but in order to be successful, you have to have that self-discipline and [motivation] to achieve and over-achieve the mission assigned."



## SSG WESTER'S 2011 RECRUITING SCORE SHEET

Total enlistments: **38**

Ship rate: **97%**

No. of prior service: **11**

No. of non-prior service: **26**

Pipeline losses\*: **0**

Annual assigned production mission\*: **23**

Achieved production mission: **161%**

\*A pipeline loss is a recruit who dropped out before AIT training.

\*\*Annual assigned production mission is the yearly mission goal recruiting teams must enlist.

## RECRUITING AWARDS

USAREC Ring  
USAREC Gold Badge (w/ 3 sapphires)  
National Guard Senior Recruiting Badge

1995 Rookie of the Year, Sacramento BN  
1996 Top Recruiter, Sacramento BN  
2010 Top Ship Rate, Arizona

2011 Top RRNCO, Arizona  
2011 Top RRNCO, RRAC VII  
2011 Top RRNCO, Army National Guard



**HE'S HONEST AND UPFRONT WITH YOU, AND THAT'S WHAT I RESPECTED ABOUT HIM THE MOST."**

PVT Alisha Johnson

Wester is extremely disciplined in his approach to recruiting. Every week, he also attempts to connect with as many people in the community as possible by sending out direct mail, making phone calls, visiting schools and colleges. However, he focuses on quality, not quantity. To find these top-notch recruits, he turns to the college and junior college campuses.

Once he sets the first appointment with applicants, Wester continually follows up with them, ensuring that they are completing every step of the process within a set time frame. But to effectively stay on top of his recruits, he had to change the way he communicated. Through trial and error, he learned that many of today's high school and college students prefer to communicate via text messaging rather than traditional phone calls.

"I was never one to text before, but now with the young people, you have to text," he says. "There's no way around it."

He's also available nearly 24/7 for his recruits, ready to answer questions, provide guidance and explain National Guard service to parents.

Wester reveals another key to his success: his wife, Chantal Wester, who pushes her husband to recruit more people. She'll push him harder than any of his bosses did all year long, Wester jokes. "She'll ask, 'Did you put anyone in today? Is that all? You can do more than that.'"

Chantal offers constant support, too, helping Wester address labels for

## MILITARY CAREER

**MOS:** 79T, Recruiting and Retention NCO (Army National Guard)  
**Rank:** E-6, Staff Sergeant  
**Length of Service:** 12 years

mailings, volunteering with his unit and assisting him however she can.

Even after meeting potential applicants, recruiters still have to build trust with them and explain how they can benefit from being in the Guard. For Wester, that's the easy part—he just tells the truth.

"Be upfront and honest with everybody that you talk to," he suggests. "Let them know exactly what they're getting into by trying to answer all their questions and being genuine with them."

## THE TOTAL SOLDIER CONCEPT

This year's RRNCO of the Year competition focused on the "Total Soldier Concept," encompassing all aspects of today's top-notch Warrior. Recruiters were judged in 11 categories, including community service, leadership, RSP involvement, physical fitness, job performance and an interview with the judging board.

Wester truly is a total Soldier. He excels in his job, in the community and with his family. Last year, he achieved an almost perfect ship rate—the number of people he recruited who actually shipped to Basic Combat Training.

As for community service, Wester, his wife and his recruiting team volunteer at least once per quarter. They organize a "casino night" at the local Veterans hospital, where everyone can play card games and roulette and win prizes. They've also participated in Habitat for Humanity, which builds affordable homes for people in need.

Wester didn't begin 2011 thinking he would be the top recruiter of the year. "My goal was to go out, have a good time, laugh and joke, put some people in the Guard and do my job," he says. Once again, he achieved his goal. **GX**



# Give Your Resume an Edge

What the boss of a top military contractor wants to see when you apply

BY DAN ALAIMO

**THE MOST IMPORTANT TOOL FOR FINDING A JOB** is a dynamic, well-written and professional-looking resume. Whether it is a Guard member's first resume or 50th, there is always room for improvement. Mike Ivy, vice president and general manager of Army Programs, Oshkosh Defense, offers some pointers based on what his company looks for in a candidate.

**Passion for service.** One of the primary characteristics that makes an applicant attractive is a passion for serving within the defense industry. I have found that many Veterans share our passion for protecting the Soldiers who ride in our vehicles. That passion from Veterans is unique since they have experienced many of the perilous situations our end users face. If candidates' resumes reflect enthusiasm

and passion to continue serving their country, they are more likely to be hired than someone whose resume might reflect similar qualifications but lacks enthusiasm.

