

GX[®]

THE GUARD E

>> ON THE ROAD

CLOSE COMBAT

SOLDIERS FACE OFF
IN COMBATIVES
COMPETITION

>> INTEL

CRUDE RESPONSE

THE GUARD BATTLES
OIL SPILL
P. 24

>> GX HERO

A REAL GAME CHANGER

SOLDIER SAVES
CITIZEN AT BALL GAME

>> SPORTS

GX GOES INTO OVERDRIVE WITH DALE JR.

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SOLDIERS
REDEDICATE
THEMSELVES TO
THE MISSION

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GX: The Guard Experience (ISSN # 1559-9922, July/August 2010) is published bimonthly by lostudio, LLC, 565 Marriott Dr., Ste. 700, Nashville, TN 37214-5040. Periodicals postage paid at Nashville, TN, and additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to: GX: The Guard Experience, 565 Marriott Dr., Ste. 700, Nashville, TN 37214-5040.



We Will Forever Be Grateful to You

On behalf of the people of Land of Lincoln, I salute our Illinois National Guard members at home and abroad. Our troops are true patriots of freedom, liberty and democracy.

Last year, the Illinois National Guard made history with its largest overseas deployment since World War II, when approximately 3,000 men and women from the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team left their families and friends to support Operation Enduring Freedom. These great heroes, like others across the United States, put their lives on the line to protect the freedoms we enjoy each and every day. Additionally, there are nearly 500 Illinois Soldiers with 2nd Battalion, 123rd Field Artillery, preparing for a unique deployment to Sinai, Egypt, in May.

Our Guard members answer the call to duty right here on the homefront as well. In June 2008, more than 1,400 Guard members assembled in Illinois helping to contain the damage after the Mississippi waters flooded some of

our communities. The Illinois National Guard's Lincoln's Challenge Academy has successfully graduated more than 11,000 high school dropouts from the mentoring program. In addition, our Guard members have reached out to local students through the Drug Demand Reduction Program, which educates children on the dangers of drugs.

We all have a duty to honor those who fight for our freedom by supporting them and their families. Thank you for your devoted service. We will forever be grateful to all of you for your selflessness and courage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Pat Quinn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Pat Quinn
Governor, Illinois

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IF YOU'D LIKE A LITTLE ADVENTURE IN
YOUR LIFE, START ADDING A LITTLE
EXCITEMENT TO YOUR MAILBOX.

“It is my objective to help protect and defend ... for as many years as I will be allowed to serve.”

>> SSG Ken Weichert, *GX* Fitness Editor, Tennessee Army National Guard Soldier (multiple deployments, 20 years of service and still going)

AS I WRITE THIS, OUR FIELD EDITOR, CLINT WOOD, is trudging through the swampy shores down in Louisiana. Clint is following the Soldiers of the Louisiana Army National Guard as they battle the multi-million-gallon mess threatening the fragile ecosystem. While it's probably a job most wouldn't expect, it does keep with the mission of securing the homeland from threats. And, it's a great testament to the versatility of the National Guard to take these challenges head-on, while still jumping into battle with the Taliban, eradicating illegal drug crops and assisting Border Patrol. Oh yeah, and saving hikers almost every day in Alaska (those guys are amazing)!

In the face of these incessant missions, our feature this month spotlights Soldiers who have re-enlisted, folks who stood up and said, “I'm not done yet.” I know I'm preaching to the choir when I say how inspiring this is. It's hard not to tear up reading the testimonies. With a million reasons to pack it up, these Warriors hold fast to the statement “I will never quit.”

Even our own “SGT Ken” has re-enlisted—four times! I asked him why he soldiered on the most recent time, in September of 2009. Ken, who is never short on an inspirational message, replied:

“It is my objective to help protect and defend our state and country against natural disasters and terrorism. I will do this for as many years as I will be allowed to serve! And, I want to fight obesity in America, using Guard fitness as the strategy to achieve mission success!”

On behalf of *GX*, thank you all for stepping up to secure our nation. Your choice to serve inspires the best in us.



Keith Kawasaki, Editor-in-Chief
Keith@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.

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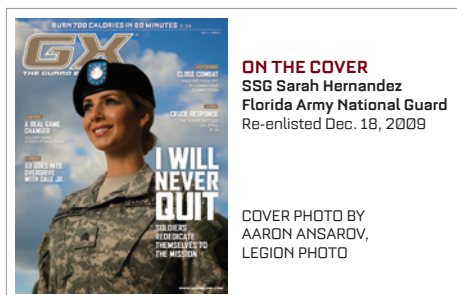
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GX magazine is **not** an official publication of the Army National Guard. All military employees are traditional Guard members.



ON THE COVER
SSG Sarah Hernandez
Florida Army National Guard
Re-enlisted Dec. 18, 2009

COVER PHOTO BY
AARON ANSAROV,
LEGION PHOTO



GX field editor Clint Wood (right) visits with Louisiana Army National Guard Soldiers in Grand Isle, LA, as they build barrier walls to prevent oil from reaching the coast.

"CLINT AND ADAM DID A GREAT JOB OUT HERE. THE SOLDIERS WERE REALLY EXCITED TO SEE THE FAMOUS GX ROAD TEAM COVERING THEM."

>> SSG Denis Ricou,
Louisiana National Guard Public Affairs

We want to
hear from you!

Send your photos and letters
to Editor@GXonline.com



🔴 Look for Clint's in-depth feature on the Guard Soldiers defending America's coastline in the next issue of GX.

Letters From the Front



TASK FORCE 38: Indiana Soldiers Sound Off

Stationed at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, Task Force 38's responsibilities include coordinating and executing flight missions in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. To date, they have logged more than 1,400 hours of flight time. Here are their letters from the front.

CARRYING OUT MY ROLE as a staff officer was the hardest part of my second deployment to Iraq.

During my first deployment to support Operation Iraqi Freedom, from April to October of 2003, I was a second lieutenant. I spent much of my time outside the wire as a platoon leader. I was able to interact with the locals and could see firsthand the differences we were making.

As I entered into my second deployment as a brigade-level battle captain, it was difficult to see the direct relationship between the duties I performed and the progress we were making on the noncontiguous battlefield. Fortunately for me, Task Force 38 partnered up with an infantry unit at an operating base near Baghdad. Our brigade collected clothing and toys so the infantry Soldiers could provide humanitarian aid to the communities around their base.

I sent requests to the homefront regarding their effort and received a positive response from Montpelier School, where I had previously worked back home in Indiana. The student council took the mission on as a school project and collected items from the student body. One class adapted the drive into their English curriculum by tying it in with the theme of a book they were reading.

The items were boxed and sent here to Iraq, and I was able to hand-deliver the items to our partner unit. I flew a flag for the school and had some certificates of appreciation made for them. I presented the certificates to the school principal and student council while on leave.

This brigade project helped me better understand that our forces, from top to bottom, internal and external, are made up of many components. Each individual Soldier or civilian plays an integral role in its overall success, from staff officers to those hard chargers we depend on outside the wire each day, from civilian contractors to those back home who support us.

>> **CPT Richard Uggen**

Task Force 38

Indiana Army National Guard

DURING MY DEPLOYMENT TO JOINT BASE BALAD, IRAQ, I had an opportunity to take classes using e-Army learning on accounting. I hoped to use the additional income to pay off our family business, an ice cream parlor in Clayton, IN. We are now on the fast track to opening our second store.

Being an Army officer and working with the dining facility helps me improve my business skills, especially in food service. As the assistant logistics officer for the brigade, I not only supervised the dining facility, but I also supervised those who supervised the property book, which is a form of accounting. I was also a manager for construction projects in our area of operations, to include the flight line.

Since I am a traditional Indiana National Guard Soldier, I have a civilian life, too. Normally, I am a media director for Indianapolis Public Schools at Northwest High School (Go Pioneers!), and appreciate this opportunity to improve my leadership skills. As a teacher-librarian, I take classes on leadership, but that's nothing like going to combat and managing the needs of an aviation brigade. Being pulled out of my normal environment momentarily helps me think of the bigger picture, and I hope to launch a reading program with a broader spectrum.

In 2003 and 2004, I deployed to various U.S. ports in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, and I used my journal to write a book about the experiences of military families, especially dual military families, since my husband is an Army Reserve Soldier. I used a website to self-publish the final product. On this deployment, I kept a journal, but really used the time to read books I was interested in, instead of books I needed for personal education or teaching.

Not everyone can be a Soldier. I consider it an honor and a privilege. The experiences I have had through the Indiana Army National Guard have enriched my life and made me a better wife, mother and teacher, but most importantly, they have made me a better leader.

>> **CPT Christina Shepard**

Task Force 38

Indiana Army National Guard



MG R. Martin Umbarger, Indiana's adjutant general, visited Task Force 38 at Joint Base Balad, Iraq. While there, he pinned two of his Hoosier Soldiers in a promotion ceremony.



TASK FORCE 38'S PRIMARY missions are to support the battalions that are within our command and to provide the best air-to-ground integration to ground commanders. Our Soldiers do this by planning, coordinating and executing both fixed wing and rotary wing aircraft missions to support the unit's requirements. Our unit's staff officers, Indiana National Guard members, have flown more than 1,400 flight hours in UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, all while based at Joint Base Balad.

This is my second deployment, and I am amazed by the continued community support that deployed Soldiers receive from families, friends and local community organizations. The Soldiers in our unit have received hundreds of care packages containing various items, from books and magazines to candy and snacks. The care packages, which sometimes come from people we don't even know, help lift the spirits of deployed Soldiers. Receiving the care packages in the mail helped boost Soldiers' morale, and the packages also allowed the unit to support numerous humanitarian missions.

In addition, we have several Soldiers in our unit who have been adopted by elementary and middle schools from our local communities as well as from other states. They routinely send us letters, care packages, pictures of their classmates and drawings.

On behalf of all the members of Task Force 38, thanks to our fellow Americans for the fantastic support that you continue to give our deployed Soldiers.

>> **SGM Mike Espinda**

Task Force 38
Indiana Army National Guard



"IRAQ?! NO, NO, NO! I do not want to go to Iraq, isn't there a way to avoid that?"

That was my first reaction upon being asked about deploying to Iraq. That was when I had just emigrated to the United States from India. I was very young and eager to stand out—as joining the Army would accomplish—but not necessarily to break out of my comfort zone. That all changed when I signed on the dotted line and raised my right hand.

Here I am now, sitting in my office located at Joint Base Balad in Iraq. Signing up took me far from my comfort zone. A deployment gives a Soldier a sense of realization, appreciation, loneliness, togetherness, maturity, tolerance, good and bad thoughts alike, strengths and weaknesses alike. It raises Soldiers' awareness.

One of my major experiences was switching sections in the first quarter of mobilizing. I went from an administration job to working outside, operating heavy machinery, and driving all over the base. It included more interaction with a variety of people.

Some might say that this was all part of a learning experience. I beg to differ. How can one sum up maturing emotionally, mentally and physically all simultaneously as just a learning experience? To me it's a change in a Soldier's personality, attitude and way of life. What Soldiers take away from those experiences, they will carry with them for the rest of their lives.

>> **SPC Manthan Patel**

Task Force 38
Indiana Army National Guard

WE ALL KNOW THE CHALLENGES of deployment. Our constant work schedule, confined living spaces, absence of family and friends, and lack of luxuries can turn even the strongest rock into a pebble over time. I am fortunate enough to have found a constructive outlet to release my inner stress and shelter me from the external pressures during this deployment: music.

Since I was five years old, music has been present in my life. I played cello in Carnegie Hall, toured America from coast-to-coast with the Star of Indiana Drum and Bugle Corps, and studied music at Eastern Kentucky University. This eventually led to performing as a cast member in a Broadway show.

But little did I know, all this experience was going to benefit me in a way few could have predicted. It gave me the ability to create and perform, at a moment's notice, a variety of music for Soldiers and Airmen in a combat environment. As piano player for the 38th Combat Aviation Brigade praise band, I had the opportunity to touch thousands of lives here in Iraq. We performed for worship services, special events and military ceremonies held throughout our base.

My acts were selfless and selfish at the same time. I personally felt at peace behind my instrument.

The dismal environment around me didn't exist for that brief moment in time. The audience benefited from the experience as well. There were moments at the chapel when the entire congregation of service members, contractors and third country nationals would join together in fellowship, singing together in harmony, with everyone contributing to the experience. Music helped bridge the gap of social and cultural differences with those participating in every event.

I left teaching public education to be an Active Guard Reserve Soldier with the Indiana National Guard, and I have no regrets. Knowing I'm personally contributing to the safety of my country is so rewarding. Our country is full of interesting people, capable of accomplishing great things. My only hope is that our citizens and leadership can finally put their differences aside, stop picking each other apart, and start working to solidify our nation for future generations to enjoy. Maybe one day we can all get together on the same sheet of music.

>> **SGT Andrew Schnieders**

Task Force 38
Indiana Army National Guard



>> DOUBLE TIME

[Port Fourchon, LA]

An Army National Guard helicopter in Port Fourchon, LA, prepares to hoist sandbags that will be dropped in one of five key locations along the Louisiana coast, May 10, 2010.

Photo by Petty Officer 3rd Class Patrick Kelley, U.S. Navy



Distance from Port Fourchon to Base: 151 miles



For exclusive video, photos
and news on the oil spill, go to
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/oilspill



» TAKING COVER

[Kuwait]

The Soldiers of the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, also known as the Gator Brigade, Florida National Guard, conduct Area Reaction Force operations in Kuwait, April 2010. The unit is attached to Third Army in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

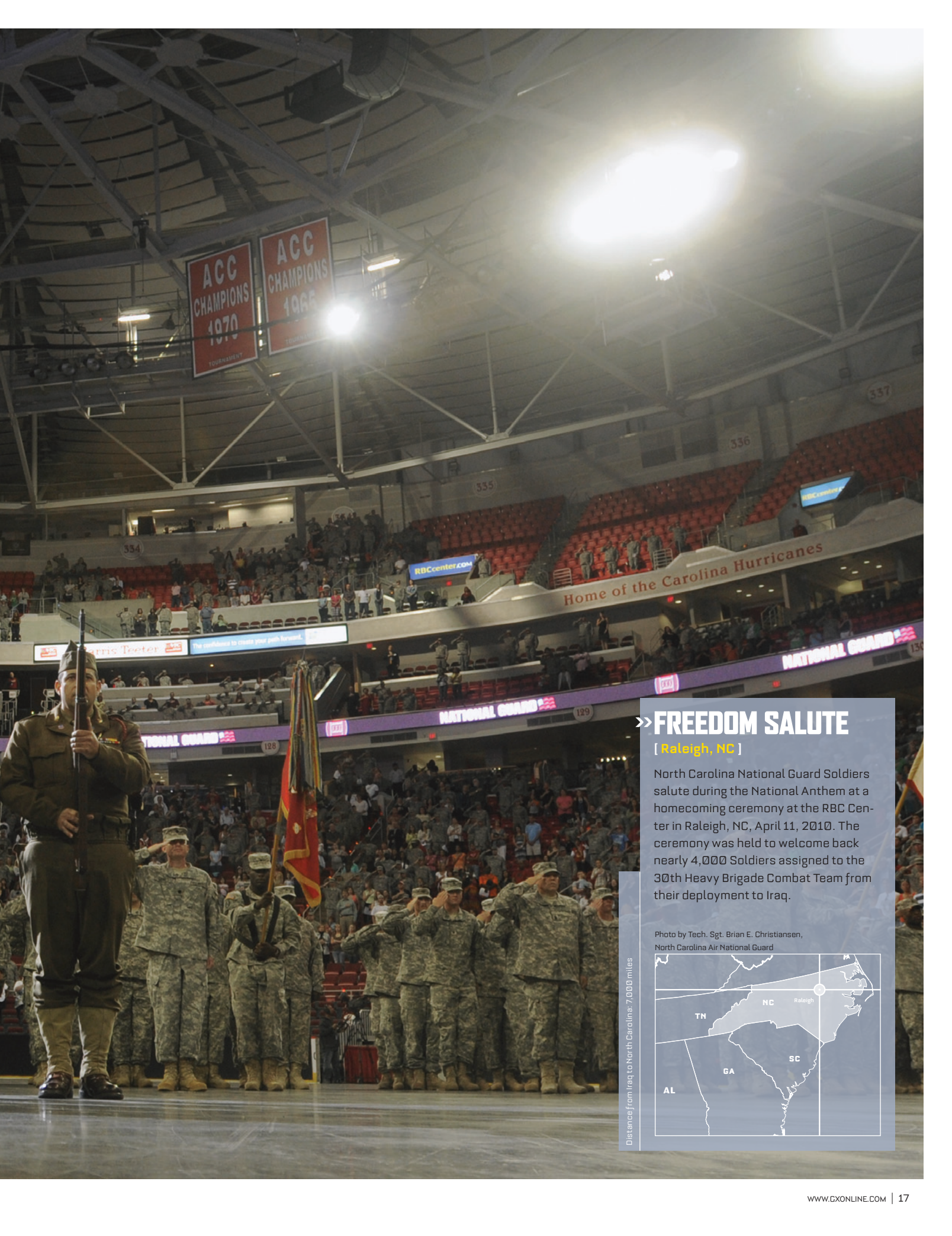
Photo by SGT David Nunn, Courtesy of DVIDS



Distance from Pinellas Park, FL, to Kuwait: 7,110 miles







» FREEDOM SALUTE

[Raleigh, NC]

North Carolina National Guard Soldiers salute during the National Anthem at a homecoming ceremony at the RBC Center in Raleigh, NC, April 11, 2010. The ceremony was held to welcome back nearly 4,000 Soldiers assigned to the 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team from their deployment to Iraq.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Brian E. Christiansen, North Carolina Air National Guard



Distance from Iraq to North Carolina: 7,000 miles



» SITUATIONAL AWARENESS

[Fort Leonard Wood, MO]

A Soldier provides security for his squad after it was hit by a chemical attack during a Basic Combat Training field training exercise for Company A, 795th Military Police Battalion, at Fort Leonard Wood, MO. See the story and more photos in "Back to Basic" feature on page 54.

Photo by Clint Wood/GX







CRUDE RESPONSE
Guard responds to
Gulf Coast oil spill

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SURPRISE ASSAULT
Vermont Infantry
defeats enemy

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**ELECTION
PROTECTION**
Virginia Soldiers
support Iraq election

32



MOBILE FORCE
Alabama MPs train
Iraqi Highway Patrol

34



MEDICAL AID
Massachusetts
Soldiers help
Afghan locals

35

"OUR BEST CONNECTION TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE AND TO COMMUNITIES IS, IN FACT, THE RESERVE COMPONENT – THE NATIONAL GUARD AND THE RESERVES."

>> SECRETARY OF DEFENSE ROBERT M. GATES



Put to the Test

Soldiers from several states respond to almost simultaneous natural disasters *By Clint Wood*

Soldiers from the Tennessee Army National Guard's 1176th Transportation Company, based in Smyrna, TN, offload victims rescued from their homes during the severe flooding in Gallatin, TN, on May 2.

CPT DARRIN HAAS

▶ **FROM APRIL 24 UNTIL MAY 4**, Army National Guard Soldiers from several states were put to the test in responding to natural disasters, including tornadoes and floods that will be talked about for years.

Mississippi Army National Guard Soldiers were the first to answer the call on April 24—more than 50 Military Policemen (MPs) assisted after “long-track” tornadoes wreaked havoc on Yazoo City and Weir.

A week later, several states got the call. They included Arkansas, Tennessee and Kentucky. More than 50 Arkansas Citizen-Soldiers responded to Scotland, AR, after it was struck by a tornado. That same day, several Tennessee Soldiers assisted local emergency management agencies in flood rescue operations after record rains flooded Middle Tennessee, with the Nashville area being hit the hardest.

LONG-TRACK TORNADO

Two Mississippi MP units—the 112th MP Battalion and the 113th MP Company—assisted law enforcement with security checkpoints and traffic.

Army Guard aviation Soldiers from the 185th Aviation Brigade used their UH-60 Black Hawks to fly the governor and other state officials to the scene to assess the damage.

The National Weather Service reported the storms that hit the lower and middle Mississippi Valley, the lower Ohio Valley and the Tennessee Valley as the “largest one-day severe weather event in more than a year.” There were more than 300 reports of severe weather received, including more than 50 reports of tornadoes.

To be classified as a “long-track,” a tornado must have a path longer than 100 miles. In all, 12 counties reported injuries and 10 people died.

The Soldiers were deactivated in two days.

The Arkansas team of Soldiers from the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) included 15 vehicles. Its mission was to provide security and assist civil authorities in search-and-rescues. Soldiers from the 39th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 39th IBCT, provided a 500-gallon water tanker to Scotland. The Guard provided a 100-kilowatt generator to Jackson County Breckenridge Water Association.

The Scotland tornado, among several that tore through the state, caused one death, destroyed several homes and uprooted trees in the small community.

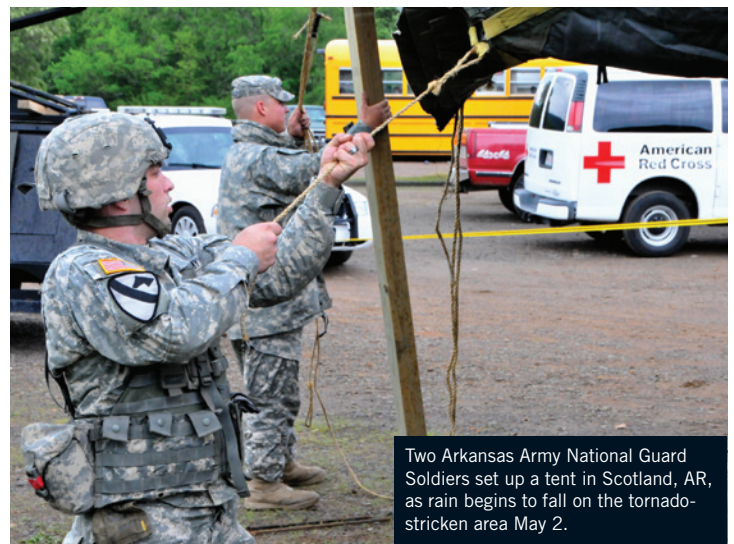
READY FOR HIGH WATER

The 1176th Transportation Company, based in Smyrna, TN, went door-to-door searching for residents who needed evacuation from their homes while the record-breaking floodwaters were still rising and creating swift currents. The Cumberland River and its tributaries flooded much of Middle Tennessee. The two-day rainfall total was 13.5 inches—doubling the previous record.