**Tout your leadership skills.** The military fosters unparalleled leadership skills that are critical for troops to be successful on the battlefield. These strengths help Veterans to be leaders in the workplace. When you prepare your resume, provide information that allows a reader to understand your role as a leader. How many people did you lead? Who did you lead? Under what circumstances did you act as a leader? What were your successes as a leader? All of this information, summarized in a few short sentences, will allow a recruiter to see a snapshot of the success you have had in the military and recognize the

leadership potential you bring as an employee.

**Communication skills.** In addition to leadership, [it's] one of the most important transferable skills from the military into the civilian workforce. No matter what career path you follow, demonstrating strong communication skills will often set you apart from other applicants. Provide examples in your resume of instances when you resolved a conflict or achieved an accomplishment through deliberate communications.

**Strong work ethic.** Nearly 10 percent of our workforce consists of Active Duty and retired military personnel, and I can almost always count on them to bring a dedicated work ethic to the team. A strong work ethic includes dedication, commitment,



Mike Ivy, who served in the Army for 27 years, is responsible for development, production and sustainment of Oshkosh's programs with the Army.

going above and beyond expectations, and the ability to function as a team player. Consider providing a concise list of things you have done within the military that demonstrate your work ethic.

**Focus on the customer.** Leading companies maintain an intense focus on the customer. Applicants who demonstrate an appreciation for the challenges our customers face stand out as people we would like on our team. I'm confident this same principle applies to nearly any other company as well. If you can make that clear in your resume, we know that you share our ambitions and are likely to be a collaborative team member.

## COMMON RESUME MISSTEPS

Avoid the use of acronyms and abbreviations like FOB or TDY.

Many people reading your resume can't be expected to translate military jargon.

**DON'T** focus so much on leadership skills and military successes that it masks your ability to function as a team player.

**DON'T** be discouraged by the lack of civilian work experience. Though employees must be qualified for their jobs, often it is the determination and can-do attitude of military applicants that best qualifies them.

**DON'T** say anything negative about a former military or civilian supervisor, regardless of the circumstances. If you speak poorly about others, how do interviewers know you won't speak negatively about them someday?

**DON'T** sell yourself short. You have served our country and developed remarkable skills and traits along the way. Make sure all of the characteristics you think make you a strong applicant are evident in your resume.



## SOLDIERS BANK ON WELLS FARGO

Workers can count on the financial company for compassion and commitment

BY JEFF WALTER

When Captain Rudyard "Rudy" Magallanes deployed to Iraq as a member of the California Army National Guard, he didn't have to worry about his civilian job with Wells Fargo and Company, one of the nation's largest banking and financial services institutions.

"My supervisor took care of me," Magallanes says. With regular email contact from his immediate boss and other company officials, including the chief investment officer, "I felt like I was always in touch."

Stories like his helped make Wells Fargo the 2011 recipient of the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award, presented by Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR). Magallanes, who nominated the company, has since left and is wrapping up a Master of Accounting and Finance degree through DeVry University's Keller Graduate School of Management.

Now with the Army Reserve, Magallanes describes military service as a three-way partnership: spouse, career and Soldier. "That's what it takes to make the military Reserve concept work," he says. "To go from doing the Army one weekend a month to being deployed, you need the support of your spouse and your job. If either isn't supportive, you have a hard time. If you feel like you're letting your work team or your family down, that will always be in the back of your mind."

### MAXIMIZING SUPPORT

For Wells Fargo, support for the military is an obvious call. The San Francisco-based bank, with 270,000 employees nationwide, has about 250 of them actively deployed at any time, says Pat Callahan, senior executive vice



Pat Callahan, executive vice president of Wells Fargo, accepts the 2011 Freedom Award from David McGinnis, acting assistant secretary of defense for Reserve Affairs.

president and chief administrative officer. After 9/11, the company upgraded its leave policy and other programs to maximize its support for those called to Active Duty. For example, as more team members—the company's term for employees—began being mobilized, the company extended from 12 to 24 months the period during which it would make up the difference between their military pay and their Wells Fargo salary.

"Our Guard and Reserve team members are hardworking and committed and ethical," Callahan says. "They are good people. We want them to come back. And we don't want to see their families unable to pay the electric bills while they're off fighting for us."

In Callahan's view, Wells Fargo's all-around approach pays off for everybody. "Our team members who are deployed appreciate it, and it's important to their coworkers, too. ... It absolutely builds loyalty, and it's something that makes people want to work here."