The “Volunteer State” Soldiers were ready for the high waters. They rode in the high wheelbase Light Medium Tactical Vehicles (LMTVs). An LMTV



Soldiers of the Mississippi Army National Guard's 112th Military Police Battalion stand guard at the entrance of a grocery store parking lot in Yazoo City, MS, April 25.



Two Arkansas Army National Guard Soldiers set up a tent in Scotland, AR, as rain begins to fall on the tornado-stricken area May 2.

that stands off the pavement is a 2.5-ton cargo truck. Eleven of those were dispatched to the two counties.

“We would drive to flooded homes, or those cut off by rising waters, and check them to ascertain whether people needed to be evacuated,” reported company commander Captain Ronnie Mathews in a Tennessee National Guard press release. “The Soldiers would then climb out of the cab and sometimes ford through chest-deep water to help them out of their homes and into our trucks.”

The rescued citizens, ranging from a 4 month-old infant to an 83-year-old woman, were transported to safe areas.

ABOVE: CPT CHRIS HEATHSCOTT; BELOW: SGT CHARLES BRICE



SGT Caleb Bucy from D Troop, 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron, based in Smyrna, TN, and Ashland City, TN, Assistant Fire Chief Brian Biggs offload crates of water in a residential area of Ashland City on May 5.

On day two of the storm, another team of company Soldiers transported people from their homes to the Gallatin Civic Center. The American Red Cross established a temporary shelter there.

“We helped swift-water teams rescue people stranded in their homes due to fast-moving water,” reported Private Calvin Gaither, one of the company’s truck drivers.

Once these citizens were brought to safety in rafts, they were loaded into the LMTVs and shuttled to the Civic Center.

The company assisted in rescuing more than 240 people.

Other missions for Tennessee Soldiers included airlifting food and water to stranded flood victims and delivering thousands of gallons of bottled water furnished by FEMA to commu-



“THE SOLDIERS [WOULD] FORD THROUGH CHEST-DEEP WATER TO HELP [CITIZENS] OUT OF THEIR HOMES AND INTO OUR TRUCKS.”

>> CPT Ronnie Mathews, Tennessee National Guard

CPT DARRIN HAAS

nities whose water was deemed undrinkable.

The 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron, which recently returned from a deployment to Iraq, used its Black Hawks to airlift the food and water.

Tennessee Soldiers from several companies used cargo trucks and trailers to deliver the water to the communities.

Tennessee resident Libby Burnett said she wasn't surprised to see Soldiers carry the bottles of water into her church. "We love the Guard," she said.

She might have been a little biased, though—her son, Major Larry Burnett, was serving with Tennessee's 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Iraq.

Burnett was quick to point out that Service Members in all branches of the military help America daily.

Service like this meant a lot to Sergeant Andy McNabb, who returned from a deployment to Iraq five months ago. He was helping not just state residents, but his neighbors. He grew up in the area.

"This means a lot to me," commented McNabb, who explained that this was the first time he'd been activated for a natural disaster. "It really feels awesome to help."

Specialist Jeffrey Bates, who also grew up in

the Centerville area and deployed with McNabb, said he was excited to receive the phone call telling him he was activated.

"It really is a down-home feeling," described the 36-year-old with a huge smile.

As of May 6, the Tennessee Guard had driven more than 12,000 miles to deliver food and water to those in need.

The water swelled most of the area's lakes, minor rivers, creeks and drainage systems well beyond capacity. The strong force washed out bridges, and thousands of homes were damaged. There were 21 reported fatalities from the flood. A tornado touched down in western Tennessee.

Damage estimates were in the tens of millions of dollars. Gov. Phil Bredesen declared 52 of the 95 counties disaster areas as of May 4. The Cumberland River crested at 51.9 feet, about 12 feet above flood stage and the highest it has been since 1937.

Thousands of Tennesseans were evacuated from homes, restaurants and nursing homes across the state.

KENTUCKY SOLDIERS ACTIVATED

About 80 Kentucky Army National Guard Soldiers, including several from the 1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery Battalion, provided assis-

tance in several counties hit by severe weather and flooding May 1–2. The battalion brought a fleet of 14 vehicles.

ANSWERING THE CALL TO CONTINUE

There is no end in sight for Citizen-Soldiers answering the call.

Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates gave approval May 4 to the governors of Alabama, Mississippi and Florida for Title 32 status, for National Guard members to help to combat the oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico. Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal requested that up to 6,000 Guard Soldiers be covered under that same Title 32 authority, according to Pentagon spokesman Marine Corps Colonel David Lapan.

Alabama requested up to 3,000 Guard members, Mississippi requested 6,000, and Florida requested 2,500. Louisiana has employed about 1,200 Guard members on Title 32 status, and they were providing command-and-control and sandbagging assistance in St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes.

Possible roles for these Guard members include communications, logistics, transportation, assessment, medical, aviation support and shoreline cleanup, Lapan said. **GX**

Kentucky National Guard Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery, and local volunteers build a sandbag wall to help prevent the Green River from flooding a water treatment plant in Canmer, KY, May 3, after the weekend's damaging storms.



SST BRYAN FLOUGHE

Crude Response

The Guard Supports Deepwater Horizon Incident Response

While the Gulf States are busy assessing the potential damage the offshore oil spill could cause the shoreline, the National Guard has responded to the incident with a detailed, layered response. More than 1,300 Guard Soldiers are providing security, communication support and evacuation planning, and implementing water diversion systems to protect coastal communities threatened by the approaching oil spill.

MISSISSIPPI:

25 members of the Mississippi National Guard are providing helicopter support and liaison officers to aid local officials with emergency response.



>> MORE THAN

1,300

NATIONAL GUARD PERSONNEL ARE CURRENTLY SUPPORTING OIL RESPONSE.



>> APPROXIMATELY

476,000

GALLONS OF DISPERSANT HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED. MORE THAN

217,000

GALLONS ARE AVAILABLE.



>> MORE THAN

1.4 million

FEET OF BOOM (REGULAR AND SORBENT) HAVE BEEN DEPLOYED TO CONTAIN THE SPILL—AND APPROXIMATELY

1 million

FEET ARE AVAILABLE.

LOUISIANA:

952 members of the Louisiana National Guard are providing command and control and sandbagging support to St. Bernard and Plaquemines parishes, supporting marina operations and conducting HAZMAT training.

>> 14 staging areas

have been set up to protect vital shoreline in all potentially affected Gulf Coast states:

Biloxi, MS	Pensacola, FL	Orange Beach, AL	Shell Beach, LA	Amelia, LA
Pascagoula, MS	Panama City, FL	Theodore, AL	Slidell, LA	Cocodrie, LA
Pass Christian, MS	Dauphin Island, AL	Grand Isle, LA	Venice, LA	

FLORIDA:

Four members of the Florida National Guard are performing liaison duties in support of the response effort to the Unified Command Center in Alabama and to its own emergency operations center in Tallahassee.

ALABAMA:

323 members of the Alabama National Guard are deploying protective barriers around Dauphin Island, and conducting sandbag drops and security operations.

>> MORE THAN
520

VESSLS ARE RESPONDING ON-SITE, INCLUDING SKIMMERS, TUGS, BARGES AND RECOVERY VESSELS TO ASSIST IN CONTAINMENT AND CLEANUP EFFORTS—IN ADDITION TO DOZENS OF AIRCRAFT, REMOTELY OPERATED VEHICLES AND MULTIPLE MOBILE OFFSHORE DRILLING UNITS.

>> APPROX.

5

MILLION GALLONS OF AN OIL-WATER MIX HAVE BEEN RECOVERED.

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278th Soldiers Keeping Iraq Safe

Cavalry Unit Performs Military Police Duties

Story and photo by 1LT Desiree Nicely / CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, IRAQ

BY PERFORMING THE DUTIES of Provost Marshal for Q-West, Iraq, select Soldiers of 1st Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment (1/278th ACR), headquartered in Henderson, TN, play a vital role in keeping the base safe. “Their mission as appointed military policemen is to maintain safety standards and law and order for the residents of [Contingency Operating Location] Q-West,” said Sergeant First Class Kenneth Jones of Jackson, TN, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Provost Marshal’s

Office (PMO) and 19-year veteran of civilian law enforcement.

Soldiers selected from each troop for this duty were trained on patrolling, report writing and basic laws that would pertain to their job performance. After being trained, these Soldiers were given the responsibility of protecting fellow Soldiers.

“My charge to my team was to be vigilant and pay attention to detail. This job means providing 100 percent coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week,” said Jones.

“There isn’t really a routine. We just have to take things as they come,” said PMO Sergeant

Lisa Bendler, a Soldier from the 2113th Transportation Company from Paducah, KY, that is currently attached to the 1/278th. “We’ve done everything from ensuring accountability of local national workers and Soldiers to collecting counterfeit bills that had to be turned over to federal law enforcement. The main benefit is that we stay busy.”

The PMO stays busy conducting health and welfare checks, patrolling, and enforcing safe driving on post. Their vehicle can be seen out and about enforcing speed and seat-belt standards for the post.

Assisting the Q-West 1/278th

ACR PMO is the 178th Military Police Detachment from Fort Hood, TX. This detachment provides occasional K-9 assets to the PMO. Rex, a German shepherd trained as a bite and bomb dog, typically does building searches, random walking patrols and postal sweeps, when not on combat missions with his handler, Staff Sergeant Culley Parr.

The PMO stays busy in order to protect and serve the residents of Q-West, just as a civilian police officer would do in the U.S. Due to effective leadership and the adherence to standards by Soldiers, crime remains very low at Q-West. The PMO plays a vital role during deployment, and the PMO of Q-West has certainly been able to fulfill that duty. **GX**

SPC Rebel Barron, a B Troop, 1st Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment Soldier from Gallatin, TN, arrives on scene to assist with a call May 5.





SGT Demarcus Page, SGT Mikeal Little, SPC Corrius Poe and SGT Christopher Haneline, all assigned to the 1/278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard, participate in a shadow run of Nashville, TN's Country Music Marathon, April 24, at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

Country Music Experience

Soldiers Run Marathon in Iraq

By 1LT Desiree Nicely / CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, IRAQ

▣ **SOLDIERS OF 1ST SQUADRON**, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment (278th ACR), of the Tennessee Army National Guard, with the 13th Sustainment Brigade (Expeditionary), laced up and hit the roads to do a “shadow run” of the Country Music Marathon on Saturday, April 24, at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, a base in northern Iraq.

Roughly 250 Soldiers participated in the run, with about 200 running and 50 ruck marching the 13.1-mile half-marathon. Due to heat and time constraints, Soldiers were not allowed to run the full marathon.

The ruck marchers wore their combat packs, wearing or carrying

an additional 35 to 80 pounds of combat gear. Most of the marchers wore their Army Combat Uniforms and boots. Ruck marching is a timeless Army tradition used to travel long distances with full gear in short periods of time.

For many, the run was an opportunity to stay connected to home, as many of them have family and loved ones running at the main location in Nashville, TN. The weather in Iraq turned out to be much more cooperative than in Nashville, with sunny skies and highs in the low 80s making for a beautiful race day.

Colonel Jeffrey H. Holmes, regimental commander of 278th, from

Middle Tennessee, knew that the run would be a big morale boost for his Soldiers and gave the go-ahead early in the deployment for his staff to start planning for the run.

“I am very fond of the [Country Music Marathon] because it was the first half-marathon I participated in, and I have many family and friends who run it every year,” said Holmes. “I appreciated seeing the marathon promoted around our bases in Iraq, giving us all a little reminder of home. These gestures in reaching out to our Soldiers will never be taken for granted.”

Many of the 278th’s Soldiers have run the Country Music

Marathon previously, and jumped at the chance to do it on the other side of the globe.

“I ran the Country Music Half-Marathon last year. It was the first time I had ever run 13.1 miles at one time,” said Sergeant First Class Charles Haynes of Springfield, TN, platoon sergeant for 3rd Platoon, C Troop, 1st Squadron, 278th ACR, headquartered in Milan, TN. “It felt great to finish the run, and I told myself I would run [it again] after this deployment. I’m excited that I didn’t have to skip a year.”

Many Soldiers ran in their first half-marathon this Saturday, while others ruck marched the distance. **GX**

Vermont Guard Surprises the Enemy

3/172nd Discovers Cache on Air Assault *By SSG Jimmy Norris / PAKTYA PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN*

A SHOCKED GROUP of insurgents looked up from the grounds of their supposed “safe house” in Mangal Kheyl village, Zormat District, in Afghanistan’s Paktya Province, to see a pair of twin-rotor CH-47 Chinook helicopters bearing down on them, April 22.

Working as part of the first combat air assault mission in the history of

the Vermont National Guard, Soldiers from C Company, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry Regiment, alongside their Afghan partners, watched from aboard the descending helicopters as the enemy dropped their weapons and fled.

“THE ENEMY WERE COMPLETELY SURPRISED BY OUR AIR ASSAULT.”

>> 2LT Mark Fazio, C Company, 3/172nd INF

“The enemy was completely surprised by our air assault,” said C Company spokesman Second Lieutenant Mark Fazio, from Company C, 3/172nd Infantry. “As the aircraft landed, we could see them drop their weapons and run away as fast as they could.”

The “cordon and search” mission was conducted in response to Soldiers from the 3-172nd INF and the Afghan National Army collecting intelligence centering around an insurgents’ safe house and logistical staging point, according to Fazio.

During the mission, Soldiers captured the largest weapons cache in the district in three years, Fazio reported. The company was also the first

unit in the battalion to capture a foreign fighter.

“This was a great opportunity for our company to be part of history and to showcase our abilities and versatility in combat,” said Captain Daniel Newman, Company C commander.

Participants in the historic mission called it a success and look forward to repeating the experience.

“This was by far the most gratifying mission we have conducted, with an outcome that left us wanting more,” said Sergeant Billy Whitcher, a team leader with Company C.

Fazio said the mission sent a message to the enemies of Afghanistan.

“The success of the mission showed the value of using air assaults in this area to gain surprise, and catch the enemy when they aren’t expecting us,” Fazio declared. **GX**

Soldiers from the Vermont National Guard and the Afghan National Army watch as a CH-47 Chinook helicopter lands at the completion of an air assault mission, April 22.



COURTESY OF VERMONT NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS



AMIDST A SANDSTORM

A Virginia National Guard Soldier from 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, looks down across a valley from the Ziggurat of Ur near the Tallil Airbase in Iraq.

Historic Unit Carries On

Virginia's "Bedford Boys" serve in Iraq

Story and photo by 1LT Angela Fry, Louisiana National Guard / CAMP ADDER, IRAQ

➤ MORE THAN 65 YEARS after A Company, 1st Battalion, 116th Infantry Regiment, left its indelible mark on history, its Soldiers have deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

To history buffs, A Company is endearingly referred to as the "Bedford Boys" because of the Virginia National Guard unit's selfless sacrifices in support of WWII on the beaches of Normandy.

"The history of this company goes back to February 1941, when it was called into federal service as part of the 29th Infantry Regiment," said First Sergeant Kevin Stewart, A Company's first sergeant. "However, it was the morning of June 6, 1944, as part of the Allied invasion that the unit first saw action."

The Veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom and former Active Army component Soldier told the story of the 30 Bedford, VA, Soldiers, who were the first infantrymen to

"THE SOLDIERS WHO CAME BEFORE US SHOWED US THE VALUES OF SELF-SACRIFICE, LOYALTY AND DUTY."

>> Captain Miguel Lickliter, A Company, 1/116th Infantry Regiment commander, speaks of the "Bedford Boys"

hit the beaches of Normandy, specifically Omaha Beach.

On that one fateful day, more than 2,500 U.S. Armed Forces members sacrificed their lives in a foreign country, thousands of miles from home.

"Bedford is claimed to have lost more per capita on D-Day than any other town in the country," Stewart stressed. "To honor the memories of these men, Congress placed the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford."

The impact of the loss of the 22 young men from the small Blue Ridge town of only 3,200 residents is still felt today, with the passing of the last surviving "Bedford Boy," Ray Nance, in April 2009.

To honor the memory of the "Bedford Boys," the troops of today's A Company, 1/116th, carry with them the pride in their unit's history and heritage, Stewart explained.

The Soldiers of A Company recently arrived at Camp Adder, Iraq, with the Louisiana Army National Guard's 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary).

Stewart graduated from Quitman High School, in Quitman, LA.

"I was excited when I found out that we were deploying with a brigade from Louisiana," the Virginia transplant recalled. "I was born in the Hodge Clinic, in Hodge, LA, and I remember the National Guard armory in Jonesboro across the street from the old Wal-Mart." The Jonesboro unit is now reorganized into A Company, 199th Brigade Support Battalion, which is also deployed with the 256th.

The deployment with the Louisiana Guard's "Tiger Brigade" marks the first time that A Company, 1/116th, will deploy under its own colors since the days of the "Bedford Boys."

"It is truly an honor to serve in this unit," said Captain Miguel Lickliter, A Company commander. "The Soldiers who came before us showed us the values of self-sacrifice, loyalty and duty. Their commitment to the mission and each other serves as a shining example for all Soldiers to emulate."

Lickliter, of Bedford, explained that the Soldiers of his unit take seriously the sacrifices of its past Soldiers.

"We are proud of our history, and we remain dedicated and steadfast to honor our past brothers-in-arms; it gives us a lot of pride to be able to fly our colors as we serve our country." **GX**

GX Flashback

"Bedford Boys: Soldiers Carry on Tradition of Forefathers"

Check out GX 2.3, p. 17!

Download it at

www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/2-3



Texas Guard Works With Afghan Students

Story and photo by 2LT Katherine Roling / GHAZNI PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

▶ **SANAYEE HIGH SCHOOL** in Ghazni City invited the Texas National Guard Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) back to school, May 3, to check up on a project designed to give students hands-on agricultural experience.

The all-male school, which has 5,000 students, has agricultural classes for 10th and 11th grade. The agricultural classes are two hours long and give students the chance to work with the soil.

Because of Afghanistan's strong agricultural background, the ADT, made up of members from the 36th Infantry Division of the Texas Army National Guard, assists with providing materials for the classes designed to instill interest in agricultural studies.

"We want to provide them with hands-on experience and to apply it, whether it's at home or if they want to pursue higher studies and

an agricultural degree," said First Lieutenant Rodney Robinson, agribusiness marketing specialist from Austin, TX. Robinson has been the team leader for this project.

After visiting on April 8, the ADT returned almost one month later to learn that textbooks, seeds and gardening tools had arrived. Gardens were also created and some students were digging in the schoolyard for class during the ADT's visit.

The team spoke with faculty and examined tools, seeds, textbooks and the five gardens, which were not complete back in April. The gardens are now ready for seeds, with metal trellises that will allow taller plants, like tomatoes, to have support for growth.

"They are in the books for a week, and then they go outside for the next week," said Zabiullah Hanify, Sanayee High School principal.

Hanify pointed through his window to smiling students working outside with shovels and bringing up soft dirt in the shade.

"About 700 students are in agricultural classes, and there are two teachers for 13 classes," said Abdul Saboor, the assistant principal. "Each class holds 50 to 60 people."

The agricultural classes teach different subjects. "They have three types of training," said Safar Ali, the school deputy administrator. "They learn about soil, how to check for diseases, and grafting."

Grafting is the process of asexual plant propagation where the tissues of one plant are encouraged to fuse with those of another. This allows the production of fruit in some plant species, like apple trees.

In addition to speaking to faculty, the team was led to an empty classroom, where they looked at the different seeds, tools and textbooks that were ordered by the ADT.

Included in the inventory were seeds for tomatoes, squash, pepper, watermelon, peanuts, alfalfa, beets, radish, rosemary and beans, and learning tools such as rakes, shovels, water buckets, wheelbarrows and textbooks.

The program will be run by the school, but now the faculty has the supplies they need to encourage agricultural studies and facilitate learning. **GX**



1LT Rodney Robinson, agribusiness marketing specialist from Austin, TX, takes inventory of the items that the Texas Agribusiness Development Team funded for Sanayee High School.

Louisiana Soldiers Hit the Road

1-141 take on convoy escort mission

Story and photo by 1LT Angela Fry / CAMP ADDER, IRAQ

▶ **WITH AN ABSENCE** of mortar rounds and fire power, Louisiana National Guard Soldiers with the 1/141st Field Artillery Battalion, 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, have accepted a new mission as of April in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The Soldiers are providing convoy escort teams (CETs) throughout Iraq, assisting in the responsible reduction of U.S. troops and equipment.

"This is my second mission on a CET," said Specialist Patrick Rigney of New Orleans. "We provide security for civilian contractors who are hauling supplies for our troops."

Rigney and the rest of the battalion spent two months at Camp Shelby, MS, learning the basics of transportation and security for their new mission prior to their deployment.

"The training at Shelby put us in the right mindset," Rigney explained. "But, you can't get that experience until you actually operate the MRAP."

The Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles were designed to survive improvised explosive device attacks.

"I am very cautious as a driver," Rigney added. **GX**



Louisiana Soldiers with New Orleans' 1-141 Field Artillery Battalion prepare for an evening convoy in an MRAP on Camp Adder, Iraq.

Dog Tags Help Families to Connect

By LTC Daniel Lonowski / KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, AFGHANISTAN



Serving in Afghanistan, SFC Maryland Hoyett places a dog tag into an envelope to mail to her 12-year-old daughter Ciare in Nashville, TN.

▶ **"WITH LOVE** from Dad. U.S. Army. Afghanistan. 2010."

The message is simple. The idea is clever. Each child's face as he or she opens the package will strike a lasting memory.

Soldiers in the 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command (ESC), mothers as well as fathers, had the opportunity to send a dog tag to their child thanks to the caring thoughts of one Soldier's spouse. This wasn't just any dog tag, but one with the above engraved message, either from dad or mom.

Debbie Ridgeway, the wife of Sergeant Major Kenneth Ridgeway, who is deployed with the 135th ESC, discovered the "Dog Tags for Kids" website (DogTagsForKids.com) when she was browsing the internet about a month ago. Debbie said she learned about the project when she was looking up the Freeport Flag Ladies, another group that supports troops who are leaving the U.S. for combat operations overseas.

"Debbie is always trying to do something nice for Soldiers," said the sergeant major, who has been in the Alabama National Guard for 38 years. "She is the driving force behind this project."

The project to which Ridgeway refers is actually operated by a two-person team, one in California and one in Michigan. The two ladies, who have been featured on Fox News for their selfless generosity, have been in the dog tag industry for six years.

"My brother served in Desert Storm. The only thing he ever asked for was a Mother's Day card [from me] to send to his wife," explained Rose Sliepka, who lives in Lancaster, CA. "Up until then, it never occurred to me that sometimes Soldiers don't have access to everyday items."

Sliepka, who initiated the program in 2004, has made more than a half-million dog tags for different occasions in order to send to troops. Her partner, Berna Novak, answers all emails from her home in Scotts, MI.