### MEMORABLE IMPACT

The company's personal touch made a lasting impression on Magallanes, perhaps most notably when he returned home to San Gabriel, CA, from Iraq for two weeks of R&R. The visit coincided with his son's first birthday. At the party, Magallanes' supervisor and another manager from Wells Fargo showed up to join in the celebration.

Five years later, the experience still resonates for Magallanes, who as a commanding officer has seen the personal struggles that can challenge Soldiers while overseas. "One of the hardest things about being deployed is just being away from family," he says, stressing the importance of support from the homefront, both in the household and in the workplace.

"I really appreciated the treatment that I got."

**IN** addition to its generous leave policy, Wells Fargo has distinguished itself in many other areas, including:

#### Jobs:

Wells Fargo participates in military job fairs and is committed to hiring returning Soldiers. "There are a lot of Veterans out there right now who are unemployed," Callahan says. "We're a big employer in all kinds of communities, and we're working to make sure we know the sources and can be a source for jobs." In addition, the bank offers a special Patriot Express loan program, backed by the Small Business Administration, for Veterans who want to start or expand their own business.

#### Employee Assistance:

The company's 24/7 Employee Assistance Consulting includes counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder.

#### The Veterans Team Member Network:

This group, with more than 1,000 active members from coast to coast, not only keeps in touch but also gets together to do military-related community service.

#### Charity:

Wells Fargo has donated 10,000 meals and thousands of clothing items to homeless Veterans nationwide.

To learn more about the Freedom Award or to nominate someone, visit [www.FreedomAward.mil](http://www.FreedomAward.mil)



PHOTO FROM OSHKOSH DEFENSE

PHOTO FROM ESGR





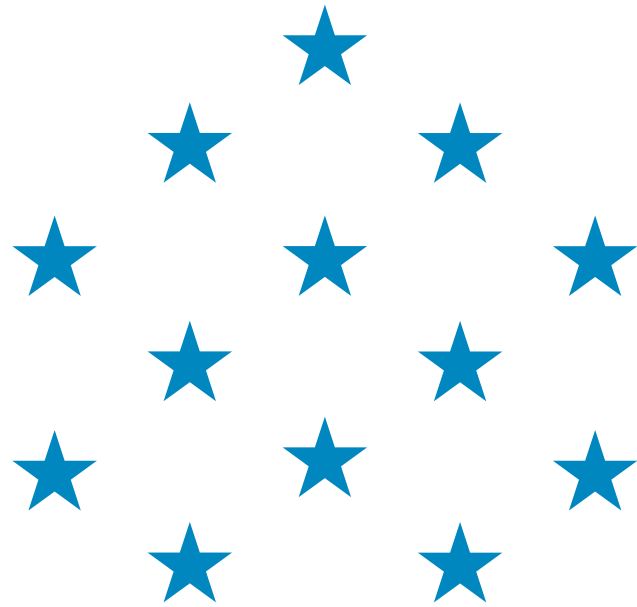
# THE MAN WHO STARED DOWN HELL



Van Barfoot, Medal of Honor recipient, Veteran of three wars and one of the last of the Greatest Generation, showed legendary courage in some of the fiercest combat one can see. The life and harrowing times of one of America's bravest Soldiers ever.

BY CHRISTIAN ANDERSON | PHOTOS BY EVAN BAINES





**I**n the room of his house devoted to his medals and awards, Van Barfoot pulled out a big wooden jewelry box. The retired colonel removed a small black felt bag, turned it upside down and let the medal inside fall to his hand.

“Wanna hold it?” he asked in his soft voice, offering his Medal of Honor.

I didn’t feel worthy enough to look at it, much less touch it. But hell yes, I wanted to hold it.

“Yes, sir,” I said quietly.

As I cradled the nation’s most sacred military prize in my hand, the metal felt cool to the touch. I rubbed my fingers over the edges of the star-shaped medalion, and I could feel the ribs of the ribbon. One side of the medal was engraved with a date and location—September 1944, France—denoting when and where he received it. I knew the full weight and meaning of what rested in my palm, and the circumstances behind it: the peril he survived, the lives he saved, the battle he single-handedly altered. And he knew I knew. I looked up at him, and he looked at me. For a few moments, we simply stood in silence. What could one possibly say?