Rose said she heard a story about children who were excited when their father sent them band-aids and sunscreen from Iraq. It was then that she realized something simple could be effective. Rose said she has many volunteers who help her package the dog tags that are sent to Soldiers, Airmen, Marines and Sailors, who can then send them to their children.

Debbie said Berna and Rose make the process very easy.

"Berna informed me that I could order a batch of the dog tags and she would send them [to my husband]," Debbie said. "Berna was so supportive of all our troops and all the sacrifices that our families make."

Ridgeway received the dog tags from the company, and he handed them out to Soldiers to send to their children.

Debbie said she worked with Leigh Shepherd, the Family Readiness Group coordinator, to get information to families.

The "Dog Tags for Kids" organization is comprised of an all-volunteer workforce. The organization receives donations from charitable companies that help support the troops around the world.

"Our youngest son, who is 30 years old, wears his dog tag proudly," Debbie said.

For Rose and Berna, hearing each story of children, regardless of age, wearing one of the 530,000 dog tags produced, makes it worth it. **GX**

For more information visit DogTagsForKids.com.



At Baghdad's Provincial Directorate of Police, SPC Derek Schreiner monitors a traffic control point near a voting site to help Iraqi police for the March 7 general election.

Virginia Soldiers Aid With Iraq Election

Story and photos by SPC Eddie Siquenza, 49th Military Police Brigade / BAGHDAD, IRAQ

▶ THIS IS A STORY about courage. It's a tribute to the Iraqi Police, the brave citizens who stepped forward to vote March 7 during Iraq's national election, and a slew of American Soldiers who participated in a part of Iraq history.

Above and beyond, this is for the Iraqi people.

Millions voted despite multiple incidents to lure them away from the polls. In Baghdad alone, more than 120 incidents occurred. The majority happened within two or three hours after voting sites opened.

"Today's voting makes it clear that the future of Iraq belongs to the people of Iraq," said President Barack Obama on election day. "I congratulate the Iraqi people on their courage throughout this historic election. Today, in the

face of violence from those who would only destroy, Iraqis took a step forward in the hard work of building up their country."

Those American Soldiers—particularly a platoon-size force located at Baghdad's Provincial Directorate of Police (PDOP) headquarters and Patrol Headquarters from the Virginia National Guard's 229th Military Police Company—exemplified what the U.S. military has done since Operation Iraqi Freedom began in 2003.

Amid all the bombings and other blasts, the PDOP-based Soldiers stuck to their mission of assisting the Iraqi Police. They stood on the streets, overseeing a check-point manned by local authorities, assuring that proper procedures were followed.

"It's supposed to be some kind of scare tactic, but it's not scaring us," Sergeant Ralph Jarrell, non-commissioned officer in charge of the 229th PDOP crew, said about the bombing. "We were prepared for it. We know our mission is important to the election. We're not surprised [the bombings] were coming."

The 49th Military Police Brigade sent members of its Police Transition Team to PDOP with the 229th's assistance to serve as information and intelligence facilitators. This crew of activated Army National Guard Soldiers monitored how Iraqis set up their election security. They provided advice. But for the most part, they observed and let the Iraqis run their own operation.

"Everything they've done is impressive," said Brigadier General

Donald Currier, 49th commander, during a brief stop at the PDOP operations center. "It's so different from the last time we were here. What they're doing today says a lot about the Iraqi Police."

The March election, according to Currier, was of special interest. When the 49th deployed in 2005-06, he witnessed the December 2005 general election. The 49th was strongly involved with that process by directing Iraqi Police. But this year, the 49th was in a supporting role. The unit became the important front seat passenger, but not the driver.

"The fact that [the Iraqis] were able to coordinate their planning and execution with other security forces demonstrated a capability that they did not have a short time ago," Currier explained. "The Iraqi

Police demonstrated their ability to plan and execute security operations for the elections in Baghdad. That entailed a comprehensive effort to plan and execute polling station security, checkpoints,

defense. It regularly sent out foot patrols, where Soldiers walked the compound to check its perimeter. It stationed mine resistant, ambush protected (MRAP) vehicles near the facility's entrance. Gunners manned them around the clock.

Election day, Soldiers rotated monitoring an entry control point (ECP) occupied by Iraqi Police. This ECP was about 200 yards from a voting site. The troops were in constant radio contact, especially during the explosions. Fortunately, none

happened near PDOP. This could be attributed to the Iraqi Police's success in curbing attacks.

"The enemy's [tactics, techniques and procedures] are forcing themselves to go further away from targets," said 229th's Lieutenant Bradley Churchill, platoon leader. "That means the Iraqi Police are doing their job. If anything, the [bombings] made us focus on our responsibilities a little more."

As 229th Soldiers watched local

authorities search vehicles and pedestrians (a curfew restricted vehicles allowed on roads to just necessities), they also witnessed history.

They saw Iraqis walking to and from a nearby voting site. They saw democracy, something nonexistent in this country eight years ago.

At Patrol Headquarters, the 229th served as a 24-hour security unit. The 49th and the 229th were on standby if there was a need for investigative assistance. Neither was called upon.

That's credit to the Iraqi Police for having control of their operation.

"The takeaway from this event is that the Iraqi Police have dramatically increased their professionalism, capabilities and leadership," Carrier added. "They can still benefit from U.S. partnership, but that is no longer a junior-senior partnership. It is a partnership of equals—each with strengths that benefit one another."

Final results will take months. Millions of Iraqis voted. But this day started in 2003, when the 49th and 229th's military predecessors launched Operation Iraqi Freedom. **GX**

"IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE SOME KIND OF SCARE TACTIC, BUT IT'S NOT SCARING US."

>> SGT Ralph Jarrell, 229th Military Police

curfew enforcement, effective vehicle movement restriction and a public information campaign that reassured its citizens that they were as safe as possible."

Major Jeanette Stuart, 49th's officer-in-charge of Iraqi Police services' national transition team, led the Patrol Headquarters element. She led a team of six who served as the "conduit" for getting information to and from United States Forces-Iraq and the Iraqi Patrol Police.

"The 49th has been partnering with Iraqi Police agencies in Baghdad to provide mentoring, training, support and assistance, as required," explained Stuart. "[The Iraqi Police] were able to prevent violent extremists from influencing or disrupting the Iraqi election process. The public gained confidence in the Iraqi Police's ability to provide civil security."

Even the 49th's Personal Security Detail (PSD) got involved. Staff Sergeant Clinton Bayoneta, PSD noncommissioned officer in charge, and more than a dozen members escorted Carrier to PDOP and Patrol Headquarters. They drove more than 35 miles through Baghdad, he reported. All returned unscathed and ready for another mission.

The 229th, based in Virginia Beach, VA, added to PDOP's internal



PFC Michael Chappell, from the 229th Military Police Company, observes a checkpoint near the Baghdad Provincial Directorate of Police headquarters.

Prior to heading on a night patrol, SPC Jameson Gurley, of the 229th Military Police Company, tests a laser sighting on his weapon the night before Iraq's general election March 7.





SGT Matthew Glassford observes Iraqi Highway Patrol officers execute training drills in Baghdad, March 17.

Alabama MPs Train Iraqi Highway Patrol

Story and photo by SGT Rebekah Lampman / CAMP VICTORY, IRAQ

▶ A BLUE POLICE TRUCK rolls up to the scene. With sirens blazing and an Iraqi flag displayed prominently on the doors, the vehicle comes to a screeching halt.

With weapons at the ready, three Iraqi Highway Patrol (IHP) officers jump out, yelling, “Get out of the car! Put your hands where I can see them!”

As the mid-March training scenario continued, Alabama Army National Guard Soldiers from the 217th Military Police (MP) Company oversaw the action, ensuring the highway patrol officers followed proper procedure.

For the past six months, the MPs have been assisting 16 IHP officers from seven Iraqi police stations in Baghdad as they conduct training events, said Sergeant Matthew Glassford, of 217th and a deputy sheriff in Shelby County, AL.

“We don’t have bombs or improvised explosive devices back in the states, so it’s chal-

lenging,” said Glassford. “When we train, we have to go into more details, but the basics are still the same.”

The IHP officers are perfecting their basic police skills, such as properly conducting a traffic stop, serving a search warrant and writing tickets. As the IHPs move through their training process, Second Lieutenant Joseph Bennett, a 217th platoon leader, said the IHP officers are dedicated to the training and have dramatically improved their skills.

“You can see that they take the training to heart,” said Bennett. “They really enjoy the hands-on portion of the training more than

the classroom. When we get to that part of the training, they really seem to shine.”

After a few more weeks of practical exercises, Glassford and the rest of his platoon will conduct a ride along with the IHP out in the

streets of Baghdad, putting their months of training to the test. And, the Iraqi police say they are ready to serve the public.

“For the 217th, all of the hard work they’ve done for us, we will not

fail,” said Brigadier General Muhamed Kutafa Mashlesh, commander of the seven Iraqi police stations involved in the training. “We will not forget what they have shown us, and we will be better for our country and our people.” **GX**

“FOR THE 217TH, WE WILL NOT FAIL.”

>> Brigadier General Muhamed Kutafa Mashlesh, commander of seven Iraqi police stations, expresses his appreciation for Alabama’s 217th MPs.

Task Force Wolverine Gets to Work

By COL Michael Berry, Delaware National Guard / BAMYAN PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

► **THE DELAWARE NATIONAL GUARD'S** Embedded Training Team, known as Task Force Wolverine - Bamyan, recently arrived at Forward Operating Base Kiwi, Bamyan Province, Afghanistan.

The team is comprised of National Guard Soldiers from Delaware, Vermont, New Jersey, Indiana, North Carolina, Florida and Puerto Rico and are co-located with the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT), which has been working on strengthening the security, governance and economic development in the Bamyan province since 2003.

The unit has three primary missions and is divided into teams based on each Soldier's civilian acquired skills and military specialties.

1 Managing the Commander's Emergency Response Program (CERP). The team monitors and pays for all the reconstruction

projects, schools, roads, hospitals and clinics that are developed by the New Zealand PRT. Many of the Soldiers on this team are engineers and construction experts, ensuring the funds and projects being provided to the government and citizens of Bamyan are utilized professionally and efficiently.

2 Mentoring the personnel assigned to the Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) Operations Coordination Center (Provincial) (OCCP). Each province in Afghanistan is developing an OCCP, which is similar to the U.S. version of an Emergency Operations Center.

Representatives from ANSF agencies are assigned to the OCCP and work together to monitor and react to incidents such as insurgent activity, natural disasters or large-scale social and government events.

The National Guard Soldiers assigned to this mission utilize their experience and expertise in assisting national, provincial and district officials in crisis management, to mentor and train the ANSF forces operating the OCCP.

3 Mentoring the Afghanistan National Police at the provincial and district level. Afghanistan is divided into provinces, and each province is divided into districts, just like the U.S. is divided into states and counties.

The Bamyan provincial police force provides the security for the province and its districts. They are a well-qualified force and are fully anticipated to reach the highest level of assessment rating within the next year. The team will be helping them fine-tune their training and logistics. **GX**

Medic Races to Aid Afghans

By 2LT Jordan Breau, Massachusetts National Guard / KABUL, AFGHANISTAN

► **NEGOTIATING THE BUSY STREETS** of Kabul city can be a challenge to the most experienced of drivers. In a city that lacks proper driving rules, training and precautions, vehicle accidents are bound to happen.

This past March, a police mentoring team from the 1st Battalion, 101st Field Artillery of the Massachusetts Army National Guard was en route to meet with the local Afghan national police force when they witnessed a red Toyota, packed with passengers, swerving out of control. The vehicle veered sharply to avoid hitting a child that was walking down the busy street. In the effort to avoid hitting the child, the vehicle struck a concrete pillar alongside the roadway.

The team responded immediately to the accident. They had secured the scene, as Private First Class Gary Reagan, medic, ran to the crash alongside his interpreter.

Reagan surveyed the damaged vehicle for injuries and identified three of the six passengers to be injured and quickly began providing medical aid to those inside the crumpled vehicle. A small crowd of local onlookers attentively watched as the National Guard medic continued to provide medical treatment.

Reagan applied the skills he acquired in school and the hours of training that he had received from his medical platoon sergeant, Sergeant First Class Joseph Rebello, to properly assess and treat the wounds.

Reagan stated, "It felt great to use the training and skills I have learned to help out the Afghan people. I really felt I had made a difference today. We are here

to help make this a more secure and stable environment. By providing basic aid, it's the first step in winning over the people and gaining their respect."

The small crowd grew into a full-on chaotic spectacle, as Reagan finished treating those that had sustained injuries.

Through his interpreter, Reagan advised his patients to immediately go to the nearest hospital and receive further medical attention. The patients expressed how thankful they were for receiving treatment.

Reagan rejoined the mentorship team as they got back into their vehicles and continued the mission. **GX**



PFC Gary Reagan places a wrap on the broken wrist of a local Afghan, while speaking through his interpreter.

COURTESY OF 1LT DOUGLAS RICHARDSON

Ready for Anything

Rhode Island Quick Reaction Force is on-call and able

By Petty Officer 2nd Class Shane Arrington, Joint Force Guantanamo Public Affairs / GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA

THE RHODE ISLAND ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S 115th Military Police (MP) Company's Quick Reaction Force (QRF), currently with Joint Task Force Guantanamo, hope they never have to use their training.

This QRF is trained for "what if" scenarios, such as situations that require extra perimeter security, bomb threat response, and establishing checkpoints and roadblocks if necessary.

"They are our 24-hour standby group," said Captain Nicolas Pacheco, 115th MP Company commander, this past April. "They are constantly training and are always available to defend Joint Task Force Guantanamo, should a situation occur that requires extra defense measures."

First Lieutenant Aaron Rozovsky, QRF platoon leader, said the most prominent

scenario at JTF Guantanamo that the team might face would be responding to a riot in the detention camps.

"It's something we hope never happens," Rozovsky said. "If it does, we'll respond to it effectively and be successful."

Rozovsky's confidence in his team comes from leading them through many hours of training in a variety of possible contingencies.

"Training is a fundamental part of QRF," Rozovsky explained. "We would not be successful if we didn't train constantly. We train on any situation. Everyone has to know how to carry out their role, and everyone else's role on the team."

"We also focus on developing leadership," he added. "Every E-4 should know how to do the job of an E-5, every E-5 should be learning from and taking on the responsibilities of an E-6, and so on—all the way up the chain."

Physical training is another key focus of the QRF. This enhances mission capability but can sometimes be tough.

"THEY ARE OUR 24-HOUR STANDBY GROUP. THEY ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE TO DEFEND JOINT TASK FORCE GUANTANAMO."

>> Captain Nicolas Pacheco, 115th MP Company commander remarks about the QRF's capability.

"The physical demands of QRFs are great," Rozovsky said. "Take being in a riot, for example. You might have to be out for hours with a lot of equipment on, in less-than-favorable weather. It stays pretty hot here year-round, and it's important to be able to handle a situation like that."

Specialist Sarah King of the 115th is especially proud to be part of such an important mission.

"Before us, they weren't going to allow females on the QRF team," King said. "We're the first platoon in [the 115th MP Company's] QRF to have females. It's a great feeling."

Pacheco says his hand-selected team is always ready for the situations they hope to never have happen. But, all their training and work is critical to back up JTF Guantanamo's mission to provide safe, humane, legal and transparent care and custody of detainees. **CX**



Rhode Island's 115th Military Police Company Quick Reaction Force at Joint Task Force Guantanamo takes a break during intense training.

COURTESY OF SGT EMILY GREENE

Valley Forge Academy Grads Serve Together

By SPC Tamara Gabbard, 382nd Public Affairs Detachment / RALEIGH, NC

➤ **LEAVING FAMILY AND FRIENDS** for a deployment is never easy. Having your “battle buddies” around can make or break the day when the truth sets in that you are going to be shipped to a combat theater.

For eight officers of the North Carolina National Guard's 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team (HBCT), who were not only Valley Forge Military Academy graduates but also attended the Wayne, PA, school together, deploying together was more than just another day in theater. It was a way for the Soldiers to build on relationships they started while attending college.

“Attending Valley Forge Military Academy is an experience that not many people are able

to understand or feel for themselves,” said First Lieutenant Christopher A. Plum, Fire Support Officer for Delta Company, 252nd Combined Arms Battalion. “Deploying to Iraq and returning home safely is also limited to a select few in this country; being able to share both with seven other guys is rare and exciting.”

Plum was deployed to Iraq in 2009 with the following 30th HBCT Valley Forge graduates: Captain Marshall G. Hildreth, military intelligence officer with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 30th HBCT; First Lieutenant George B. Bullen, battery executive officer with 1/113th Fires Artillery Battalion; First Lieutenant Emran

K. Huda, with HHC, 252nd CAB; Captain Damien A. Bethea, logistics officer with HHC, 252nd CAB; First Lieutenant Mark B. Lim, fire support officer with B Co., 252nd CAB; First Lieutenant Dennis J. Harris Jr., executive officer for Gulf Co. 230th Brigade Support Battalion, and First Lieutenant Aaron C. Reed, aide for the brigade commander, HHC, 30th HBCT.

“To see the guy I was in math class with just a few years ago sitting next to me in Iraq was more than reassuring,” said Harris. “It really made the world seem smaller, but in a good way.”

“Although all of us were not in the same area all the time, or in the same sections working, to be able to go and eat together and watch movies really helped out with finding comfort in the deployment,” added Plum.

All eight of these officers gained their commission from the academy through the Early Commissioning Program, which is a program that commissions officers after only two years of college. **GX**

Soldiers Teach Kids to “Stay on Track”

Story and photo by SSG Billie Jo Lorus / BISMARCK, ND

➤ **FOR TEACHERS LOOKING** for help educating their students on real-life experiences and instilling healthy choices, lessons in goal-setting, and building good decision-making skills based on positive peer pressure, these Soldiers are a lifesaver.

A new National Guard program called Stay on Track is an evidence-based drug and alcohol prevention course aimed at teaching middle school students healthy choices. Stay on Track was developed by the National Center for Prevention and Research Solutions. The program is part of the National Guard Counterdrug Program, which operates in all 54 States and Territories. Its mission is to utilize the National Guard to help create the best opportunity for America's youth to commit to being drug-free.

National Guard members in North Dakota have been working to implement this program into middle schools through the National Guard Counterdrug Drug Demand Reduction Program course.

Currently, two schools have used the Stay on Track program in North Dakota. Turtle Lake recently finished their program for the year and gave positive feedback afterward.

“I learned from this program that reality can be different from perception,” said eighth-grade student Koh Miller.

The Stay on Track course consists of 12 lessons for each middle school grade level. Each lesson takes about one class period. Lessons have been developed specifically for sixth-grade through eighth-grade students and appeal to all types of learners, providing for real-world life skills development. Upon completion of the course, students understand the negative health effects of drug use, become prepared to set short- and long-term goals, understand the techniques of effective communication, become prepared to respond to negative peer pressure and are able to make the commitment to being drug-free.



2LT Patrick Joyce teaches Turtle Lake Middle School students to “Stay on Track.”

The program is especially unique because National Guard members instruct each lesson.

Second Lieutenant Patrick Joyce said, “Grade school students seem to enjoy having a uniformed member taking part of their class and presenting materials that help them learn in a fun, friendly, educational manner. They are very open with us.”

Staff Sergeant Melanie Vincent adds, “They tell you the truth. They seem to tell us things they wouldn't normally tell the teachers.”

“Maybe they've seen a lot more and they've experienced it, so you know it's real,” says sixth-grade Turtle Lake student Tasha Williams. “If you do drugs, it can change your life and you can harm other people. You can lose everything you've worked for in your whole life.” **GX**



A Soldier with the 1038th Horizontal Construction Company unearths a truck that had been stripped, crushed and buried.

Drugs, Money and Murder

Arkansas Counterdrug uncovers \$200,000 in stolen property

Story and photos by CPT Christopher Heathscott / MOUNT JUDEA, AR

▶ IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS of Monday, March 8, this small town of 833 people in rural north Arkansas witnessed an unexpected parade of roughly 40 police and military vehicles. When the parade ended at the home of a local man suspected of involvement in drug trafficking, grand theft and murder, the mission for the Arkansas National Guard's counterdrug program had just begun.

While the program's personnel were very familiar with the mission of supporting civil authorities in the state's drug interdiction and eradication efforts, this multi-

agency operation provided the team with experience in a whole new aspect of the war on drugs. This time, they were called upon to assist in the search for 20-year-old Josh Middleton, who was suspected to have been murdered in relation to his family's drug operation. Finding the body would be no simple task, as it was thought to be buried in a vehicle somewhere on the family's property, which spread out over 1,000 acres.

"The initial request came in for up to 20 troops, including our ground surveillance folks, aerial surveillance and ground-pene-

trating radar," said Lieutenant Colonel Don Mabry, Counterdrug coordinator for the Arkansas National Guard. "The request also included bulldozers and backhoe type of excavator equipment."

The Guard was called out by the request of the Arkansas State Police in coordination with the Drug Enforcement Agency, the Newton County Sheriff, and the 14th Drug Task Force, in order to serve an open-ended warrant in the search for Middleton's body. Intelligence suggested that Middleton, who was reported missing in 2005, had been murdered as a result of

skimming money and drugs while working in his role to distribute the family's methamphetamine across state lines.

"The request also included the 61st Civil Support Team partly because this family had the reputation of producing methamphetamines," said Mabry. "We didn't know how they were disposing of that toxic waste, so we had the Civil Support Team on standby in case we accidentally stumbled across some of the toxic waste."

Guard personnel used ground-penetrating radar to scan the areas where evidence suggested the possi-

bility of a buried vehicle. Game and fish personnel looked for other possible sites with signs of moved earth or other unnatural humps in the ground. While the majority of personnel searched the ground, an Arkansas National Guard pilot flew others in a UH-72 Lakota in order to get a good look from the air.

“IT WAS EXCITING. DEFINITELY GOT TO DO THINGS YOU WOULDN’T NORMALLY DO.”

>> Specialist Michael Lynch, Arkansas National Guard

“It was pretty intense,” said Mabry. “It was a one-week mission, which is very unusual for counterdrug unless it’s the marijuana eradication season.”

Within the first four hours of day one, radar detected a large mass underground which set the Guard’s engineers in action. Members of the Guard’s 1038th Horizontal Construction Company from North Little Rock quickly uncovered the find.

Although this particular site didn’t produce the Chevy Z71 pickup that was suspected to be Middleton’s tomb, it did produce a different vehicle. This truck had been stolen, stripped, crushed and buried, but had no sign of a body inside.