When trying to sum up the life and accomplishments of Van Barfoot, it’s easy to be rendered speechless. He fought bravely in three wars: WWII, Korea and Vietnam. Like other elite Soldiers, he participated in an amphibious invasion, but unlike most, he took part in *four* (three in Italy, one in France). Before Audie Murphy, Barfoot was the most decorated Soldier in the nation, and his endless list of commendations includes a Silver Star, a Bronze Star and three Purple Hearts. Put simply, he was one of America’s greatest war heroes.

In November, I had the honor of visiting Barfoot at his home in Richmond, VA, where he lived alone. In late February, at 92 years old, he suffered a fall and went into a coma. He died days later. Our military is

filled with heroes of every stripe, but there will never be another Van Barfoot, and I’ll never forget the moments I shared with him. When I saw him in November, his body was frail and his memory wasn’t what it used to be, but he remained stubbornly independent, gracious with visitors and patriotic to his core. And as he looked back on his legendary life of service, he exuded a quiet pride, not in the action he saw or the number of enemies he took out—“Not proud I ever let a shot hit anybody else,” he said—but in the mere fact that he did whatever it took to protect the men who fought beside him.

Never was that truer than on May 23, 1944.

### HEIGHTS OF COURAGE

Barfoot modestly referred to that date as “just one of many days,” but it wasn’t. At that point in the war, control of Italy was crucial to Allied success in Europe, and before D-Day, that country was where the Germans placed their best fighters. American forces had landed at the port city of Anzio, with the goal of taking Rome, roughly 30 miles away. Allied commanders ordered an assault to put the Germans back on their heels, and Barfoot and his men were at the tip of that attack.

As a technical sergeant in the 157th Infantry Regiment, 45th Infantry Division (a Guard unit), Barfoot and his Soldiers were ordered to uproot the Germans defending Carano, a tiny town between Anzio and Rome. A massive Naval bombardment kicked off the assault at 5:45 a.m. By 6:30, Barfoot cautiously led his men across the wheat fields and cemetery directly in front of them. Moving within eyesight distance of German fortifications, Barfoot ordered his men to take cover and provide him covering fire on his command. Then he proceeded to crawl toward the German flank, moving through no man’s land in an abandoned trench.

“One of the Soldiers’ nicknames for dad was ‘Minefield Warrior,’ ” Barfoot’s daughter, Margaret,



**ALL I HAD IN MIND WHEN I WAS IN THE MILITARY WAS TO ELIMINATE THE ENEMY AND GET HIM OUT OF MY WAY. HE WAS INTERFERING WITH WHERE WE WERE GOING.”**

COL (RET.)  
VAN BARFOOT

said. “He would stay up all night and watch the Germans plant minefields, memorizing where they were. That’s how he could lead his men across the field and not hit a mine.”

That spying paid off as Barfoot moved, undetected, closer to the German positions. When he was practically on top of a German machine-gun nest, he sprang from cover and destroyed it with a grenade.

Barfoot attacked the next machine-gun nest only a few yards away, killing Germans with his Thompson submachine gun. Spotting the third and final nest, Barfoot began to attack but stopped when the Germans surrendered. In a matter of minutes, he had taken out three machine-gun nests, killing six Germans and taking another 17 prisoner. Looking back on his attack, Barfoot described his actions as self-preservation. “All I had in mind when I was in the military was to eliminate the enemy and get him out of my way,” he said. “He was interfering with where we were going.”

Sensing the possibility of a German counterattack,

Barfoot moved his men farther forward, closer to a railroad junction that would offer better protection. As they closed the distance, he found and destroyed an abandoned German howitzer using a satchel charge. His men set up defenses in hopes of repelling whatever the Germans were about to throw their way.

Several hours later, the ground began to shake. Barfoot and his unit watched in horror as three German tanks rumbled directly toward them. The majority of his troops fell back to a better defensive position, but Barfoot stayed behind with a small team and a bazooka to try and knock out the tanks. There was no guarantee the bazooka rounds would penetrate the tanks’ armor, but Barfoot was determined to stop the tank column. His first shot was a direct hit, destroying the lead tank’s treads and sending it careening into a nearby ditch. As the other tanks turned around, Barfoot waited to see what the Germans inside the disabled tank would do next. Fight or flee?



### THE HIGHEST PRIZE

Originally created for the Navy during the Civil War, Congress made the Medal of Honor a permanent military decoration in 1863. The highest distinction in the United States Armed Forces, the award is given to one distinguished through “conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his or her life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States.” Of the tens of millions of service members in the nation’s history, only 3,457 men and one woman have received the award.