“When we hit something, whether it’s a rock, or it’s a piece of metal, you get butterflies in your stomach,” said Staff Sergeant Tim Smith, of the Guard’s Counterdrug Task Force. “You just can’t wait to dig it up to see what you found.”

The search didn’t stop after the initial find, and the discoveries didn’t stop either.

“We found a truck that had a boat hooked to it. Boat and truck were

buried together,” said Specialist Michael Lynch, who is a member of the Guard’s Headquarters and Headquarters Company of the 39th Brigade Special Troops Battalion. “It was exciting. We definitely got to do things we wouldn’t normally do.”

Lynch’s team verified the large object buried underground after Game and Fish personnel spotted the unnatural hump in the saddle between two hills.

“Nobody really wants to see somebody who’s been murdered,” Lynch said after the engineers pulled the Z71 in question from the site of his team’s find, “but to help law enforcement close the case on

it would have been beneficial, so I had mixed feelings.”

Lynch, who was called in specifically for this mission due to his knowledge of the ground-penetrating radar, did not have to face the sight of a dead body with this discovery since this vehicle did not contain a body either.

As the search continued, the Guard was called upon to transport Josh Middleton’s stepfather and alleged leader of the drug ring, who was suspected of being responsible for the younger Middleton’s disappearance.

“Law enforcement had monitored phone calls that he had made while in jail trying to arrange an ambush of the law enforcement transport of the prisoner from the Benton County detention center in Rogers to Jasper in Newton County for his arraignment,” said Mabry. “The request came through as a prisoner transport, but in actuality what we did was for the safety of the law enforcement personnel.”

Since the Guard can legally transport prisoners in custody of law enforcement as part of the counterdrug mission, the UH-72

Lakota helicopter and its pilot took on that additional role in the operation.

The body of Josh Middleton was never found, but after all was said and done the Drug Enforcement Agency reported over \$200,000 in stolen property was recovered and six additional felony arrests were made.

“The sheriff told us at the end of the mission, ‘if we would have found the body, that would have been the icing on the cake, but we got the cake,’” said Mabry.

“The operation was deemed a success because of all the stolen property we found,” said Newton County

Sheriff Keith Slape. “We’ve got such limited manpower in Newton County. We’re a very rural area and a vast county, too. I’d have been here with six deputies for several years trying to figure this out. It expedited everything with the Guard there.”

“It was great to have so many different people from so many different agencies all come together for a common goal and to succeed at that goal and work together smoothly and seamlessly,” said Staff Sergeant Sam Hardin, an imagery analyst with the 123rd Intelligence Squadron, who provided his expertise for the mission. “I think it was very successful.” **GX**



Guard personnel used ground-penetrating radar to scan the areas where credible evidence suggested the possibility of a buried vehicle.



The Rhode Island Militia at the Beginning of the Revolutionary War

By Jonathan Bernstein / WASHINGTON, DC

▶ DISPLAYED AT THE ENTRANCE to the National Guard Memorial Museum’s Militia Gallery in Washington, DC, is a small piece of parchment and a Brown Bess musket. These two artifacts represent the foundation of U.S. history and especially that of the National Guard.

The Brown Bess musket, or 1756 Long Land Pattern musket, was built by the Mathis firm and was the typical shoulder weapon of British Regiments in the colonies. It is distinctly possible that this musket fired one of the first volleys of the American Revolution.

While historically significant, this musket pales in comparison to the framed note hanging adjacent to it.

Captain Edward Knight was born in 1734 in Warwick, RI, and like all males aged 16–60, he was required to serve in the militia. He rose to command the 3rd Company of Cranston Militia by 1774 and would take that company to war the following year with the start of the American Revolution. As word of the skirmishes at Lexington Green and Concord Bridge on April 19, 1775, spread, militia units around New England mobilized and began their marches toward Boston. By the following day, militia units in Rhode Island began to issue mobilization orders.

Captain Knight wrote to one of his corporals, James Briggs, ordering him to

assemble the men of the company at the house of Christopher Lippitt the following morning. Issuing written orders was risky. The order was folded extremely small to be as inconspicuous as possible and most likely delivered by courier. Had British soldiers intercepted the courier, both he and Knight would have been tried for treason and executed. The order reads:

“You are hereby command to warne (in conjunction with the other corporals) every inlisted soldier of the 3d company of militia of the town of Cranston to appear at the dwelling house of Christ. Lippitt Esq. on Fryday the 21st

day April 1775 by seven of the clock in the fore-noon according to law together with seven days provisions, a blanket and knapsack. Each soldier then and there to hold himself in readiness to obey the commands of your superior officers. Given under my hand this day, the 20th day of Aprill, 1775.

Edward Knight, Capt.”

The 2nd Regiment of Rhode Island Militia was hastily organized at the home of Colonel Christopher Lippitt the following day and was officially recognized on the 22nd, when the colony’s General Assembly voted to create an “Army of Observation” from the companies of Rhode Island Militia and then dispatched the 1,500-man force to Boston to bolster Massachusetts militia forces engaging British Regulars. The formation then arrived outside of Boston on May 8, setting up camp to participate in the siege of the British-occupied city.

While this mobilization order gives us a unique view into the history of the National Guard, it tells a larger story: the origins of the U.S. Army. Lippitt’s regiment, along with the other militia regiments around Boston, became the core of the Continental Army when it was founded by the First Continental Congress on May 10, 1775. The intent was to utilize the Continental Army to coordinate the efforts of existing militia regiments, rather than raise a force of Regulars. However, by the Second Continental Congress, a month later, it was decided that raising a professional Army was necessary, and was passed by resolution on June 14, 1775.

The Army that had gathered in New England as a response to Lexington and Concord became the new Continental Army under General George Washington. Those militia regiments that had responded within a “minute’s notice” became the first Regulars of what was to become the U.S. Army and forever entwined the history of the U.S. Army and the National Guard. **CX**

The National Guard Educational Foundation (NGEF), located in Washington, DC, was established in 1975 with the mission to educate the public and foster awareness about the contributions of the National Guard of the United States. In short, we tell the Guard’s story.

As the educational element of the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), the foundation achieves its mission through a portfolio that includes The National Guard Memorial Museum and The National Guard Memorial Library in Washington, DC; The Guard Muster, a permanent register of Guard men and women, preserving individual legacies of service; and educational programs, forums and seminars for students and the general public.

The National Guard Memorial Museum is free and open to the public.

Please visit us at:

One Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Hours:
Monday – Friday
9am – 5pm

Guard Mentors Offer Fresh Perspective

Program Connects Students With Soldiers

Story and photo by Scott J. Farrell / BROOKFIELD, CT

To become a career mentor or to find one for your students, visit PartnersInEducation.com.

► **WHEN JIM LYON** was looking for an experienced accountant to talk to his high school class, he knew where to turn: the Army National Guard's Partners in Education program. Lyon heard about the program's career mentor database from another educator and decided to test it out. Just a few days later, Major Kurt Miller was speaking at Brookfield High School, where Lyon is the team leader of applied education.

Miller has more than 20 years of professional experience in accounting. He talked to the class about getting his undergraduate degree in accounting from Western Connecticut State University and his master's in taxation from the University of New Haven—with tuition support from the Army National Guard. He also shared his experience of getting licensed as a

certified public accountant, or CPA.

"It gives the students a different perspective," Miller said. "And if they're thinking about joining the military, the career mentor program gives them someone to talk to." Especially in communities where few people join the military, career mentoring by a member of the National Guard gives students exposure to someone from their community who has done it, he added.

Not only is Miller a member of the Brookfield community, he also graduated from Brookfield High School. "I decided in high school that I wanted to be an accountant," Miller said. But first he joined the Army, serving on Active Duty for two years. Afterward, he enlisted in the National Guard to continue serving his country while taking advantage of the education benefits.

"Any time they call me and need me to talk to students, I'll gladly go in," Miller said. "I would absolutely recommend the career mentor program to other members of the National Guard."

Susan Troupe is a career coordinator at Brookfield High School and

for career days and to interpret ASVAB test results through the ASVAB Career Exploration Program.

"The career mentor program breaks down some of the barriers and stereotypes about people in the military," Troupe said. "Students don't always understand that people

"THE MORE CHOICES THERE ARE IN THE DATABASE, THE MORE EDUCATORS CAN USE THIS RESOURCE."

>> Susan Troupe, career coordinator, Brookfield High School

is the educator who referred Lyon to the Partners in Education program. She has a long-time working relationship with the Connecticut Army National Guard, including inviting National Guard members

go into the private sector from the military, and how easy it is to transition from a military career to a civilian one. They don't know that the military provides an opportunity to have two career pathways."

"The career mentoring program is a great concept. It's important for students to be able to tie the academics to the real world," said Troupe.

Lyon agrees. "When you bring a speaker into a class, the hope is that your students will hear the same words that you as their teacher have spoken, but take these words to heart," said Lyon. "Not that my students don't believe their own teacher, but reinforcement from a non-school source always helps. I believe Kurt accomplished that with his talk to my students."

The Partners in Education database is open to both current and retired National Guard members who can share their diverse career stories with students in their community. The database has more than 800 registered mentors from around the country, but more are needed.

"The more choices there are in the database, the more educators can use this resource," Troupe said. **GX**

Career mentor MAJ Kurt Miller of the Connecticut Army National Guard speaks to accounting students at Brookfield High School.



I WILL NEVER QUIT

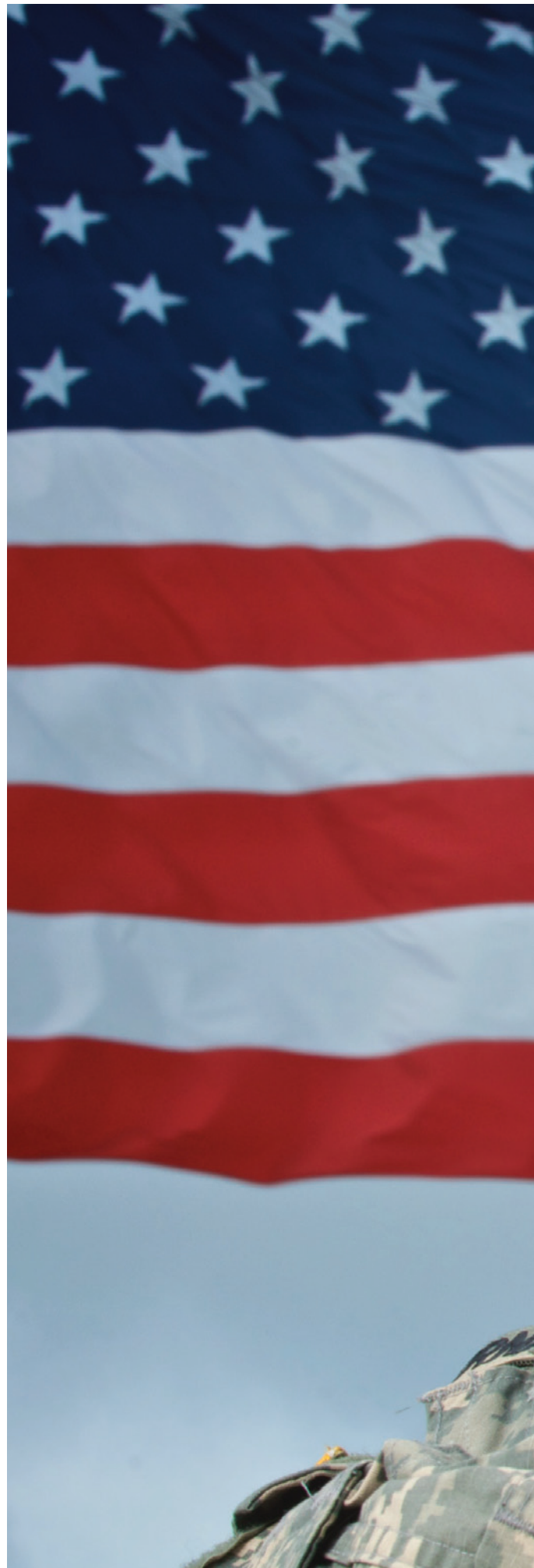


Soldiers Rededicate Themselves to the Mission

Intro by Julie Zeitlin

When a Soldier's Guard service commitment is fulfilled, they're free to return to civilian life—family, friends and plenty of time. But, many don't. Instead, they re-enlist, agreeing to several more years of weekend drills and possible mobilizations. Some even do so while deployed, or when eligible for retirement—when it would be much easier to move on. But, Soldiers aren't about doing what's easy. They're about selfless service.

GX heard from several Soldiers who recently re-enlisted. We hope their stories inspire you.





I RE-ENLISTED INTO THE FLORIDA Army National Guard to be an Human Interrogator. Being in the Guard has created opportunities for me that I would not have had anywhere else. I never dreamed I would be detonating explosives, completing a 12-mile road march, or be on a poster for the National Guard in a national movie theater ad. This is what my life has been as a Guard Soldier—I love every moment of it. As a civilian, I work as the education liaison for the Florida Army National Guard. When I tell high school students how young I am, how much money I make, who paid for my education and my experience at my age, they cannot believe it. I tell them it's true, and it's all thanks to the National Guard.

**>> Sergeant Sarah Hernandez
35M20 Human Interrogator
Florida Army National Guard
Re-enlisted Dec. 18, 2009**

Ire-enlisted because I have a fierce sense of patriotism. My brother is with the Special Forces and is in Afghanistan for the second time. I had a burning desire to serve my country again, and, this time, to serve my home state as well. Bottom line is, **I am an American Soldier and proud to be able to say that again.**

>> **Specialist Alexander Rohlfing** | 88M Motor Transport Operator | Florida Army National Guard | Re-enlisted Sept. 22, 2009

AFTER LOSING MY CIVILIAN JOB AS A HATCHERY manager for Pilgrim's Pride, I was thankful I had the military to help out. Living in a rural area of Alabama, good jobs are hard to find. Knowing I needed to find something permanent, I applied for AGR (Active Guard Reserve) positions. In February of this year, I accepted a position as a sergeant in the G1 section of the 167th Theater Sustainment Command. I'm glad to have a job I can call "permanent."

>> **Sergeant Christopher Blake Wakefield**
92W Water Treatment Specialist
Alabama Army National Guard
Re-enlisted Feb. 17, 2010, at Fort McClellan, AL

AFTER MY ENLISTMENT IN THE NAVY WAS over, I went state-to-state and job-to-job. Something kept telling me my military career was not over. At 44 years old I thought, "There's no way the Guard would ever accept me now." I went to the local recruiter, and I got the call to get ready for my physical. Today, I work at Field Maintenance Shop #4 in Poplar Bluff, doing what I love as a technician/mechanic.

>> **Specialist Kevin C. Smothers**
91B Wheeled Mechanic, 1221st Transportation Company
Missouri Army National Guard
Re-enlisted Sept. 24, 2009

I am re-enlisting to **serve and protect the American people**. I believe that by re-enlisting I'm helping to **preserve our freedom**. It's an **honor to serve**, and that is the reason I chose to make the Guard my career.

>> **Specialist Aaron L. Gann** | 91B Wheeled Mechanic
1138th MP Company | Missouri Army National Guard
Re-enlisted at Camp Cropper, Iraq

I WAS A MARINE FROM 1980-1986, after which I was a firefighter EMT. I saw numerous ads for the National Guard. After an inquiry, I found that the Guard would credit my prior service time, and I was eligible. Since re-enlisting, I have made friends as close, or closer, to me than the Marines I served with. The trust, respect and camaraderie existing within the Army National Guard are important to me.

>> **Specialist Don Gibbs** | 68W Health Care Specialist/Medic
South Dakota Army National Guard | Re-enlisted Mar. 3, 2009



I WAS PLANNING TO ETS (end my military career) in the fall of 2006. Then, I realized that, as an officer, I could make drill reflect my vision of above-standard training and having a great time doing it. I re-enlisted for three years and enrolled in OCS (Officer Candidate School). I graduated from OCS in August 2008 and decided I wanted more experience as a section sergeant. I drilled in Mott, ND, and gained experience fighting the statewide floods of spring 2009 and the Dickinson tornado in July. I am currently the detachment commander in Hazen, ND—and I am loving it!

>> **Second Lieutenant Justin Berger**
21B Combat Engineer
North Dakota National Guard
Re-enlisted July 16, 2009



🔴 **I decided to re-enlist** for an additional six years while deployed to Iraq after I was offered an E6 position with the 1137th MP Company.

>> **Staff Sergeant Michael Dustin Wilson** | 31B Military Police
Missouri Army National Guard | Re-enlisted Nov. 3, 2009, at Al Asad Airbase, Iraq



PHOTOS COURTESY OF KENTUCKY, MISSOURI, SOUTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

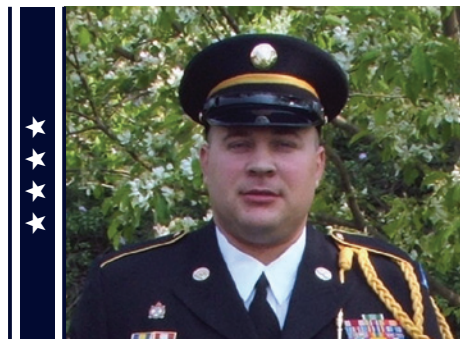


▶ **The Kentucky Army National Guard** has been a major influence in my life over the last 20 years, and I have been lucky that my last two re-enlistments have been in Afghanistan. I chose to re-enlist in theater both times because re-enlistments are an honor and I wanted to make them as memorable as I could.

>> **First Sergeant Daniel F. Tuttle** | Kentucky Army National Guard

▶ **I EXTENDED MY SERVICE IN THE** Army National Guard for an additional year after I was offered an E5 position with the 3175th Chemical Company.

>> **Sergeant Michael James Deleon**
 91B Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic and
 31B Military Police
 Missouri Army National Guard
 Re-enlisted Nov. 19, 2009, at Al Asad Airbase, Iraq



▶ **I RE-ENLISTED SO I COULD DEPLOY** to Afghanistan with my unit. I work for the state as a federal technician at a South Dakota National Guard maintenance facility. I enjoy the Guard and the benefits available to my family.

>> **Sergeant Donally Kranz**
 Safety NCO
 South Dakota Army National Guard
 Re-enlisted Feb. 24, 2010

▶ **THE MILITARY HAS BEEN A HUGE** part of my life since I was 18 years old. I decided to re-enlist for many reasons. First, it's a great job. Second, all three of my children have been Army National Guard "brats." Both of my sons, Elih and Mathieu, joined in 2008 and are now on their first deployment in Kuwait/Iraq. My daughter, Hanna, plans to join once she finishes high school, in 2011. I thank God so much for showing me how to mentor my children and provide inspiration toward their decision to join the Guard.

>> **Master Sergeant Graciela H. Paula**
42R Band Member – 13th Army Band
Florida Army National Guard
Re-enlisted March 2, 2009



▶ I re-enlisted because I want to continue to serve my country. Ever since I joined the Guard and realized how great it is, I decided to make it a part-time career.

>> **Sergeant Michael Hays Jr.**
31B Military Police
49th Military Police Brigade
California National Guard
Re-enlisted Oct. 28, 2009,
at Camp Liberty, Iraq



I WAS PROMOTED from staff sergeant to sergeant first class, and I needed to extend for one year to keep the rank. Plus, our unit was deploying to Iraq and I wanted to finish my military career on a deployment. I first started on Active Duty in 1970. I got out in 1976. In 1987, I enlisted into the Florida Army National Guard. I should retire with 30 years of military service in September 2012.

>> **Sergeant First Class Terry L. Norsworthy**
92G Food Service Specialist
Florida Army National Guard
Re-enlisted Feb. 11, 2009

▶ My re-enlistment in Afghanistan allows me to complete 20 years of Active Federal Service and 30 total years in the Kentucky Army National Guard. **It was a proud day for my family and me—** especially my wife, Susan. Without my family's support, this would not have been possible.

>> **Sergeant First Class Scotty D. Turner** | Kentucky Army National Guard

When I first joined the Army National Guard nearly six years ago, two factors influenced my decision. First, my father has been in the Army for 30 years. Second, I did it for the educational benefits.

While my initial enlistment wasn't a tough decision, I never intended on making a career out of the military. Upon returning from my recent deployment to Afghanistan, not only did I opt to stay in the Guard, I was recently hired as the program analyst for the 108th Sustainment Brigade.

Even without receiving a bonus, I am virtually debt-free, thanks in large part to Army National Guard. The Guard has also presented me with opportunities to train and travel. I have met and worked alongside Soldiers and civilians from all over the world. Through the Guard, I have been blessed in so many ways, and I know that opportunities like these will continue to present themselves as I further my career in the Army National Guard. ▶

>> **Sergeant Courtney McCormick-Behary**
92Y Unit Supply Specialist
Illinois Army National Guard
Re-enlisted March 4, 2010



PHOTOS ON PP. 44-47 COURTESY OF THE KENTUCKY, MISSOURI AND SOUTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICES



RE-ENLISTED DURING A FIELD OPERATION

in preparation for the 53rd Brigade's deployment. Since we had no flags to utilize during the "swearing in," we used a patch. It was an exciting moment for me because I had just been accepted for an AGR (Active Guard Reserve) position after a few years of applying.

>> **Sergeant Jennie A. Saavedra**
92Y Unit Supply Specialist
Florida Army National Guard
Re-enlisted Oct. 28, 2009

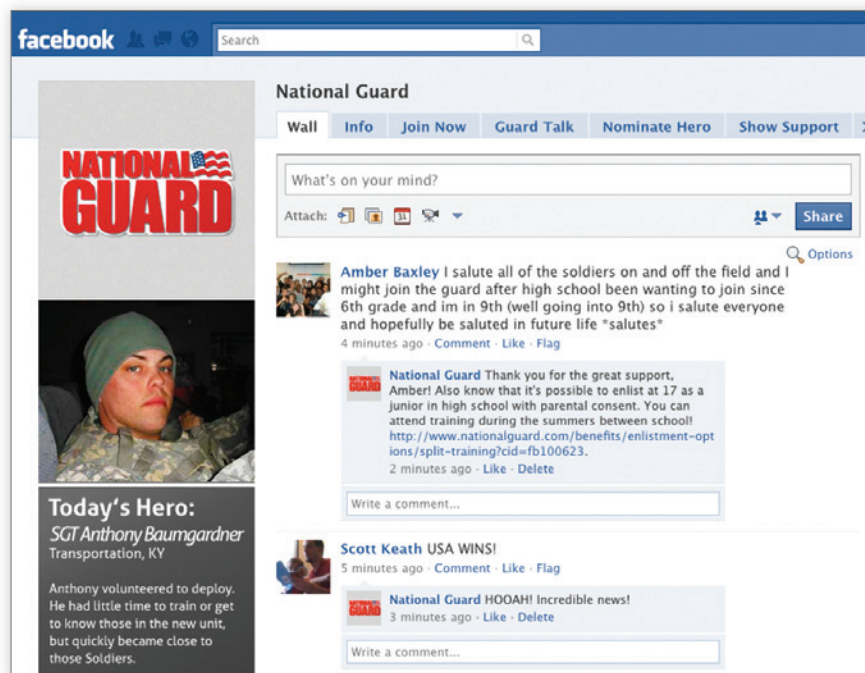
Re-enlistment will give me the chance to be able to serve in the Florida Army National Guard for 39 years. I can say that the National Guard plays a vital part in today's military. **It has been a real honor to be able to serve my country during conflicts, my state missions during national disasters and my hometown of Pensacola, FL.**

>> **Master Sergeant Timothy Matheiss** | 21Z Combat Engineering Senior Sergeant
779th Engineer Battalion | Florida Army National Guard



The Bugler is a tool to help Soldiers in all aspects of recruiting. From the Recruiting NCOIC to the Recruiting Assistant (RA), all new information about the latest and greatest recruiting tools and programs can be found right here in each issue of GX.

Info and images courtesy of NGB-ASM



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www.Facebook.com/NationalGuard

The National Guard Facebook page is the most popular Facebook page for interactions in the military. Twenty-four hours a day, potential recruits log on and post questions about National Guard service, requirements, jobs and more. Their questions are answered by the National Guard Social Media Response Team, other Soldiers and fans. Take advantage of this unique opportunity to talk directly to a potential recruit by logging on to Facebook today.



>> NATIONAL GUARD: Virtual Career Fair



Register Now

The National Guard's Virtual Career Fair combines all the communication elements young adults already use, such as online chats, avatars, information downloads and video. Through this interface, National Guard representatives from all states and territories replicate a real-world career fair environment with booths on a showroom floor, an auditorium with presentations, and a lounge to relax and chat with candidates from around the country.

For more information on how to register or to participate in one of the upcoming events, visit www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/virtual or contact MAJ Elaine Gullotta, Advertising & Marketing Future Operations Officer, National Guard Bureau, (703) 604-4215 or by email at Elaine.Gullotta@us.army.mil.

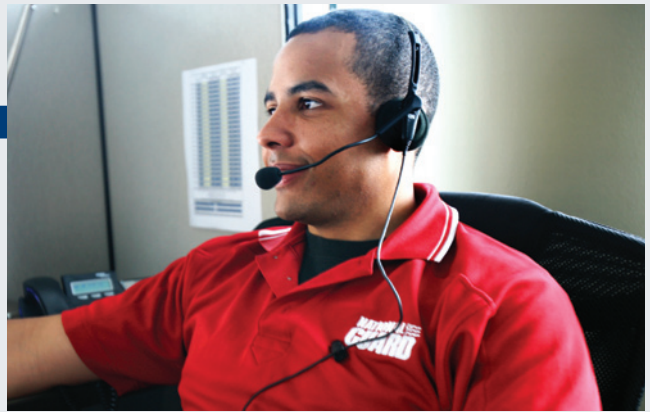
PATH TO HONOR Are you eligible?

>> MEET THE OPERATORS

Anthony Stewart

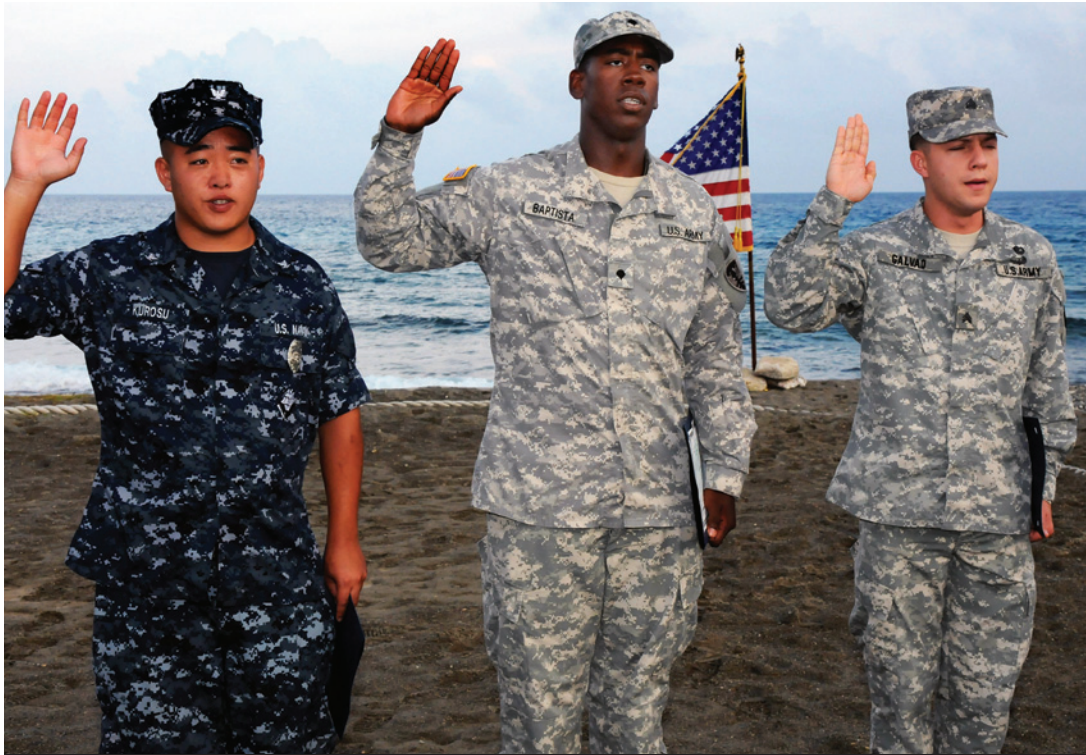
*Specialist, Tennessee National Guard
Infantryman and Cavalry Scout*

Anthony has been in the National Guard three and a half years and a PTH operator for two. He grew up wanting to be in the military, and enjoys the Guard because of its dual role—helping his country and also his community. On being an operator: “It’s nice to talk to people who are excited about joining the Guard.”



>> HERO ON CALL <<

The Hero on Call program continues to add subject matter experts to its ranks to help engage and facilitate getting information to potential recruits. Recently, a UH-60 Black Hawk pilot and Soldiers of the Year from Hawaii and Pennsylvania have begun chatting online to help answer questions about enlisting in the Army National Guard.



Specialist Carlos Baptista, middle, of the Rhode Island Army National Guard's 115th Military Police Battalion, takes the U.S. Oath of Allegiance during his naturalization ceremony at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, April 19, 2010.

Soldier Becomes Citizen

Story and photo by MC2 (SW) Shane Arrington, JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

SPECIALIST CARLOS BAPTISTA OF the Rhode Island Army National Guard's 115th Military Police Company dreamed of becoming an American citizen since he left the island country of Cape Verde, off the coast of Africa, when he was just four years old.

Twenty years later, that dream became a reality when he took the U.S. Oath of Allegiance while deployed here with Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Completing the process to become an American citizen has earned Baptista his 15 minutes of fame.

This accomplishment makes Baptista justifiably proud—and his parents, too.

PARENTAL PRIDE

"I know this brings a big smile to

my parents' faces," Baptista said, with a smile of his own, shortly after taking the oath that officially made him a citizen of the country he'd already sworn to support and defend almost four years ago.

Baptista joined the Rhode Island Army National Guard Sept. 11, 2006, and he made it clear it was no coincidence he joined on that date.

While getting his citizenship has always been a goal, it was easier said than done.

"I've always been very busy, but I needed to start working on my citizenship," Baptista said. "[I had to] get it while in Cuba to come on this deployment. I was really lucky to have so many people help me. My command gave me the time I needed to study and prepare."

Captain Nicolas Pacheco, 115th Military Police Company

commander, said he's glad to see his Soldier's hard work pay off.

"He was very passionate and dedicated," Pacheco said. "We were all proud to see him raise his hand in the first recorded naturalization ceremony in Guantanamo Bay."

Baptista mentioned two of his former officers, who he said were instrumental in encouraging him to pursue his dream of citizenship. Major Samuel Maldonado and Captain Alex Arroyo "gave a lot of their spare time to help me get everything done properly," Baptista said. "They didn't have to help, but I'm glad they did."

FLAG IN HAND

Baptista never went too long without looking down at the American flag in his hands, the one he was presented during the cere-

RHODE ISLAND ARMY NATIONAL GUARD HISTORY:

The Rhode Island Army National Guard traces its history back to the first colonial defensive force established in the town of Portsmouth in 1638. This group of Citizen-Soldiers consisted of two sergeants, two corporals and one clerk.

From this humble beginning, the state's military grew, providing forces in many conflicts during the pre-Revolutionary period, the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812, the Civil War, the Spanish-American War, the Mexican Border, WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm, Stabilization Forces (SFOR) in the Balkans and, most recently, the Overseas Contingency Operation.

Today, the Rhode Island Army National Guard consists of a force of over 2,500 dedicated men and women who are prepared to serve their state or nation in a variety of military specialties. Rhode Island has Citizen-Soldiers qualified in military occupational specialties that include artillery, infantry, signal, engineer, aviation and military police.

THE PATH TO CITIZENSHIP:

Since 9/11, 58,000 members of our Armed Forces have become American citizens, often taking the Oath of Allegiance while deployed in Iraq or Afghanistan.

mony. A flag he said will be safely sent home and respected.

Now that he's an American citizen, Baptista said he's glad he can do things he couldn't before, such as applying for a security clearance and an American passport, and applying to bring more of his family to the country he's called home for most of his life.

"I always felt like something was missing," Baptista said. "Now that I'm an American citizen, I feel complete."

Along with Baptista, Army Sergeant Ardicio Galvao and Navy Machinist Mate 3rd Class Jo Kurosu received their citizenship during the naturalization ceremony. **GX**

Up for the Challenge

Ohio Readies Soldiers for Basic Combat Training

Story and photo by SPC Sam Beavers, Ohio National Guard Public Affairs

WHETHER CLIMBING OVER A 10-FOOT WALL, rappelling into a ravine or crawling through a mud pit, it was not an average drill weekend for about 100 Soldiers who competed in the 3rd Annual Ohio Army National Guard Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) Warrior Challenge April 24–25 at Camp Sherman and Camp Lazarus.

The challenge started April 24 at Camp Sherman in Chillicothe, where Soldiers tested their proficiency in basic tasks such as land navigation, evaluating a casualty, donning a protective mask and assembling an M16A2 rifle. The event continued April 25 with a grueling 2-mile obstacle course at Boy Scouts of America Camp Lazarus in Delaware, OH.

“This is the capstone event for RSP,” said Lieutenant Colonel Daniel Shank, Ohio Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion commander. “It builds esprit de corps and encourages working together as a team.”

SETUP FOR SUCCESS

Warrior Challenge is an opportunity for new Soldiers to build confidence as well as a chance for leaders to assess how ready they are for the rigors of Basic Combat Training (BCT) and Advanced Individual Training, Shank said.

“It helps make Basic less of a shock,” said Private Jacob Kenworthy, who has already completed BCT and is drilling with his RSP unit until he begins his advanced training.

Kenworthy’s parents agreed and said the challenge is a great event.

“It prepares you mentally and physically,” said Brenda Kenworthy, Jacob’s mom.

After a severe thunderstorm forced challenge organizers to close down the obstacle course early, RSP Company F, based out of Newton Falls, emerged victorious among RSP teams, earning the title “Top Team” based on total points accumulated from physical fitness tests and Stripes for Skills testing which took place on Saturday. The Ohio State University Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) team, competing as a guest competitor along with two teams from the University of Cincinnati ROTC, earned top ROTC team honors.

Covered in mud and filled with enthusiasm, RSP Company A was named “Top Company” since the combined total of both its teams resulted in the highest overall score. Led by First Sergeant David Hunt, the competing Warriors were presented the SPC Joshua J. O’Bannon Memorial Trophy by Shank; Major General Matthew L. Kambic, Ohio’s assistant adjutant general for Army; and Ohio State head football coach Jim Tressel, who acted as an honorary battalion commander for the day’s events.

“It was tough, but it was a blast,” said Private First Class Amanda Green of Company A, Recruiting and Retention Detachment.

Another fellow Company A member agreed with visible excitement.

“This was a great experience,” said Private Lukas Blanton. “There were so many activities—it was such a rush.”

KUDOS FROM THE COACH

Tressel also promoted numerous Soldiers following Sunday’s event and told each of them how much he appreciated their service. Following the ceremony, Tressel stuck around to sign autographs and to

participate in several “O-H-I-O” pictures.

“It was nice that Coach Tressel supported the RSP and the National Guard; it was definitely a morale boost,” said Cadet Elizabeth Mikulka, who’s in her second year of ROTC at Ohio State University. “It was even better because we were representing our college as well as the Army.”

The Ohio RSP was created in 2006 to better prepare new recruits to handle the mental and physical challenges of Basic Training. The program ensures new enlistees are properly prepared to ship and successfully complete BCT. On average, for every 100 enlistments into the Ohio Army National Guard, 94 successfully ship to their Basic Combat Training course. Of those, 89 successfully complete the training.

All 54 States and Territories have RSPs, which are tracked by the National Guard Bureau. Since its inception, the Ohio Army National Guard’s RSP has continued to rank in the top 2 percent among all National Guard Bureau programs. **GX**

Several Company I Soldiers do flutter kicks as they get “smoked” by a drill sergeant shortly before competing in the 3rd Annual Recruit Sustainment Program Warrior Challenge April 25 at Camp Lazarus, Ohio.



For more on RSP, go to
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/OhioBCT



CPT William Gorby, battalion support company commander, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, West Virginia National Guard, receives the General Douglas MacArthur Award for Leadership Excellence during a May 6 ceremony at the Pentagon. Chief of Staff of the Army GEN George W. Casey Jr. and a representative from the General Douglas MacArthur Foundation presented the awards.

MacArthur Award

Seven Guard Members Recognized for Leadership

By SPC Darron Salzer, National Guard Bureau

SEVEN NATIONAL GUARD MEMBERS were presented with the MacArthur Leadership Award from the General Douglas MacArthur Foundation during a ceremony at the Pentagon on May 7.

Captains Bill Barthen of the Wisconsin National Guard, Stephen E. Brack of Arkansas, William M. Gorby of West Virginia, Charles D. McWilliams of Nebraska, Timothy J. Newman of Illinois, and Joseph A. Ruotolo of Pennsylvania, and Chief Warrant Officer Two Mark J. Simon of Rhode Island were recognized along with other Army company grade officers as demonstrating the ideals for which MacArthur stood—duty, honor and country.

WISE WORDS

“Those three hallowed words reverently dictate what you ought to be, what you can be, what you will be,” MacArthur told cadets at the U.S. Military Academy in 1962. “They are your rallying points: to build courage when courage seems to fail, to gain faith when there seems to be little cause for faith, to create hope when hope becomes forlorn.”

Leadership is what it will take to get the

Army through the challenges of the 21st century, General George W. Casey Jr., chief of staff of the Army, said during the ceremony.

“The one thing that rings clear to us is that it’s going to take leadership and leaders of character and competence to chart our way through the challenges [ahead],” he said. “All of these award winners have demonstrated the tremendous quality that we’re privileged to have in our Army today.”

Guard recipients of the award said they don’t think that they’ve done anything above and beyond what the Army asks of them, only that they have simply stuck to the basics and are truly humbled by the recognition.

THE UNEXPECTED

“It’s awfully humbling to receive this award,” said Barthen, the training officer for Wisconsin’s 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. “Just being nominated was huge in and of itself, and I was quite shocked to learn that I was the nominee for the state of Wisconsin.”

“The basic Army Values and Warrior Ethos that you learn at basic training and [advanced individual training] are what make [a good

leader],” said Barthen. “It sounds simple, but it’s very difficult to live these values—incorporate them into who you are, and then exude that among your Soldiers, admit your faults when wrong, and always do what’s right and move forward.”

Barthen said he is not trying to be the best leader. “I’m just trying to do what’s right by my Soldiers all the time,” he said. “Apparently, in the end, they appreciate that and the leadership appreciates that I do that, too.”

THE SPIRIT OF LEADERSHIP

Other nominees echoed Barthen’s sentiments, and added that such things as esprit de corps, and the ability to find a happy medium between mission success and keeping Soldiers happy, are key qualities to leadership excellence.

“You have to maintain an esprit de corps and an ability to motivate,” said Gorby, the battalion support company commander for West Virginia’s 19th Special Forces Group. “When you have found that success, it motivates [your Soldiers] to complete the mission for them, not simply because they are following the protocol of rank and customs and courtesies.”

Casey told the awardees that they “embody the spirit that our country will need to lead it forward in the decades ahead. Our nation can continue to be proud that we can bring forward generation after generation of Americans who believe so strongly in the values and ideals that this country stands for.” **GX**

Facing a Challenge

Combat Medic Is Devoted to Helping Others

By Bob Haskell

PRIVATE 1ST CLASS ANDREW WILKINSON is fascinated about something that most people would just as soon avoid: trauma. Specifically, he is curious about what happens to the human body when it is suddenly injured because of an accident or some other kind of impact—such as a bullet or an improvised explosive device.

The Massachusetts Army National Guard Soldier has put himself in an excellent position to find out. Wilkinson, 21, is a combat medic (68W), and he expects to spend the rest of this year in Kuwait and Iraq with the 164th Heavy Equipment Transportation Battalion, which is trucking equipment from Iraq to Kuwait as part of Operation Responsible Drawdown.

“I see trauma as a challenge, and I’m always up for a challenge,” said Wilkinson.

He was the only qualified combat medic in the Massachusetts battalion when it was training at Fort Sill, OK, for its March deployment. He did point out, however, that many of the other Soldiers have completed combat lifesaving courses so they, too, could help injured comrades.

“I want the experience so I can join a fire department as a paramedic when I come home,” explained Wilkinson, who grew up in Middleboro, MA.

FAMILY TRADITION

Wilkinson comes from a family that helps those in distress. His

mother is a dispatcher for the Stoughton Fire Department in Massachusetts; his stepmother is a nurse in Bangor, ME; and his stepfather is a firefighter and paramedic in Bridgewater, MA.

Wilkinson is already certified as an emergency medical technician. He worked for the Rapid Ambulance Service in Holliston, MA, for nearly three years before reporting for the overseas mission. He transferred to the transportation battalion from the 772nd Military Police Company in Taunton so he could deploy, he said.

He became interested in emergency medicine while helping his stepfather, Tim Donovan, study for his paramedic recertification, Wilkinson said, and he trained as

an Army medic because he likes the idea of helping people in life-or-death situations.

INTENSE IN TEXAS

His combat medic training at Fort Sam Houston, TX, last year “was the most intense training I’ve ever had,” Wilkinson said. “It was intense,

“I SEE TRAUMA AS A CHALLENGE, AND I’M ALWAYS UP FOR A CHALLENGE.”

>> PFC Andrew Wilkinson

well thought out, and methodical. Everyone understood what we were being trained to do.”

Trauma intrigues him, Wilkinson explained, because of how it affects the human body. Trauma patients suffer serious and life-threatening

PFC Andrew Wilkinson is a combat medic who is prepared to help those in need in Kuwait and Iraq.

physical injuries that could result in shock, respiratory failure or death, according to a trauma website. Medics have to

treat patients for unconsciousness, internal bleeding, disorientation or shock to save their lives. The first 60 minutes, the so-called golden hour, is critical for caring for those patients.

Wilkinson did not deploy to the Middle East looking for trouble. But he certainly knew he could encounter trauma after he got to the combat zone.

“It could happen, but I hope it doesn’t,” he said. “If it happens, I’ll be ready for it.” **GX**

To see videos of combat medics in action go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/68W



SFC DONALD VETCH, JR., MASSACHUSETTS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Back to Basic

▶ THE TRANSFORMATION FROM CIVILIAN TO SOLDIER



GX Enters the Warrior Phase of Basic Combat Training

Part 1 of 4: Fort Leonard Wood, MO

Story and photo by Clint Wood

A squad of Soldiers had to find two points for their land navigation course test during a Basic Combat Training field training exercise at Fort Leonard Wood, MO.

THE NUMBER ONE QUESTION that future Army National Guard Soldiers ask is, “What is Basic Combat Training (BCT) like?”

GX decided to find out firsthand by spending time at four of the five BCT sites—Fort Leonard Wood, MO; Fort Benning, GA; Fort Jackson, SC; and Fort Sill, OK.

This first segment of our four-part BCT series takes place over two days at Fort Leonard Wood, which is nestled in the rugged terrain of the Ozark Mountains.

It was week eight, day three, for about 100 Initial Entry Training Soldiers of Company A, 795th Military Police (MP) Battalion. These Warriors, who had come from around the

country, were in BCT Phase III—also known as Blue Phase or Warrior Phase.

NOT QUITE CAMPING

They were on a “camping trip” courtesy of the National Guard—up before the crack of dawn and in their sleeping bags well after dusk.

About the only things that would resemble camping, though, were the two-man tents and hot breakfasts. Breakfast included scrambled eggs and ham, and dinners included a salad and dessert.

Otherwise, these privates were wearing “battle rattle” as if they were in Iraq or Afghanistan. Battle rattle includes a 3.5-pound

Advanced Combat Helmet, body armor with the lighter protective plates, eye protection, elbow pads and knee pads.

The fort’s command sergeant major had directed that the BCT Soldiers and their drill sergeants train as if they were in a combat zone—the good old “train as you fight” method.

This “camping trip,” or field training exercise (FTX), was the culmination of previous training the Soldiers received. It’s similar to a mission rehearsal exercise before units deploy overseas.

“It really brings to memory what the drill sergeant has been teaching us, and it all combines together,” said Private Miquela Sullivan, 19, of Cookeville, TN. Sullivan is the granddaughter

See more photos and video at GXonline.com

of an Army Green Beret who served in Vietnam. “Yes, we have learned something,” she added.

Sullivan, who joined the MP Corps to be able to serve in a combat-like role, is among thousands of Soldiers who would probably say the same thing. When Fort McClellan, AL, was closed in 2000 as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, the U.S. Army Chemical Corps and Military Police Corps schools were transferred to Fort Leonard Wood, which was concurrently redesignated the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center.

THE TEAM

GX interviewed several Soldiers at Fort Leonard Wood for this story.

Mark Butler, 19, of West Virginia, was pursuing two degrees at West Virginia University.

Eric Burke, 26, from Kentucky, left behind a job as a belt inspector and safety coordinator at a coal mine.

Robert Seida, 22, of Illinois, who has an associate degree in computer science, said goodbye to his position as a clerk at an electronics store.