**464**  
HONOREES SINCE  
WWII

**82**  
OVERALL RECIPIENTS  
WHO ARE STILL LIVING

**12**  
RECIPIENTS FROM  
WWII WHO ARE  
STILL LIVING

**19**  
TWO-TIME RECIPIENTS

**9/15/11**  
DATE THE LAST MEDAL  
WAS GIVEN,  
TO MARINE SERGEANT  
DAKOTA MEYER





**Top:** After getting a battlefield commission following the fighting at Anzio, Barfoot (far right) successfully led his new platoon into St. Maxime in southern France during Operation Dragoon in August of 1944. **Inset:** A young Barfoot just after he enlisted into the Army in 1940.

Suddenly, the hatch opened, and three German troops dismounted. Barfoot gunned them down. "Sometimes you have to take your chances, and get the enemy out of the way. I shot those three Germans with a machine gun because they were after me," he said. "I was the enemy. They were in a tank. They had the advantage [over] me. It's what I had to do."

After his commander ordered him to fall back in hopes of consolidating the line, Barfoot fought exhaustion to help two of his seriously wounded comrades to a safe position 1,700 yards away. Their assault on Carano was a success, and eventually the 45th and other Allied units pushed the Germans up into the northern Italian Alps. On June 4, 1944, the Allies took Rome.

### A YOUNG SOLDIER

In November, many exact dates and details eluded Barfoot, and his energy came in spurts. But as he sat in the kitchen recounting his experiences, he tilted his chair back like a teenager. Although his daughter, Margaret, lived two houses down and looked after him—Barfoot's wife, Norma, died in 1992—Barfoot still insisted on

doing everything himself, even scampering up a ladder to the attic to retrieve some photos to show me. "I can take care of things," he said. He still moved through a room with a confidence that few own, and when he reminisced, he had a way of telling you about himself that left you feeling like you'd known him his whole life.

That life began in 1919 in the rural town of Edinburg, MS, where Barfoot, a Choctaw Indian, was born. There wasn't much excitement in that area when he grew up, especially during the Great Depression, so Barfoot spent time fishing when he wasn't working on the farm. In the late 1930s, he spent a year with the Civil Conservation Corps (CCC), a public relief program that provided unskilled jobs to young men in need of work. His time with the CCC took him to Oregon and Washington, and like many young men of his generation, the money he earned was sent back home to help support his family. Upon returning to Edinburg, he received a piece of mail that changed his life.

"I got a letter from Uncle Sam that said I was subject to the draft," Barfoot said. "I had never been drafted for anything in my life. I figured I'd just go ahead and volunteer." Barfoot chose the Army and enlisted in 1940. By the time the United States declared war on the Germans and Japanese in December 1941, Barfoot was already a bona fide Soldier—and loving every minute of it.

## MAN OF METTLE

VAN BARFOOT WAS ONE OF THE MOST DECORATED SOLDIERS IN AMERICAN HISTORY.



SILVER STAR



LEGION OF MERIT



BRONZE STAR



3 PURPLE HEARTS

Barfoot's first three years of service were spent in the 1st Infantry Division (ID). He trained from Fort Dix, NJ, to Fort Polk, LA, and everywhere in between. He eventually transferred from the 1st ID to the 45th ID and spent time at Fort Devens in Massachusetts training for amphibious landings. On June 8, 1943, he boarded a cargo ship bound for northern Africa. There, the Soldiers of the 45th would continue to prepare for an invasion somewhere in Italy, location to be determined.

Many of the Soldiers couldn't wait to see action, Barfoot said. But once the war officially started during the invasion of Sicily on July 10, 1943, and they saw the horrors of war, their thirst for action died down. Back then, the level and intensity of combat reached brutally epic proportions—thousands of men killing thousands of others on a daily basis. The 45th rolled through the Italian forces in Sicily, but within a few weeks, it faced fierce resistance at Motta Hill, where German forces reinforced Italian troops. After four days of heavy fighting, the 45th took the hill. General George S. Patton then ordered the unit to beat the British to Messina, the eastern tip of Sicily.

On September 10, Barfoot and the 45th took part in the invasion of Salerno in southern Italy. For 10 days and nights, the unit pounded the opposition just beyond the beachhead. Finally, the German defenses were overrun, and the 45th raced inland. But the success on the beachhead was short-lived, and the Soldiers of the 45th lost their momentum in the surrounding mountains over the subsequent months, fighting for every inch of ground. German forces had prepared strong defenses throughout the mountains, the winter conditions were frigid, and morale hit an all-time low. "It was colder than holy hell," Barfoot said.