Nicole Jones-Williams, 18, of Minnesota, was in her first year of general studies at Normandale Community College.

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER

One New York Citizen-Soldier had a story right out of “Good Morning America.” Cody Duger, a New York State court clerk in Auburn, NY, joined the Guard at age 39. He had always wanted to join the military, and when he learned he wasn’t too old, he took the leap.

“I guess this is my midlife crisis—to go for it and serve my country,” mused Duger, who has been married for 10 years and has a bachelor’s degree in public justice. “So I decided to go for it.”

It wasn’t that easy, though. He wanted approval from his wife. When he asked her how she felt, she told him that if he thought he’d always regret not joining, then he should do it.

It’s a now or never kind of deal, Duger told his wife.

The “deal” has worked out for Duger. Early during BCT, he could only do 30 each of push-ups and sit-ups. Now, he can pump out 53 each. As far as the 2-mile run, he has a hit a “grand slam.” He’s the third fastest runner in his platoon,

completing it in 12:39.

“He was crazy fast,” said one of his fellow platoon members.

Duger, whose goal is to score a 300 on the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT), explained that he’s an avid runner and once ran a marathon in Burlington, VT.

Regarding the extreme fitness routines the privates undergo during BCT, you would think this was the most challenging aspect. But, that isn’t the case. Most of them said being away from their families was their biggest challenge.

But, West Virginian Chris Mathews admitted

“YOU JUST NEED TO STAY DISCIPLINED ...YOU JUST HAVE TO GET YOUR HEAD IN THE GAME.”

>> PVT Chris Mathews

that going from a civilian to a Soldier quickly did challenge him.

GET IN FOCUS

“You just need to stay disciplined,” he commented. “You just have to get your head in the game.”

That sentiment is music to the ears of on-duty drill sergeant Staff Sergeant Michael Espejo. Espejo is a former Marine infantryman who has been a drill sergeant at Fort Leonard Wood for 16 months.

He said his number one priority in training privates is to instill discipline.

“Attention to detail is important too,” he added. “If they’re not paying attention to detail here, they won’t [do so] downrange, and that’s what gets our battle buddies killed.”

Espejo knows firsthand about the latter statement. In Afghanistan, his meticulousness saved his life, along with the lives of four Soldiers, two state department officials and several civilian onlookers (see sidebar).

This awareness is key in looking out for the welfare of the Soldier to your left or right—your “battle buddy.”

Battle buddies are selected randomly on the

first day of training.

Sergeant First Class Todd Warner, a drill sergeant, said he loves to instill the battle buddy system into BCT Soldiers.

“It is not about the individual,” he said. “It’s about their battle buddy—giving them good cover when they’re moving toward an objective.”

IT’S ONLY 20 WEEKS

Private Logan Woods of Jackson, TN, received this message loud and clear. “You look out for each other,” he said. “You do this in every little thing you do, from changing socks to making sure you have your weapon at all times. This system makes you really close.”

Private Jesse Howard’s advice was simpler: “Just keep a positive attitude through the whole thing. It’s only 20 weeks.”

Company commander Captain E.J. Kesslering conceded, “Just come here with a good attitude and an open mind. Realize that there is an end date, and don’t give up in the first three weeks.”

“It’s not going to be easy,” Espejo admitted. “You are going to endure some really hard things.”

Jones-Williams had this advice for female Soldiers: “Don’t let the males intimidate you. Just because they’re 6 feet tall and 200 pounds doesn’t mean you can’t do the same job that they can.”

Sullivan, who intends to be a helicopter pilot, said it best. “Just be yourself and strive to improve your training. Because the better you train, the better you are going to be downrange.” **GX**

For more information on Basic Training, go to

www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/WarriorPhase

SSG MICHAEL ESPEJO EARNS THE SILVER STAR MEDAL

While deployed to Afghanistan, Staff Sergeant Michael Espejo noticed something strange about an apparent Afghan policeman: The man’s chest seemed strangely bulky. Espejo suspected he was not a real police officer, and that he had a bomb.

Espejo ordered his fellow Soldiers to stay away and then stepped back himself. He warned the would-be bomber several times, in an Afghan dialect—to no avail. He then neutralized the man with his M4 carbine.

For these actions, Espejo was awarded the Silver Star—the third-highest commendation for bravery.

For All the Right Reasons Soldier Chooses a Life of Service

By Christian Anderson

IT HAS BEEN SAID that a man is defined not by his principles, but by his actions. Sergeant Tom Hoy, 39, knows this and works hard to excel in his two professional roles—Guard Soldier and sheriff's deputy.

Hoy has always wanted to make a difference. So whether he's wearing his Yamhill County sheriff's department uniform, or his ACUs as a Soldier with A Battery, 2nd Battalion, 218th Field Artillery Regiment, Oregon Army National Guard,

he welcomes the chance to have an impact on someone's life.

But, it's not only his life today that makes him special—it's how he got here.

THE PATH TO SERVICE

Hoy had always wanted to be in the military. Growing up on an Air Force base, he dreamed of becoming a fighter pilot. His father was a recruiter for the U.S. Air Force and had married an

English woman while stationed at Lakenheath Air Force Base, about 85 miles northeast of London. From a young age, Tom had cultural experiences that developed his communication and interpersonal skills.

"Growing up, I lived in two separate worlds. I went to school on the Air Force base with American kids, but we lived in Stanton, where there were no Americans. So we learned the English culture."

Throughout Hoy's teens, his family relocated several times. He held onto his dream of becoming a fighter pilot until he stumbled onto his father's recruiting tools one evening.

"My dad brought home a colorblind test, which you have to pass to become a pilot," Hoy explained. "Unfortunately, I didn't pass. But I still wanted to do something above and beyond the norm."

Soon, Hoy's father was transferred to Kingsley Field near Klamath Falls, OR, and Hoy settled in at Henley High School. There, he met an Army National Guard recruiter. He felt that the Guard would be a great way to gain military experience, so he enlisted under the Split Option plan. He went to Basic Combat Training (BCT) after his junior year of high school. BCT was unlike anything Hoy had ever experienced.

"It was very strange," Hoy recalled. "But I kept my nose to the grindstone and eventually graduated."

After BCT, Hoy returned to high school to finish his senior year, during which he attended monthly drills. He connected with an infantry unit, where he prepared for Advanced Individual Training the following summer. He enjoyed drilling and absorbed some of the principles that his leaders stressed, such as discipline, leadership and integrity. Over the next four years, he got a job with Les Schwab Tire Company in Prineville, OR, and fulfilled his four-year contract with the Guard.

STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE

Hoy's job at Les Schwab taught him a lot about customer service. Les Schwab, a WWII Veteran,

founded his tire company in 1952 upon a principle that became its slogan: "If we can't guarantee it, we won't sell it."

By 2007, Les Schwab Tires had over 400 stores in the Northwest. It was with this unique company that Hoy honed his people skills. But, although he excelled at his job and received promotions, something was missing.

"I hadn't given being a Soldier the chance that I should have after high school," Hoy explained. "As I aged and matured, my philosophy had



Sheriff's Deputy Tom Hoy poses with his K-9 companion, Buddy, a bloodhound.

COURTESY OF SGT TOM HOY

changed to, 'If I am going to do something, I need to do it 100 percent right.' Plus, after 9/11, I knew I had to get back in."

So he re-enlisted in the Oregon Army National Guard in November of 2005, in infantry. This change was the precursor for another one—a life change that would allow him to fulfill his desire to help people in need.

TO PROTECT AND SERVE

About a year before re-enlisting, Hoy had switched jobs from Les Schwab Tires to a Ford dealership in Prineville, OR. There, he was able to put his customer service skills to use and interact with clients on every level, from single-car families to the local police department.

One day, the police chief paid Hoy a visit at the dealership.

"He told me about a position opening at the [police] department," Hoy explained. "He urged me to apply, I guess because I had worked hard to take care of their account, he knew that I took pride in my work and myself. I got the job and went to the Police Academy in 2006."

Hoy believes that his time in the Guard—especially, his transformation at BCT—helped him breeze through the Police Academy. His instructors saw his military spirit and assigned him leadership roles.

"It was absolutely amazing how Basic Training prepared me for the Police Academy," Hoy recalled. "Although it was almost 19 years later, I still remembered a lot of the principles I'd learned. A lot of the civilians [found it difficult], but to me, it seemed like we were on vacation compared to my experience at Basic."

After the 16-week course, Hoy graduated from the Police Academy. The next day, he began his career as a law enforcement officer at the Prineville Police Department.

FROM OFFICER TO DEPUTY

Hoy was looking for a new challenge. He sent applications to several law enforcement agencies in Oregon, and was offered a job with the Yamhill County sheriff's department in late 2007. He accepted.

"The certifications were exactly the same, so I was pretty much doing the same job as deputy that an officer would," Hoy explained. "The only exception is that I have 4,000 miles of roads I can patrol, versus the four or five square miles I had before."

Working his territory, Hoy began to notice a problem. "During my patrols, I had several pursuits in a row where the suspect would jump out of their car and run into the woods," Hoy explained. "We would send in our police dogs—



SGT Tom Hoy takes a moment to pose for a photo after firing his 105 mm howitzer while drilling.

mostly German shepherds—but they would not be able to find the suspect.

"I started doing some research and realized that most of the agencies in the south and the eastern seaboard states used bloodhounds, which are exceptional trackers," he added. "Hounds can track a person like no other dog because they can smell the skin cells off of your body, sometimes up to three days after a person has passed through the area."

Hoy spent countless hours researching bloodhounds and talking to experts. Eventually, he met Bob Stevens, a Massachusetts resident who had been raising and training bloodhounds for law enforcement for over 45 years.

"Bob told me the only reason Oregon didn't have bloodhounds was that none of the agencies had ever looked into it," he explained.

Hoy flew to Massachusetts to meet Bob, who introduced him to a 22-month-old purebred bloodhound named Buddy.

"The first day I was there, Buddy jumped up on me and I immediately knew he was the one."

Then, it was time for training.

"Tom didn't know what he was doing, which is what I expect to see the first day," Stevens explained. "We worked 18 hours a day for eight days straight, training him to be a handler. You can tell when guys come from a service background, and Tom's professionalism really showed."

Hoy explained that the experience changed his life.

"Buddy and I trained hard with Bob, and every minute paid off," he admitted. "Now he lives with me, rides patrol with me every day, and is my best friend. He is absolutely amazing."

SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

Since re-enlisting in the Guard, Hoy has been promoted to sergeant and received additional training so he could switch from the infantry field to artillery.

Hoy's battery has several 105 mm howitzers and Hoy is on the governor's Honor Battery, which responds to duty at the governor's request for special occasions like sporting events, ceremonies and funerals.

He has excelled in the law enforcement sector, and proved that creative thinking—such as acquiring Buddy—can achieve greater results than settling for the status quo. Hoy attributes his success as a sheriff's deputy to being a Soldier, and vice versa.

"I feel that my Guard and civilian careers cross over and allow me to be successful in both," he explained. "I enjoy seeing people whose lives are better because we've come into contact with them. I enjoy knowing that I am a small piece of a really important picture. That makes me feel like I have a purpose." **GX**

Do you know a Soldier who serves as a firefighter, law enforcement officer or medical professional? If so, email us at editor@GXonline.com today!

A Convenient Truth About College

Online Learning Could Be Right for You

By Johanna Altland, Grantham University

ACCORDING TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION, 63.4 percent of all colleges and universities in the U.S. now offer distance learning courses. But what is distance learning?

Distance learning, also called e-learning, online learning, distance education or online education, is typically defined as any method of learning where academic material is delivered to students who aren't located on campus. For the purpose of this article, online learning is defined as courses that are delivered via the computer and the Internet.

The rising popularity of online learning, largely due to the flexibility and affordability provided by this delivery method, has resulted in an increasing number of questions about the process, experience, rigor and acceptance of pursuing a degree online. Let's take a look at some of the most frequently asked questions:



1 HOW DO ONLINE COURSES WORK?

Online courses are available through an institution's virtual learning environment. All of your coursework, including discussions, tests and writing assignments, is completed electronically. You simply log in to the virtual learning environment through a Web browser, click on the link for your course and you're in class.

2 ARE ONLINE COURSES TRULY AVAILABLE 24/7?

One of the top reasons students elect to learn online is due to the convenience—virtual learning environments are available all day, every day.

For the most part, coursework can be completed any time, day or night, but all online courses have deadlines and due dates. For example, you may take a course that has an assignment due by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday of each week. It doesn't matter what time of day you complete the assignment, as long as it is submitted on time each week. Conversely, some online schools may give you a set timeframe to complete a course. You may not have specific due dates for your assignments, but you must have all coursework completed prior to the class end date, or you could be penalized.

3 IS ONLINE LEARNING AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO LEARN?

Yes. Because online students make up more than 21 percent of students enrolled in higher education nationwide, a significant amount of research is available to prove these programs are effective. Research compiled by the Western Cooperative for Educational Telecommunications suggests that there is no significant difference between the effectiveness of learning through online courses and traditional, classroom-based courses.

In addition, a 2009 study completed by the U.S. Department of Education found that students who took an online course performed better than those taking the same course in a traditional classroom environment. In other words, online students are indeed learning.

4 WILL I MISS THE INTERACTION FOUND IN A TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM?

With today's sophisticated technology, peer-to-peer interaction and faculty-to-student interaction in the online environment is more seamless than ever. Unlike a traditional class, there are no lectures and no one is sitting in the "back row." Everyone participates. Many online colleges and universities, including Grantham University, require students to engage in weekly discussions. Professors provide feedback on assignments and are also available via email, phone and course chat rooms. Some even have virtual office hours.

5 WILL I HAVE AN ACTUAL PROFESSOR?

Yes, all online courses have instructors. However, just as online programs vary, so do the professors.

ISTOCK

Typically, your instructor will have one of three different backgrounds:

>>An instructor at a traditional campus-based program who also teaches online courses.

>> Someone who prefers to teach only online courses.

>> Someone who teaches online courses part time and is an expert working full time in the career field in which they teach. For example, your instructor for Criminal Justice 101 could also be the Chief of Police in a city or town near you.

6 HOW MUCH TIME WILL I SPEND STUDYING?

Online courses require as much, if not more, study time than traditional classes. Yes, the flexibility you gain by learning online is nice, but you still have to work hard to earn your degree. For each three-credit-hour course, expect to spend around 9-12 hours per week studying and completing assignments.

7 IS AN ONLINE DEGREE ACCEPTED BY EMPLOYERS?

First and foremost, it's important to note that your diploma and transcript will be identical to those earned by graduates in a traditional campus-based program. Your diploma will not distinguish you as an online student.

With more than 3.94 million students enrolled in online courses, employer acceptance of online courses and degree programs is increasing. A 2008 report, "Online Degrees Make the Grade: Employer Acceptance Now Common," commissioned by Western Governors University, found that "As corporations continue to see an increase in job candidates who have earned their degrees online, the word has spread among executives, human resource professionals and hiring managers that online higher education graduates are focused employees with strong work ethics."

8 ARE ONLINE COURSES ACCREDITED?

Reputable online courses, like traditional campus-based programs, are accredited by agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).

Accreditation assures you that the institution operates on a sound financial basis and has an approved program of study, qualified instructors, adequate facilities and equipment, and approved recruitment and admissions policies.

A great way to check on a college or university's accreditation is to search for them on the U.S. Department of Education's Database of Accredited Programs and Institutions at OPE.ed.gov/accreditation.

9 CAN ANYONE TAKE AN ONLINE COURSE?

Technically, yes, anyone with a computer and Internet access can take an online class, but that doesn't mean that it's necessarily the right choice for you. Online students need to be highly motivated and capable of adhering to a set study schedule. If you are by nature a procrastinator and need a structured learning environment, then online courses may not be the best choice.

10 DO I HAVE TO WAIT UNTIL THE START OF A NEW SEMESTER TO ENROLL?

Most online schools aren't semester based; instead, they have weekly, bi-weekly or monthly enrollment periods, so you can get started on your degree as quickly as possible. Also, many online schools have continuous enrollment, meaning that once you enroll and start your courses, you can progress through each course without taking a break, unless you need one.

There is a lot more information and research about online learning available on the Internet. If you are interested in pursuing a degree online, the best thing you can do is find the right online school for you and register for a course in an area that interests you to see how you like it. **GX**



Home, Safe Home

Keep Your House in Top Shape This Summer

Courtesy of USAA

AS SUMMER APPROACHES, it's easy to enjoy the warm weather and forget your financial worries. But, along with blue skies and vacations can come flooding, robberies and high air-conditioning bills.

Here are a few tips to keep your house safe, save money and enjoy the summer weather.

SPRING SHOWERS BRING FLOWERS—AND FLOODING

Find out how much flood coverage you need by typing in your street address, city, state and zip code at FloodSmart.gov. This site shows the risk of flooding in your area.

BEFORE LIGHTNING STRIKES

Plug electronics and computers into power-surge protectors to prevent them from being destroyed by lightning.

Do: Turn off the strip when you're not using it so it doesn't draw excess energy and raise your electricity bill.

Don't: Plug one power-strip into another or you risk an overload that could start a fire.

RETURNING HOME AFTER A LONG ABSENCE?

If you're returning to an empty home after a lengthy trip or deployment, turn on the water valve and/or supply lines to each plumbing fixture and carefully check for leaks. Seals can dry out when they are without water for a period of time.

To help you prepare your home before you leave for a lengthy trip or deployment, go to **Is Your Home Alone? Keep It Safe When You're Not There** at IBHS.org/publications/view.asp?cat=68&id=493, an online brochure produced by the Institute for Business & Home Safety.

MONTHLY REMINDER

To save energy and improve efficiency, replace your air conditioning filters. Have your heating and cooling system cleaned professionally twice a year. A seasonal checkup costs around \$150 but can save \$5,000 or more—the cost of a new system. **GX**



The Signs of ADDICTION

By Kevin T. Mason, MD MPH, and Ann Stark, Army National Guard Decade of Health

Check the next issue of **GX** for tips on how to successfully deal with your addiction.

Addiction is a very real problem. Getting through the hard shell of denial to solving the problem is difficult. The first step is learning what addiction means, what the risk factors are and how to detect the warning signs.



NO SURRENDER

In modern terms, most would say addiction is a drive to do something over and over, even when you know it is harmful to you and those around you. Scientists want to limit the definition to something measurable, such as a tolerance to or dependence on a habit-forming substance, verified by blood tests.

But, addiction is not always measurable. There's a lot of gray area between normal use and addiction.

RISKS FOR ADDICTIONS

It's important to identify the risk factors for developing an addiction. First, addiction tends to cluster in families. Whether this is due to genetic patterns, a turbulent social environment, learning by example, exposure to addictive chemicals as a child, or all four,

Nicotine factoids

- >> Nicotine is an insecticide.
- >> Nicotine is as physically addictive as heroin.

is not fully understood. Second, personal social circumstances can affect whether you become an addict. Those who are alone, frightened, depressed, anxious, or have poor family support are at risk. Some are more resistant to these stressors than

Common Addictions

- Illegal drugs
- Medications
- Nicotine
- Alcohol
- Pornography
- Gambling
- Food
- Shopping
- Internet use

others. Third, specific substances that we use are potent addiction-causing agents, most notably, illegal drugs, pain medications and nicotine.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Detecting addiction isn't easy. But, there are general questions that can help shed some light: Does the activity take up most of your waking hours? Can you stop your addiction activity and be satisfied without it? Or after a few hours of abstinence, you have an overwhelming urge to resume the activity. Do you find yourself lying to others to conceal your addiction activities? As we said in the beginning, denial is part of the hard shell that surrounds your problem. And finally, does the

addiction result in some loss of financial stability, freedom, success, health or relationships? If your answers to one or more of these questions show that you cannot do without the activity, you may have crossed the gray zone from normal behavior to addicted behavior. **GX**



To learn more, visit the National Institute on Drug Abuse website at DrugAbuse.gov and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism at Niaaaa.nih.gov. For immediate 24/7 assistance, log in to Military OneSource at MilitaryOneSource.com.

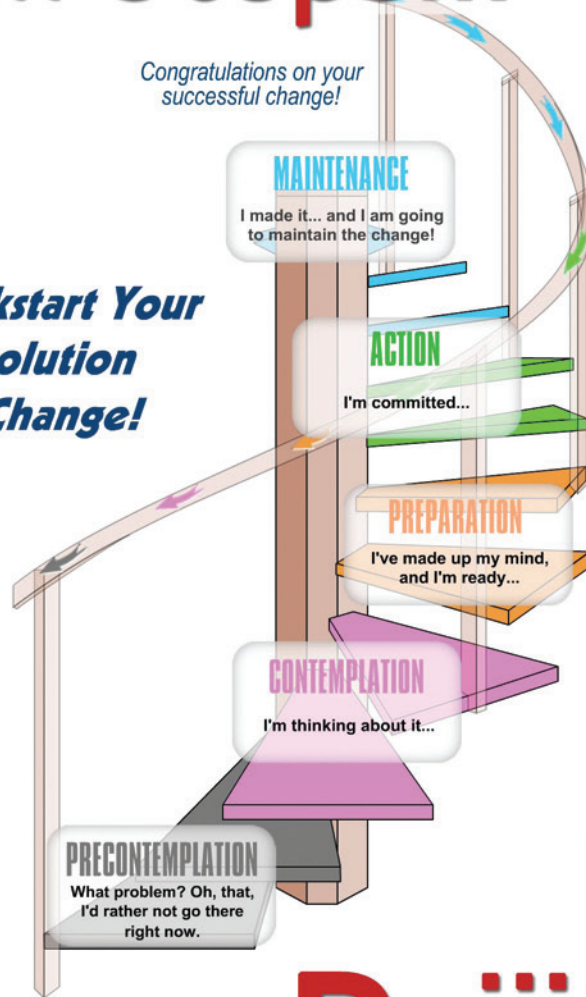
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DEFENDING THE LONE STAR STATE



The Texas Army National Guard

By Jason Hall



UNIT #22
1st Cavalry Div
Sep 1921

#3

TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD
BRIG. GEN'L. WOLTERS COMP.
CAMP MABRY 1921

IF YOU HAVE READ MANY OF THE GX "LEGACY" ARTICLES OVER THE YEARS, THEN YOU KNOW THAT MANY STATES WERE BORN FROM BATTLE, THANKS TO THE BRAVE MEMBERS OF THEIR RESPECTIVE MILITIAS. NO INSTANCE OF THIS IS TRUER THAN THE "LONE STAR" STATE OF TEXAS.