On January 9, 1944, after fighting continually for four months—longer than the unit had ever been on the frontline—the 45th was pulled back off the line to rest and regroup. The Army needed it to be at full strength before one final push toward Rome.

The amphibious assault at Anzio on January 30 would prove to be Barfoot's final but fiercest beachhead

assault in Italy. The Americans eventually broke through the German fortifications on the shore, but the force of 150,000 met heavy resistance on the mainland. For the better part of four months, the 45th found itself in a war of attrition. Barfoot's actions at Carano helped propel the Allies' decisive push.

### SURPRISE IN FRANCE

Just before the Allied forces took Rome, Barfoot was field commissioned as a second lieutenant and took command of another company within the 157th. The Allied commanders had planned an invasion into southern France to give the troops stuck in Normandy some support, so on August 15, 1944, Barfoot and his men assaulted the beaches at St. Maxime in southern France as part of Operation Dragoon. Although battle-hardened by this point, Barfoot was able to still keep a sense of humanity about him. "The day that I crossed into France, I shot a guy, and when I found him, he was in bad shape," Barfoot said. "I stopped, gave him morphine, dressed up his bandage, and took the man to a ship. It was a German lieutenant."

They continued to fight hard, pushing the Germans farther back into France. And then out of the blue, Barfoot was asked to report to the regimental headquarters in Epinal, France. "I came back down to where the Army headquarters was, and there were about three generals and a couple of colonels waiting for me in a tent," he said. "So I went in there and laid my carbine down and said, 'Good to see you, folks.' And that's when they told me, 'Congratulations.'"

"I said, 'What the hell for?' They told me I'd been awarded the Medal of Honor."

In a field not far from the front in southern France, Barfoot's commander placed the medal around his neck. His Soldiers, the men who had nominated him for the honor, applauded as they celebrated together. Barfoot used to carry a list of those men with him everywhere.

Receiving the medal effectively ended Barfoot's fighting in Europe. After the war, he made a decision to stay in the Army and was stationed in Germany. There,



Van Barfoot's unit, the 45th Infantry Division from Oklahoma, was one of the first American units to fight in Europe and remained on the frontline until Germany's surrender on May 8, 1945. **The Soldiers paid a heavy price during their 511 days on the front** but gained fame (and their nickname) as one of the most skilled and battle-hardened units of the war. Of the 45th's 20,993-plus casualties, over 2,500 of them were KIA. **By the end of WWII, the 45th was also one of the most recognized units** with eight Medals of Honor, 61 Distinguished Service Crosses, 38 Legion of Merits, 1,848 Silver Stars and 5,744 Bronze Stars.





For most of his 92 years, Barfoot was committed to a daily ritual of raising and lowering the American Flag every morning and evening.



he raised the family with Norma and worked to rebuild the war-torn country.

After a few peacetime assignments, the Korean War broke out, and Barfoot finagled his way back into a war zone. President Harry Truman had expressed his concern about sending Medal of Honor recipients back into the fight, but Barfoot took command of an infantry unit. He saw some action, led his men gallantly and then returned home for another duty station. The whole time, he kept his Medal of Honor a secret from his Soldiers and his family. "When we moved on to another duty station," Margaret said, "he would notify them ahead that he didn't want it to be announced in the paper that he was coming."

Like a typical Army family, the Barfoots bounced around the globe as he took on assignments and received promotions. He attended fixed-wing flight school and, after graduating, switched to flying helicopters in 1963. He seemed to enjoy flying more than being an infantryman, and it looked as if he was finally done with war. As the Vietnam conflict worsened, more aviation units were needed to support operations around the battlefield. Barfoot volunteered and became deputy chief of Army Aviation. And he still flew missions, something that was rare not only for someone his age (50) but also for someone with his medals. "He wasn't supposed to be flying in combat. He told my mother it was a desk job, but it wasn't," Margaret said. "But that's just like dad."

"He earned 11 air medals while he was over there flying helicopters, and the whole time we had no idea he was flying."

Eventually, Barfoot returned to the States and stayed there for the remainder of the war. Retiring in 1974 after 34 years of service, he and his wife moved to a small farm in Virginia. But his legend preceded him, and as time went on, more people wanted to meet him, hear him speak at events and even write books about his combat. Looking back on all the battles, the wounds and brushes with death, Barfoot humbly acknowledged his good fortune. "I think the Lord's let me stay," he said. "Remember that in your lifetime."

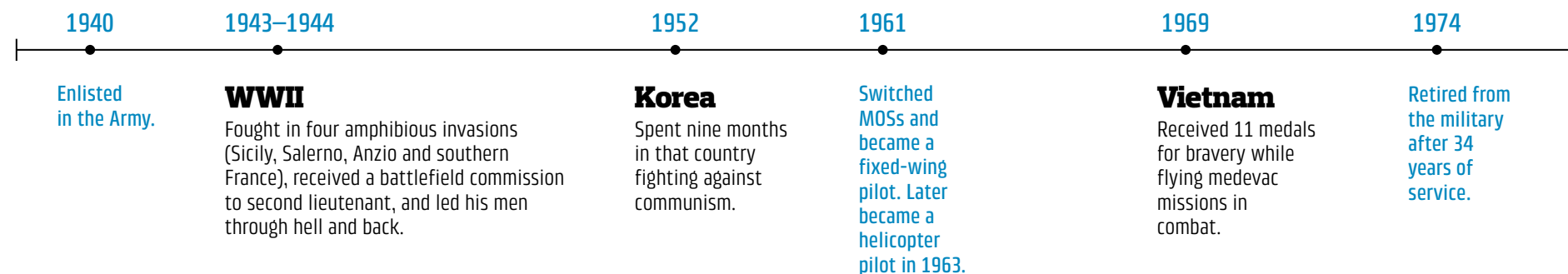
### STARS AND STRIPES FOREVER

As dusk approached in his Virginia home, my visit with him neared an end. Barfoot seemed to need to rest, though he denied it. He remained the friendly host. "You can spend the night if you want," he offered.

Other than Barfoot's children—Margaret and her three older brothers—only his sister, Freddie Hall, is still alive among his immediate family and friends. But before he died, there remained one other constant in his life: his daily ritual. Barfoot got up between 5 and 6 every morning to raise the large American Flag outside his home, and lower it every day at 5 p.m. He made the news in 2009 when he clashed with the local homeowners' association over the flagpole. After an outpouring of support, Barfoot was allowed to keep it.

"I just love the American Flag. I've had it all my life," he said. "[It] has been in my house or been where I was from the time I was this big, and it still is now. It went with me where I went. And it's going to go where I go now." **GX**

## VAN BARFOOT'S JOURNEY OF WAR





# FIRE AND FORGET

With the Javelin missile system, a single Soldier can take out a tank

COURTESY OF LOCKHEED MARTIN

Javelin is effective from a very close range of 65 meters out to 2.5 kilometers. To fire, the gunner places a cursor over the selected target and launches the missile. The CLU sends a lock-on-before-launch (LOBL) signal to the missile. Using an arched top-attack profile, Javelin climbs over its target for improved visibility. It strikes tanks where the armor is weakest.

Javelin's long-wave I2R (infrared imagery sensor) seeker enables it to engage in obscurants and reduced visibility, and to resist countermeasures. Its image-based tracker ensures accurate target hit and minimizes collateral damage. The CLU's thermal sight is an excellent surveillance device with day sight for use in clear conditions and an infrared sight for reduced visibility.

Because the missile automatically guides itself to the target after launch, the gunner is free to reload or reposition to avoid counterfire. Its soft launch design means it can be fired safely from inside buildings or bunkers, further increasing gunner survivability and making it effective in urban operations.

Originally designed as a one-man portable shoulder-fired weapon, Javelin is adaptable to many platforms, including tripods, trucks, light-armored vehicles and unmanned remotely piloted vehicles. More than 25,000 Javelin rounds have been delivered—well over 1,000 rounds have been fired in combat.

**THE JAVELIN MISSILE SYSTEM** is a shoulder-fired anti-armor weapon developed and produced for the United States Marine Corps and Army by a Raytheon/Lockheed Martin Javelin joint venture. Javelin is lethal against armored and urban targets, including tanks, bunkers, buildings, small boats and slow-moving helicopters. The system consists of a missile in a disposable launch tube and a reusable command launch unit (CLU).

Javelin is effective from a very close range of 65 meters out to 2.5 kilometers. To fire, the gunner places a cursor over the selected target and launches the missile. The CLU sends a lock-on-before-launch (LOBL) signal to the missile. Using an arched top-attack profile, Javelin climbs over its target for improved visibility. It strikes tanks where the armor is weakest.



> AFTER AN INITIAL SHOT, THE SOLDIER CAN ATTACH A NEW MISSILE TUBE TO THE COMMAND LAUNCH UNIT AND BE READY TO FIRE AGAIN IN 30 SECONDS.