THE BIRTH OF TEXAS is one of the few statehood stories known not just by Texans, but by almost every American. Though often shrouded in myth, you would be hard pressed to find someone who had never heard of the Alamo. Most Americans have a romanticized vision of Davy Crockett battling Mexican soldiers to the bitter end. But the story of Texas independence involves so much more than the legend of the Alamo. So much is forgotten as to the true sacrifices made to bring the Lone Star State into being.

TREKKING TO TEJAS

Texas, originally known as Tejas, was part of the State of Coahuila, Mexico. Traditionally, only people from Mexico or Spain had been allowed to move into Texas. In the 1820s, the Mexican government loosened the regulations on immigration into Texas in hopes the new settlers would provide a militia force to protect against the ever-present threat of Comanche raids. Called *empresarios*, the new settlers came from many parts of Europe. But, the largest contingent was from the United States.

Unrest was brewing in Mexico when, in December 1829, Vice President Anastasio Bustamante led a coup against President Guerrero. Following the execution of Guerrero, Bustamante was installed as the new president in 1830.

Texans began to suffer under Bustamante's rule due to his policies of ignoring civil authori-

ties, imprisoning citizens without providing cause or fair trials, and stationing troops all across the territory who had little to no respect for personal property or personal freedom. Bitterness grew among the Texans, and militia forces began to form as the idea of a free and independent Republic of Texas became more and more popular. Volunteers from the United States, predominantly those looking for free or cheap land and a new lease on life, began streaming into Texas to aid in the coming revolt.

The Texans and their newly arrived allies supported the efforts of General Antonio López de Santa Anna, who successfully defeated the forces of Bustamante in December 1832. Santa Anna had assured the Texans that if they supported him, they would be treated more fairly and would again have the rights they were once afforded. Unfortunately, Santa Anna became power hungry and was quickly elected as President of Mexico on April 1, 1833, by a corrupt Mexican Congress. Instead of honoring the promises made to the Texans, Santa Anna sent a military force into Texas to force them to submit to his tyrannical rule.

"COME AND TAKE IT!"

In 1831, the Mexican government had given the Texas town of Gonzales a small cannon to assist them in protecting themselves against Comanche raids. In 1835, as civil unrest grew throughout Texas, Colonel Domingo de Ugartechea, commander of all

Mexican troops in Texas, thought it unwise to allow the rebellious citizens the possibility of using the cannon against Mexican forces. Ugartechea requested that the citizens of Gonzales return the cannon, to which they refused, stating, "Come and take it!" In response to the insolent settlers, Ugartechea sent 100 dragoons (mounted infantry) to retrieve the cannon, and ordered the use of force if the citizenry resisted.

The Mexican dragoons arrived near Gonzales on September 29. The small Gonzales militia force requested that the dragoons wait until the local magistrate could arrive and help litigate the situation to a peaceful end. This was a ruse, as word went out to neighboring settlements resulting in over 140 Texans from the areas of Guadeloupe, the Colorado and the Brazos. Not wanting to wait for the Mexicans to attack, the Texan militiamen, carrying a flag with the image of a cannon and the words "Come and take it" emblazoned upon it, charged the dragoons on Oct. 2, causing the Mexicans to flee. Though a minor skirmish, the Battle of Gonzales signaled the end of the relationship between the predominantly American settlers and the Mexican government, sparking the Texas Revolution.

A mere month later, on Nov. 3, the First Army of Texas Volunteers was formed. On that day, Major General Sam Houston, overall Army commander, oversaw the organization of the 1st Texas

Texas National Guard at Camp Mabry, 1921.



COURTESY OF LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



► **Left:** Sam Houston led 900 Soldiers against 1,400 Mexican forces at the Alamo. Houston's war cry was "Remember the Alamo!"

► **Right:** Antonio López de Santa Anna, as President of Mexico, led the charge that destroyed the Alamo in February 1836.

Regiment of Volunteers with Colonel Edward Bureson as regimental commander. Later, the 2nd Texas Regiment was also formed, with Colonel Sidney Sherman in command. These first Texas militia regiments live on today as the 141st Infantry Regiment, Texas Army National Guard.

The new Texas Army marched on the town of San Antonio and attacked the Mexican garrison located at a former mission called the Alamo. The Mexican force was completely overwhelmed by the Texas men, which included militiamen from several American states. However, the Texans would not be allowed to revel long in their capture of the Alamo. President General Santa Anna himself led a massive Mexican army to San Antonio and, beginning on February 23, 1836, laid siege to the Alamo. While the Texas and American militiamen endured inside the Alamo, Texas independence was declared on March 2, with the ratification of a new constitution creating the Republic of Texas.

The new Republic was only four days old when Santa Anna ordered a full charge of his entire force that overwhelmed the defenders of the Alamo, killing every defender, save two.

"REMEMBER THE ALAMO!"

The militiamen of the Texas Army, under the command of Sam Houston, were enraged by the news of the fall of the Alamo. Their chance to avenge the Alamo came at a small town called San Jacinto. On April 21, 1836, Sam Houston rode at the head of his 900-man army,

killed while inflicting upon the Mexican Army 630 killed, and 208 wounded. Over 700 Mexicans were captured, including President General Santa Anna.

Describing the Battle of San Jacinto, Santa Anna later stated, "So sudden and fierce was the enemy's charge that the earth seemed to move and tremble." Santa Anna was now a prisoner of war, and many Texans wanted to see him hang for the injustices and degradations he wreaked upon Texas. However, Sam Houston wanted to make an offer to Santa Anna: Texas independence in exchange for his life. Santa Anna was compelled to acquiesce and three weeks later signed the peace treaty ordering the Mexican Army to evacuate Texas. Though this ended the Texas Revolution, Mexico did not officially recognize the Republic of Texas as a sovereign nation.

WELCOME TO STATEHOOD

Following war for their independence, the members of the Texas militia were mostly engaged in sporadic skirmishes with Native American tribes, mostly with the Comanche. Though Texas was a republic, many Texans, as early as 1837, hoped for annexation by the United States. Several Texas leaders attempted to negotiate annexation with the U.S. government, though many Texans were resistant to this idea. James K. Polk, who advocated the expansion of the United States, was elected President in 1844. With extreme pressure from President Polk, the U.S. Congress admitted



"SO SUDDEN AND FIERCE WAS THE ENEMY'S CHARGE THAT THE EARTH SEEMED TO MOVE AND TREMBLE."

>> General Antonio López de Santa Anna

crying, "Remember the Alamo!" charged across a field and attacked Santa Anna's force of 1,400 strong. The battle lasted just 18 minutes, with the Mexicans suffering massive casualties. The Texans had struck with such speed and fury, that they only incurred four men

Texas as the 28th state on December 29, 1845.

Mexico immediately broke off diplomatic relations with the United States following Texas gaining statehood. Mexico had never officially given up claim to Texas and decided to not let it go to the U.S. without a fight. In January 1846, General Mariano Arista crossed the Rio Grande with his Mexican Army. Congress viewed this as an "invasion upon American soil" and declared war on Mexico. American General Zachary Taylor was dispatched to drive Arista back across the Rio Grande. Taylor put out a call for Texas militia to join him, and over 8,000 of them heeded his call. Among Taylor's force were "two [Texas] independent companies of mounted men commanded by Captains Samuel H. Walker and John T. Price." These Texans fought on their own land in the first of two major engagements—Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma—of the Mexican War.

U.S. Regular Army Soldiers, combined with militia units from across the country, rushed to join the militia of the new state of Texas in driving the Mexicans back across the Rio Grande and deep into Mexico. The men of Texas played a critical role in winning the war and helped to instill a sense of American pride among the Texans. The war also helped coin a now famous name. On September 27, 1846, several companies of Texas mounted volunteers stormed a strongly fortified position known as Independence Hill. These cavalrymen became known as the immortal "Texas Rangers."

THE CIVIL WAR

After only 15 years as part of the United States, Texas seceded and joined the fledgling Confederate States of America on February 1, 1861. Open conflict between the United States of America and the newly created Confederate States of America began on April 12, 1861, with the bombardment of Fort Sumter in Charleston Harbor, SC. In less than a week, the Confederate government requested Texas supply 8,000 Soldiers to fight in Virginia, to which the state quickly obliged. In the end,

Texas would provide the Confederate Army with 45 cavalry regiments, 23 infantry regiments and 30 batteries of artillery.

The president of the Confederate States of America, Jefferson Davis, had served in the Mexican War as part of the famed “Mississippi Rifles.” During his service, he learned firsthand the fighting ability of the men from Texas. He once remarked, “The troops of other states have their reputation to gain, the sons of the Alamo have theirs to maintain.”

Probably the most famous fighting unit to come out of Texas during the Civil War was “Hood’s Texas Brigade.” Organized in October 1861, the brigade was comprised of the 1st, 4th and 5th Texas Infantry Regiments, along with the 18th Georgia. After the Battle of Antietam in September 1862, the 18th Georgia was reassigned and the 3rd Arkansas Infantry was added in its place. At the Battle of Gaines Mill in 1862, the brigade, led by commander General John Bell Hood, broke the Union line. Henceforth the brigade was known as Hood’s Texas Brigade.

For his actions at Gaines Mill, Hood was promoted as commander of a division in Major General James Longstreet’s First Corps of the Army of Northern Virginia. Though

he was no longer directly in command of the brigade, they retained their name as Hood’s Texas Brigade. In August 1862, on the final day of the Second Battle of Manassas, Hood ordered his division, including his old Texas Brigade, to attack the Union left flank in the largest Confederate charge of the war—nearly 2,000 men. The men of Hood’s Texas Brigade swept over two Union regiments, nearly annihilating the 5th New York Zouaves.

LOST IN THE DEVIL’S DEN

The most famous chapter in the brigade’s history was written at a small dusty town in Pennsylvania called Gettysburg. On July 2, 1863, the second day of the battle, Hood once again personally led his division into battle. At the outset of his attack against the Union’s left flank, Hood was struck by shrapnel from an exploding artillery shell. Quickly taken to the rear and attended to by surgeons, Hood waited for news of his Soldiers. Hood’s division, spearheaded by Hood’s Texas Brigade, under the command of J. B. Robertson, had led a

valiant charge but was unable to capture the main objective of Little Round Top. Many Texans were killed in taking, and holding, the treacherous rocky terrain known as Devil’s Den.

Not long after Gettysburg, Hood’s men were sent to Tennessee. In September 1863, Longstreet’s entire corps, in the largest troop movement by rail in the history of warfare up to that point, had been moved from Virginia to Nashville, TN, to aid the faltering Confederate Army of General Braxton Bragg. During the Battle of Chickamauga, just across the border from Nashville in Georgia, Hood “exploited a gap in the federal line” which led to a victory for the Confederates at Chickamauga.

Longstreet’s corps was again transferred back to Virginia, where the situation was growing bleak for the Confederates. On May 6, 1864, the Texans found themselves in a wooded area of Virginia known as “The Wilderness.” General Robert E. Lee,

► **Right:** The “T” patch of the 36th Infantry Division was designed in WWI by combining the “T” for Texas and the light blue arrowhead for Oklahoma.

► **Below:** Operation AVALANCHE, launched Sept. 9, 1943, by the 36th Infantry Division, became the longest campaign of WWII.



“TIP OF THE AVALANCHE” PAINTING BY KEITH ROGCO. COURTESY OF NATIONAL GUARD EDUCATION FOUNDATION

commanding officer of the Army of Northern Virginia, was watching his right flank collapse. With the fate of the entire army hanging in the balance, Lee sent Hood's Texas Brigade, now under the command of Brigadier General John Gregg, forward.

As Gregg cheered his men forward, he shouted, "Attention, Texas Brigade! The eyes of Texas, and of General Lee, are upon you! Forward march!" Behind the Texans, Lee rose up in his saddle and urged the Texans onward, exclaiming, "Texas always moves them!" Lee's encouragement spread through the ranks, causing the Texans to cheer loudly. The Texans, unsupported by any other units, stopped two Union corps in their tracks, saving the Confederate right flank. The Texans paid a heavy price for this action. Of the approximately 800 Soldiers of the Texas Brigade who charged that day, 565 fell dead or wounded.

Though no major battles of the Civil War were fought on Texas soil, it's important to note that the final battle occurred near Brownsville, TX, at a place called Palmito Ranch. The Battle of Palmito Ranch was fought May 12-13, 1865, a full month after the surrender of Robert E. Lee to Ulysses S. Grant. Word of the end of the war had not reached these Soldiers. A poignant illustration of the fact that the Civil War was "brother against brother" is the fact that the Union regiment 2nd Texas Cavalry fought against the Confederate 2nd Texas Cavalry. This small skirmish, the final combat of one of the nation's bloodiest conflicts, ended in a Confederate victory.

SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR

With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, 38 Texas Guard units out of 45 immediately volunteered for service. One of

In 1916, for the third time, an enemy emerged from south of the border. On March 9, Pancho Villa and his band of marauders crossed the border and attacked the town of Columbus, NM, killing 17 Americans. In response, President Woodrow Wilson sent General John Pershing on a "punitive expedition" into Mexico to capture the insurgents.

The governors of New Mexico, Arizona and Texas were highly concerned about the security of their border with Mexico. In May, the governor of Texas mobilized approximately 5,000 of his Guard members to patrol along the Rio Grande as a deterrent. To counter the threat posed by Villa and his men, Wilson ordered a mobilization of Guard units on June 18, only 15 days after being given this power by the National Defense Act of 1916. As the Texans took up positions along the border with Mexico, scores of Guard members from other states flowed into Texas and trained at forts and camps throughout the state.

THE "TEXAS DIVISION"

WWI had been raging in Europe since 1914, but it was not until April 6, 1917, that America joined the fray by declaring war on Germany. Just prior to sending troops overseas, American military leaders initiated a major reorganization of units, which resulted in the creation of a new divisional structure. On July 18, the War Department authorized the formation of the 36th Division. Organized and commanded by Brigadier General John A. Hulen, the division was comprised of Guard members from Texas and Oklahoma, though the majority were from Texas, which led the 36th to being nicknamed the "Texas Division."

On May 31, 1918, the first unit of the division arrived in France, with the rest arriving by the middle of August. In just two months,

the heavily fortified Foret Farm, and killing or capturing the entire German garrison.

After the war ended, the 36th Division returned to Fort Bowie in June 1919 to be released from Active Duty. By the time they arrived back in Texas, they had adopted a new divisional shoulder patch. The patch consisted of an "Infantry Blue" arrowhead that represented Oklahoma, and a green "T" superimposed on the arrowhead, representing Texas. Between WWI and WWII, the 36th was reorganized and became an "all Texas" division, with the Oklahoma units becoming part of the 45th "Thunderbird" Division.

In response to the growing conflict in Europe at the time, President Franklin D. Roosevelt mobilized the entire National Guard in 1940. The 36th Division was mobilized at Camp Bowie, in Brownwood, and participated in the Louisiana Maneuvers in 1941.

Following the 1940 mobilization, most of the Texas units returned home, but a few were retained for federal service. One such unit, the 2nd Battalion of the 131st Field Artillery (2/131st), was on a ship heading to the Philippines to reinforce the American garrison there when they received news of the Japanese attack on December 7 at Pearl Harbor, HI. This event would begin the harrowing tale the men of the 2/131st would endure during WWII.

THE "LOST BATTALION"

The ship carrying the 2/131st was diverted to Australia after the Japanese invasion of the Philippines. It finally made landfall at Java, where it was tasked with supporting the British, Dutch and Australian defenders against an impending Japanese invasion. Once the Japanese landed at Java, the Dutch put up a token resistance and surrendered, causing the entire 2/131st to be captured. For the next three years, these

Texas Soldiers would be forced to work as slave laborers.

First sent to Burma, the men built the infamous "Burma-Siam Death Railway" through the jungle. Following construction of the bridge, the men spent 42 months laboring at various locations around Southeast Asia, including Japan itself. The men endured starvation, humiliation and torture at the hands of the Japanese.

By the time the men were liberated at the end of the war, 163 of them had died in captivity, with 133 dying during the construction of the Burma-Siam Bridge. Due to the fact that no one in the American military hierarchy had heard from the battalion in three years, the

★ ★ ★ ★ **"I THINK WE WILL LOOK BACK AND HISTORIANS WILL TELL THESE SOLDIERS THEY SERVED AT A TIME WHEN HISTORY WAS MADE."**

>> COL Mark Campsey, Texas Army National Guard

these regiments was the 1st Regiment, Texas Volunteer Infantry, United States Volunteers. Though the regiment did not see combat, it was the only Texas unit to serve outside of the U.S. From December 26, 1898, to March 25, 1899, it was part of the American force occupying Cuba.

the division was in the trenches and fighting to push the Germans out of France. Beginning on October 8, the division ferociously attacked the German lines, which culminated with the 71st Brigade (141st and 142nd Infantry Regiments, Texas National Guard) storming



While training in 2009 for their mission in Iraq, Soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, approach a building during urban operations training at McGregor Range, NM.

unit garnered the name the “Lost Battalion.”

In the European theater, the 36th Division landed in North Africa in April 1943. After completing intensive amphibious training, the 36th Division became the first American combat division to land on the continent of Europe when it invaded Salerno, Italy, on Sept. 9, 1943. As the leading force of Operation AVALANCHE, the 36th landing was supposed to have been a surprise attack, but the Germans saw them coming. At approximately 3:15 a.m., the men of the 36th were huddling inside their landing craft, approaching the beach with German shells landing all around them. As the door of the craft dropped, machine gun fire shot through the front ranks of men. Though sounding eerily similar to what would be told by Veterans of another D-Day, the men of Texas were the first Americans to set foot in Europe. This was nine months before Normandy.

14 MEDALS OF HONOR

The 36th would fight up the Italian peninsula before being pulled off the line for another amphibious landing, this time on Southern France. On August 15, as part of Operation DRAGOON, the 36th landed on Southern France to support the Allied forces moving inland into France off of the Normandy beachhead. Driving up through France, the 36th was breaking through the German defenses known as the Siegfried Line when it heard of Germany’s surrender. After 400 days in

combat, the 36th “Texas” Division earned seven campaign streamers for its colors, with 14 of its Soldiers receiving the Medal of Honor.

After WWII, the Texas National Guard grew to include two divisions. In addition to the 36th, the Department of Defense authorized the creation of two National Guard armored divisions. The 50th Armored Division was formed in New Jersey, and the 49th Armored Division was organized in Texas in February 1947.

The 49th lived for 20 years, until both the 36th and the 49th were deactivated in 1968. In 1973 the 49th was reactivated. The 36th Division was not re-formed, and its assets were absorbed by the 49th. Some of the units would see combat deployments, including the 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment (previously of the 36th Division), which was mobilized for Operation Desert Shield, and later, Desert Storm.

Probably the most historically significant deployment for the 49th Armored Division was in March 2000, when it was selected to lead Task Force Eagle during the NATO actions against Serbian forces in Bosnia. The 49th Division Headquarters assumed command of the American sector in Bosnia. Not since the Korean War, 50 years earlier, had a National Guard division been deployed to Europe on an operational mission.

In the wake of 9/11, a large armored division was no longer practical. Thus, on May 1, 2004, the 49th Division was deactivated and

its units were reorganized into the reactivated 36th “Texas” Division. The men and women of the 36th have been called upon time and again for Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

In 2005, over 3,000 members of the 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), 36th Division, were sent to Iraq as the largest deployment of Texas National Guard Soldiers since WWII. Also in 2005 to 2006, over 800 Soldiers of the 141st were deployed to Afghanistan, where it earned a Meritorious Unit Citation.

After training at Fort Dix, NJ, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment, deployed to Iraq, where it participated in several combat operations. The rest of 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment, trained at Camp Shelby in early 2007 and deployed to Iraq as “Task Force Panther.”

Just as they had in 2005, on August 28, 2008, over 3,000 Soldiers of the 56th IBCT, 36th Division, once again deployed to Iraq. In the fall of 2009, the 72nd IBCT mobilized to be deployed to Iraq in support of the planned withdrawal of troops. The role the Texas Army National Guard has played in Iraq, and throughout history, is best summed up by the words of the 72nd IBCT’s commander, Colonel Mark Campsey: “I think we will look back and historians will tell these Soldiers they served at a time when history was made.” **GX**

On the Road

▶ BEHIND THE GATES



SPC Elisha Helsper of Idaho throws a soccer kick at SFC Ryan Taniguchi of Hawaii during their flyweight championship bout.

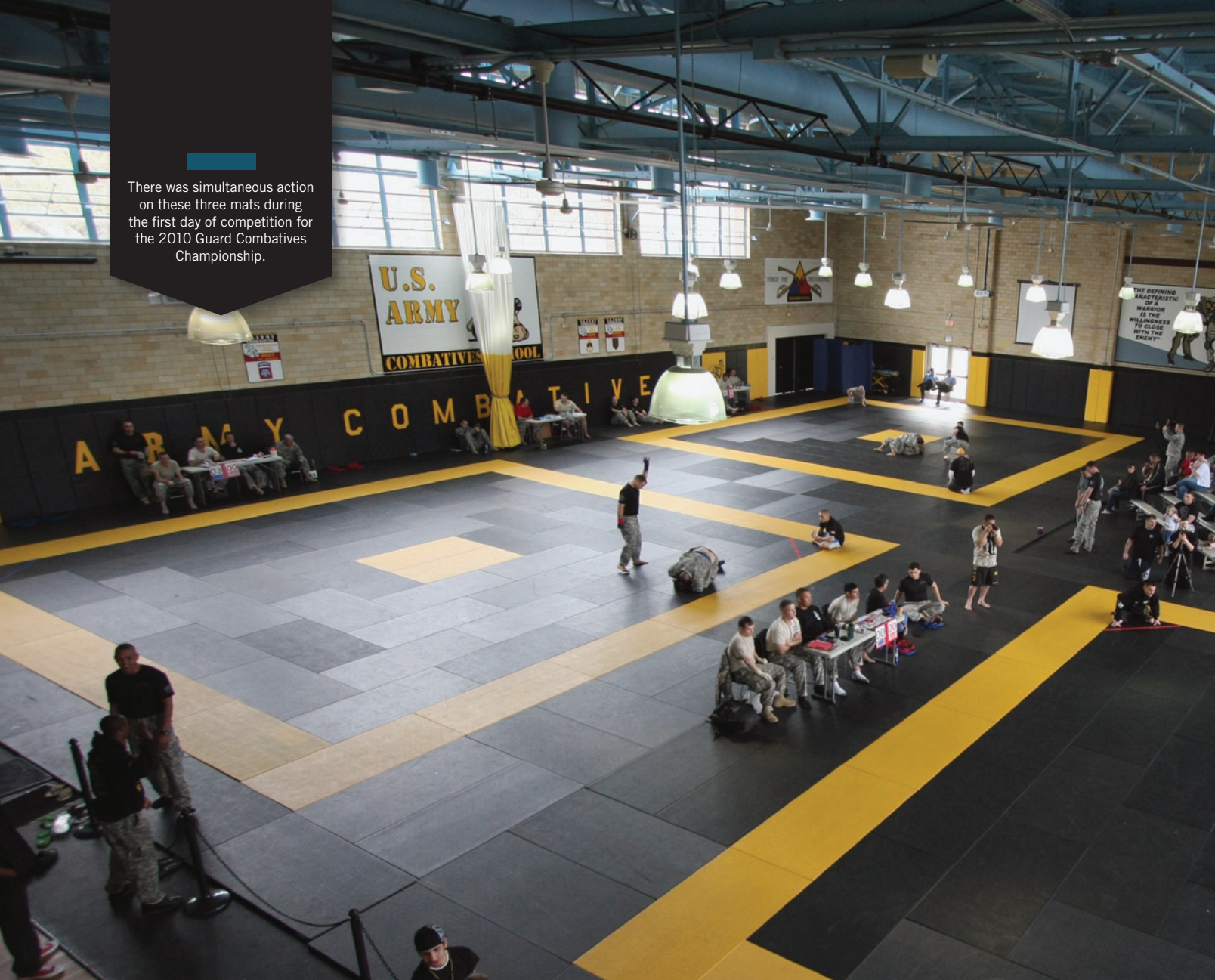


close Combat

Soldiers Battle
for Top Honors
at Combatives
Competition

Story and photos by Clint Wood

There was simultaneous action on these three mats during the first day of competition for the 2010 Guard Combatives Championship.