> ONE SIGHT FOR DAY/LIMITED VISIBILITY SURVEILLANCE AND TARGET ATTACK

> ONE-MAN PORTABLE AND EMPLOYABLE

## JAVELIN 411

- > MAXIMUM EFFECTIVE RANGE: 2,500 YARDS
- > WEIGHT OF LOADED JAVELIN: 49.5 LBS.
- > FIRST WEAPON THAT ALLOWS A SINGLE SOLDIER TO DESTROY A TANK FROM ANY ANGLE
- > FIRE-AND-FORGET MISSILE
- > GUNNER CAN SELECT TOP OR DIRECT ATTACK
- > SOFT LAUNCH ALLOWS GUNNERS TO ATTACK FROM ENCLOSURES AND EMITS A LOW LAUNCH SIGNATURE
- > CAN BE FIRED IN ALL WEATHER AND ALL BATTLEFIELD CONDITIONS

PHOTO FROM LOCKHEED MARTIN



# PRESIDENT GEORGE H.W. BUSH

OUR 41st PRESIDENT ON DESERT STORM, TEAMING WITH BILL CLINTON AND CIVILIAN SKYDIVING.

BY CHRISTIAN ANDERSON



President George H.W. Bush and General Norman Schwarzkopf survey American troops after Coalition Forces defeated the Iraqi forces in Kuwait in 1991.

After joining the Navy in 1942 at the age of 18, George Herbert Walker Bush fulfilled a goal by becoming an aviator. Despite getting shot down while on a mission, Bush survived the war, married his sweetheart and attended Yale University. After beginning what would become a successful career in the oil industry, he pursued a career in politics, starting off in 1964 as chairman of the Republican Party in Harris County, TX. After that, you could say his career really picked up. Here, our 41st president looks back on his military roots.

You were commissioned as an ensign three days prior to your 19th birthday. What kind of responsibility did you feel as the youngest Naval aviator to date? To do my job and not mess it up. Our squadron was like a team, and we never wanted to let each other down.

What was going through your mind when you were shot down over the Pacific on Sept. 2, 1944? The first thought that went through my mind was related to my training—to the procedures I was taught. All along, however, I thought about my crew and doing everything I could to get the plane out to open water so we could hit the silk and bail out.

What were some of your thoughts as you drifted in the ocean waiting to be rescued? About my crew—where they were and how they were doing. About the enemy, who had sent ships out to try and capture me. About my squad mates, who strafed the enemy boats as they tried to approach my location. About my family and my girl, who I missed so very much.

You went skydiving in 1997 over Yuma, AZ. What were your motives for jumping out of a plane again? When I bailed out of my plane in 1944, I didn't do everything right—and didn't get a clean exit as a result. I wanted to do it again and try to get it right. Plus, I love the exhilaration of going fast—the thrill of it.

What aspect of politics enticed you to become chairman for the Republican Party? The idea of getting involved in the political process and trying to give something back to our community—the general idea of public service, you might say.

What was the most significant challenge you faced when ordering

Operation Desert Storm? The very real thought that my decision was going to cost people their lives. President Lincoln talked of being driven to his knees in prayer by the weight of such a decision, and I knew exactly what he was talking about. I had total confidence in our mission and our people, but it was worry, worry, worry.

What was your initial reaction when your son George told you he was running for president? Pride—the pride of a father in a son willing to take on such a challenge and do his best, and handle himself with class.

Looking back on your marriage to Barbara, are you amazed at how much the two of you have been through? Time flies when you have fun, and Barbara Pierce Bush and I have certainly enjoyed our long lives together. I cannot imagine trying to do it without her.

What has it been like to ally with President Bill Clinton, your former adversary, and work together to promote worthy humanitarian causes?

Totally rewarding for me. I always liked President Clinton, so it was a joy when my son suggested we work together on tsunami and hurricane relief projects. President Clinton is a thoroughly engaging man, and I am happy to call him a friend.

What is the biggest challenge the United States faces as we progress through the 21st century? I'll leave that to others currently in the political arena to judge, but one thing I hope we get right is our bilateral relationship with China. No other relationship will affect peace and prosperity in the 21st century more than the U.S.-China relationship.

What comes to mind when you see the men and women of the United States military? Pride and gratitude. Confidence. In fact, one of the reasons why I am so optimistic about our future as a nation and a people is because of my confidence in our military men and women.

What advice would you give to the Army National Guard Soldiers serving today? If you do your very best every day, you'll never know regret. Thanks to you all for your selfless service to this great country!

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