Sergeant First Class Ryan Taniguchi had just spent more than 14 minutes in the ring with Specialist Elisha Helsper. It was the final flyweight match of the 2010 Army National Guard Combatives tournament at Briant Wells Fieldhouse, Fort Benning, GA, March 28.

Combatives, a type of competitive fighting based on the original form of combat—hand-to-hand—allows closed fists, punching, kicking and kneeling to the torso.

Helsper, a former high school wrestler, was visibly worn out. Taniguchi controlled most of the bout.

A man in the audience encouraged Helsper by shouting, “You’re all right, you’re all right.”

Seconds later, someone shouted to her not to give up.

She replied with a very loud, “I will never quit.”

Those four words come directly from the Soldier’s Creed, which in turn is part of the Army National Guard Warrior Ethos.

I asked her later about this statement. “There was no way I was going to tap,” she said.

“Honestly, I thought I was going to finish it a couple times, but she never gave up,” said Taniguchi, a level-four Combatives instructor.



He is also chief instructor, Combat Arms, at the 298th Multifunctional Training Unit at the Regiment Regional Training Institute (RTI) in Hawaii.

Taniguchi, 33, an 88M (truck driver), won by unanimous decision.

The competition attracted 97 participants this year—the highest showing in its three years of existence.

Taniguchi summed up the two-day tournament this way: “It takes a lot for a person to get in that ring.”

DRESSED FOR SUCCESS

Unlike fights on television, where males wear only shorts, the Soldiers’ attire here was geared for safety.

In the first round, they wore Army Combat Uniforms (ACUs) with shoes. According to Sergeant First Class (Ret.) Matt Larsen, Director of the U.S. Army Combatives Program, fighting barefoot is better,

“AT THE END OF THE DAY, LIKE ANY OTHER SPORT, IT’S FUN, AND YOU DO IT BECAUSE YOU LIKE IT.”

>> SFC (Ret.) Matt Larsen, U.S. Army Combatives

THE CHAMPIONS

Heavyweight

1st place: SSG Jeremy Christensen (AK)

2nd place: SGT Gregory Main (AZ)

Light Heavyweight

1st place: 2LT Brandon Hern (OR)

2nd place: SSG Phillip Wagoner (RI)

Cruiserweight

1st place: SSG Steven Elliot (CA)

2nd place: SFC Ryan Chroninger (ID)

Middleweight

1st place: CPT Joachim Eitenmiller (MN)

2nd place: MAJ Curtiss Robinson (SC)

Welterweight

1st place: SSG Robert Earley (ID)

2nd place: SGT Adam Therriault (IL)

Flyweight

1st place: SFC Ryan Taniguchi (HI)

2nd place: SPC Elisha Helsper (ID)

A LOOK AT THE COMPETITORS



LTC CHRIS VOSSO

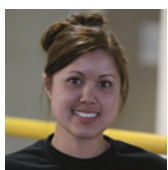
Age: 43

Years in the Guard: 11

Guard title: Deputy Commander, 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, Georgia Army National Guard

Results this year: Lost first match by points; won second match by points; lost final match by submission. "My goal coming in this year was to win one match."

Advice to Soldiers: "Don't be afraid to get out there and compete."



SPC WENDY KHAMPHONG

Years in the Guard: 6

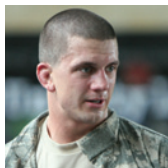
Why she joined: College money and to serve her country

Full-time Guard job: Supply technician

Unit: 1st Battalion, 285th Aviation Regiment, Arizona Army National Guard

Results this year: Lost first round by submission.

Future Combatives plans: "I'm going to come back next year. I want to keep doing it."



SGT JOSHUA FRIDGEN

Age: 26

Unit: A Company, 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, Minnesota Army National Guard

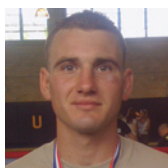
MOS: 11B

Years in the Guard: 7

Deployments: Afghanistan 2004–2005; Kosovo 2007–2008

Combatives level: Level four

Where he trains: Minnesota Martial Arts Academy, Brooklyn Center, MN



SGT ADAM THERRAULT

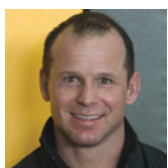
Training routine: Five days a week at three different gymnasiums

Training disciplines: Grappling, striking and Brazilian jiu-jitsu

Tournament results: Second in welter-

weight. Won first three rounds by submission. Won the semifinal round by an arm-bar submission.

Thoughts on Combatives: "I was very overweight until I discovered Mixed Martial Arts. It has helped make me a better Soldier."



MAJ DEAN ROBERTS

Age: 37

Wrestling experience: High school, college and four years for the United States Military Academy at West Point

Years in the Guard: 6

Deployments: Bosnia 1997–1998; Kosovo 1999–2000

Unit: 83rd Civil Support Team, Montana Army National Guard

Job in the Guard: Apache helicopter pilot

Tournament results: Won his first match; lost his second; won the next three. Earned third place due to injury default.

"I HIT HIM RIGHT IN THE NOSE AND HE CRINGED. I KNEW THAT WAS IT."

>> SSG Jeremy Christensen, Alaska Army National Guard

because the fighter can feel their feet and their opponent has less material to grab.

The first round was played under standard rules, which consisted strictly of ground fighting techniques. The second round followed intermediate rules, which allowed open-hand strikes to the head, punches to the body, knee strikes and kicks. In the finals, they wore a T-shirt and ACU trousers with shin and knee guards.

Fighters competed individually based on weight class, and team points were awarded based on individual placement. A team from Illinois won the team competition for the second time in three years. Team Illinois won with 171 points, followed by Team Arizona and Team Idaho with 117 points each and Team Minnesota with 110.

Round three between Taniguchi and Helsper opened with someone from the audience shouting, "Let's go, Helsper."

Minutes later the bell sounded and the match was over. The two got up and stood in the center of the ring. Captain Robert Deaton, the commander of the Army National Guard Warrior Training Center, walked in between them. Taniguchi, with several bloodstains on his tan T-shirt, was proclaimed the winner. But he let Helsper know that she was a winner, too. After hugging her, he raised her left arm as though she had won the bout.

"She fought very tough," Taniguchi said of Helsper.

GROUNDING AND POUNDING

"I knew there was nobody who could outlast me here. I trained for this, I really did," Taniguchi said. He teaches Combatives courses, as well as the 11B (infantryman) military occupational specialty courses, the Warrior Leader Course, Officer Candidate School and Army Basic Instructor Course.

He told us his work schedule means his days sometimes last until midnight, so he trains in Combatives in the morning.

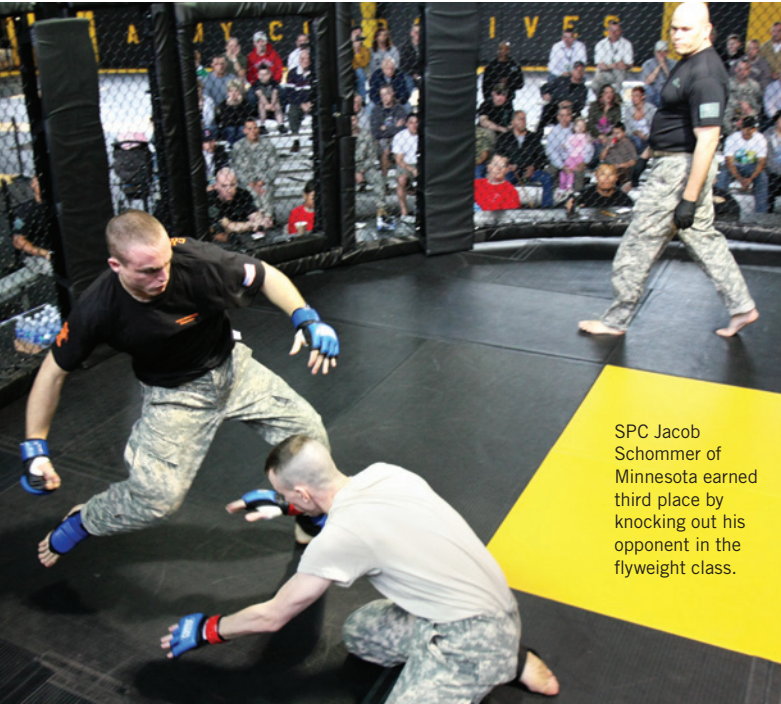


Knee strikes and kicks were allowed in the second round of competition.



Above: SFC Austin L. Randolph III, Combatives instructor at the Warrior Training Center, raises the hand of SFC Ryan Taniguchi of Hawaii after Taniguchi won the flyweight championship. **Right:** Even openfisted strikes are an integral part of Combatives and they are used to catch an opponent off-guard.





SPC Jacob Schommer of Minnesota earned third place by knocking out his opponent in the flyweight class.



Staff Sergeant Jeremy Christensen relies on his boxing skills to seal the deal in the heavyweight final of the Combatives tournament.

CAGED COMBAT

This was the first year for the final rounds to be held in the black cage. A normal boxing ring was used for the first two years of the competition. Larsen said the main reason for the change was to prevent fighters from falling out or being thrown out of a boxing ring.

Staff Sergeant Jeremy Christensen of Alaska, who won the heavyweight championship, shed more light on the situation.

“This makes it real,” he commented. “There’s nowhere to run. It’s just you and your opponent. You have to be there mentally and physically.”

Larsen pointed out that the Combatives program started in 1995.

Larsen said the goal was to instill the Warrior Ethos and Army Values in every Soldier. Hand-to-hand combat training was the best way to do this.

“What you’re seeing today is the fruition of [the vision],” said Larsen, who went from training Combatives to his squad of about eight, to teaching it throughout the entire Army. “Soldiers from all over the force and all the components are learning and using hand-to-hand combat.” We teach them, through this sort of competition, to be able to handle themselves in a tight situation,” he continued.

WHOLE LOT OF LOVE

Throughout the tournament, camaraderie ran rampant. After almost every match, the competitors hugged each other.

“You have to be able to [express friendship] and know that it is just friendly competition,” commented Larsen. “After all, that person isn’t your enemy. At the end of the day, like any other sport, it’s fun, and you do it because you like it. I tell people that that’s the first lesson of Combatives training. It’s got to be enjoyable. If it’s not, people won’t [do it], and will never become the [kind of] fighter that we need next to us on the battlefield.”

MAIN EVENT

Christensen, a level-one Combatives instructor, won the heavyweight class final. He defeated Sergeant Gregory Main of Arizona by a referee stoppage. He confessed that he was a little nervous when he saw that Main was larger than he.

“It is kind of intimidating to see a guy like that,” he said.

Christensen said Main gave away his punches a little bit, but still threw heavy right hooks.

“I stayed down inside on him, got some leg control, took him down to the mat and started working in there,” described Christensen on how he avoided Main’s strikes.

Christensen said his intent was to move Main into the corner and tire him out. “Because he was bigger than me, I wanted to keep him trapped in there and not give him much room to breathe.”

“HE WAS TRYING TO FIGHT BACK. IT JUST DIDN’T WORK OUT IN HIS FAVOR.”

>> SPC Elisha Helsper, Idaho Army National Guard

The second round opened with Main giving Christensen a blow to the side of his head.

"I thought, 'Let's get him down again,'" commented Christensen.

Once Main was down again and in the corner, he heard his ring-man say, "Get the knee on the belly." Which he did.

"I got up and teed off on him a couple times," added Christensen. "I hit him right in the nose and he cringed. I knew that was it."

To say Christensen was excited after being deemed the winner would be an understatement. He collapsed to his knees in the center of the mat and raised both arms in the air.

"You train to be a Warrior," he said. "The best. It's very hard, but it's so rewarding, it's unbelievable." **GX**

MEET GX'S FIELD EDITOR: CLINT WOOD



THE FIRST TIME CLINT WOOD stepped into our office, we knew he was the real thing: a bona fide Warrior. Clint spent 22 months deployed with the 1/34th Red Bulls of the Minnesota National Guard. He has 18 years of service under his belt. Since he came on board in 2008, Clint has traveled around the country, capturing the story of the National Guard. Follow Clint's blog at GXonline.com.



SPC Elisha Helsper of Idaho, right, won her second round in the flyweight class by a submission hold.

A Day in the Life of **COMBAT ENGINEERS**

*Story and photos by SGT Jon E. Dougherty,
203rd Engineer Battalion Public Affairs*

For crews of 2nd Platoon, 211th Engineer Company (Sappers), South Dakota Army National Guard—the “Big Dogs,” as they are called—the trip here was as monotonous as it was long.

Assembling at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Sharana before sunrise, 2nd Platoon members and their interpreter gathered for their mission brief.

It has become a familiar process since first taking up their route clearance mission in November: prepare their trucks for combat, receive a brief that spells out the dangers that lie ahead of them and then mount up—always without question or complaint.

And while their role here has not gotten any easier since they first arrived after mobilization training at Fort McCoy, WI, as part of the 203rd Engineer Battalion, Missouri Army National Guard, their ability to perform their mission has vastly improved.

But, no amount of training and improvement is a guarantee that somewhere, sometime, in some place, a resourceful enemy won't find a way to strike.

And on a recent mission, the Big Dogs were reminded of why they are here: finding improvised explosive devices (IEDs) buried along the roads they patrol.



SFC Jon Albers of 2nd Platoon, 211th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, talks with his road grader operator while performing a route clearance mission in the Paktika Province, Afghanistan. The platoon found three IEDs (improvised explosive devices) during this mission.

WILDERNESS

It is remote and isolated, to be sure. Indeed, the patch of Afghanistan where 2nd Platoon patrolled recently might best be described as “The Wilderness.” This outpost in the southern portion of Paktika province represents, by the presence of a contingent of U.S. troops, a guarantee to the region’s scattered settlements that NATO hasn’t forgotten about them.

But getting here is no picnic. Much of the route is primitive and uncomfortable. And, on the first day of their mission, windy conditions kicked up so much hazy dust that it choked crews inside their vehicles and made visibility extremely difficult.

Still, some found reason for optimism and reassurance.

“I feel better with the helicopters overhead,” said Sergeant First Class Jon Albers of Madison, SD, of the two Apache gunships that provided overhead route security for the convoy for much of the mission. Nevertheless Albers, accustomed to the ambiguity and unpredictable nature of the enemy, reflected on the challenge of this particular mission.

He said the platoon hadn’t been down this route in some time, and “you just never know

when or where” the enemy would concentrate. The route could be littered with IEDs or it could be clear of them, he noted ominously.

The crews pulled into Kushamond in late afternoon after a bruising, battering ride in their MRAPs. The wind was blowing the dust in sheets and the Big Dogs struggled to shield themselves from it. The crews filed into the tent and chose a dust-covered cot in which to drop off assault packs and spread out sleeping bags.

WELCOME SHOWERS

The 2nd Platoon had no pressing duties to attend to on the second day of their mission, so many took advantage of the opportunity to sleep in.

Others, perhaps accustomed to getting up at an earlier hour, rose and dressed, some heading off to the chow hall, while still others found the showers. Cramped and dirty, the small white Conexes that served as the showers for the small outpost were nonetheless welcome. The water was at least hot.

By mid-morning, everyone had risen, showered and had chow. The majority performed various maintenance duties for the trip home to FOB Sharana the next day. Afterward the men

of the Big Dog Platoon relaxed with a game of cards, a book or magazine, or an additional nap.

In the early afternoon several of the napping crews were jolted suddenly from their racks by the sound of a crashing boom, which, in the initial seconds, sounded like an explosion within the compound. In reality, it was the sound of one of the bases’ 155 mm howitzers conducting live-fire exercises. Later, in the evening, Albers was trying to be pragmatic about the next day’s journey.

“It wouldn’t surprise me if we didn’t have a few [IEDs] waiting for us on the way back,” he said.

STARRY MORNING

The morning of the third day began early with crews being “on the trucks” well before dawn. The Big Dogs’ mission, besides simply getting back “home” to Sharana, would be to clear the route for a combat logistics convoy filled with vital supplies for the base and much-needed parts for vehicles.

Crews huddled around Master Sergeant John Dornbusch of Wessington Springs, SD, the convoy’s commander, for the traditional brief.

“Intel says there could be some IEDs along the first part of the route, but probably not

On the Road

DISPATCHES FROM THE FIELD

past that,” Dornbusch said. “Still, we need to pay attention the entire way.”

The brief concluded, 2nd Platoon mounted up and, once communications checks were performed between vehicles, they got the convoy set and ready to depart well before their scheduled departure time. But instead of being permitted to leave early, Dornbusch, over the radio, informed his unit they were instructed to wait. Part of the reason for that was the addition of a small infantry detachment that would accompany the convoy for the earliest part of its mission, in order to respond to threats and to provide dismounted personnel for questioning or detaining potential enemies.

“ALL STOP”

An hour later, the convoy got its go-ahead from the TOC (tactical operations center). Slowly, methodically, crews guided their vehicles out of the front gate and along the bumpy, dusty route that would take them, eventually, back to their own base. Early on, crews managed a steady 5-6 mph pace—a good clip considering the dilapidated nature of the road on which they traveled. But soon, the driver of the lead vehicle—a mine-hunting Husky—called for an “all stop.”

“I’ve got a pretty solid ping on my left panel,” said the driver over the radio to Dornbusch. “Send the Buffalo forward to investigate.”

The Husky’s mine-detection equipment had sounded a strong alarm that something could be hidden in the ground beneath the road, so before the convoy could proceed any further, the source of the ping would have to be examined. That meant the convoy’s largest MRAP, the hulking Buffalo, would have to use its powerful hydraulic arm to dig through the dirt. It didn’t take long for Dufek, who was operating the Buffalo arm, to report a find.

“Looks like we’ve got a charge about the size of a paint can, wrapped in plastic,” he said over the radio. “We’ll move it off to the side for [explosives ordnance disposal].”

As Dufek and the Buffalo team continued to examine the site, a detachment of U.S. and Afghan National Army Soldiers converged on a nearby qalat, or living compound, that appeared to be inhabited by a couple of Afghan families. Three men, two women and several children could be seen moving in and out of the qalat as the Soldiers arrived to question them about the IED find.

LONG DAY AHEAD

More than an hour had passed before the convoy was cleared to

move forward, but in the meantime, Dornbusch had been informed by the U.S. forces acting in conjunction with the ANA that upon questioning, one man from the nearby qalat said there were “multiple IEDs” along the route ahead of the Big Dogs. Additional intelligence reported “as many as eight Taliban operatives” in the area as well, and that the convoy should be on guard for IDF—indirect fire—from small arms, mortars and rocket-propelled grenades.

After the convoy finally began moving again, and within a few hundred yards of the first IED find, the lead Husky again reported a heavy “ping.”

Once more Dufek’s Buffalo crew moved forward and began investigating. Dufek unearthed another IED—this one an HME (homemade explosive).

SUSPECT SPOTTED

It didn’t take long to find the next IED. Boom!

Two trucks up from Albers—perhaps 150

yards—a cloud of smoke and dust shot out from the front of Dornbusch’s vehicle. Immediately, all trucks in the convoy hit their brakes, and training and experience took over as camera operators and gunners began scanning for signs the IED might have been “command-detonated”—or detonated by an insurgent with a device rather than by a pressure plate.

For a few seconds, the radio was eerily silent. Then came Dornbusch’s voice: “We’re all OK. Our [mine] rollers took most of the blast.” A mine roller is a device that is attached to the front of a truck to keep the explosion away from vehicles. A few moments later, an Apache pilot—one of two who had been orbiting above the convoy—said that he had witnessed the explosion and that someone on a motorcycle was racing away from the convoy at high speed.

“We’re tracking him—it looks like he went into a village where there are a lot of other people,” the pilot said. “We’ll see if we can pick him out.”



SPC Benjamin Peterson with the maintenance platoon, 211th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, works to recover a set of mine rollers damaged by an improvised explosive device (IED) during a route clearance mission.



SPC Ramsey Crissman, Second Platoon, 211th Engineer Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, loads a set of mine rollers onto a flatbed truck so they can be repaired at a later date.

“IT WOULDN’T SURPRISE ME IF WE HAD A FEW [IEDS] WAITING FOR US ON THE WAY BACK.”

>> SFC Jon Albers, South Dakota National Guard



Meanwhile, Dornbusch’s driver had begun backing away from the detonation area, weaving toward the middle of the convoy as members of the platoon’s wrecker vehicle moved forward to meet him. Once in position, Dornbusch and his crew dismounted and assessed the vehicle’s damage.

“Not a very big one,” Dornbusch observed. “Thank goodness.” The Apache pilot had no luck in locating the suspect he was trying to track.

Mindful that a stopped convoy is a target, the wrecker crew and other members of the convoy nonetheless continued to move quickly to recover the damaged rollers from Dornbusch’s vick, lifting and then securing them with heavy chains. With no suspect in custody and little else to do at the scene, Dornbusch—whose truck was still mission-capable—resumed his position in the convoy and ordered it forward, as gunners and camera operators in all vehicles continuously scanned the area for any sign of insurgent activity.

READY, ACTION

For the next several hours both Husky vehicles in the convoy reported several more “pings,” each of which took a while to properly investigate.

With the days’ events thus far, the convoy was more than willing to spend as much time as needed to make sure the coast was clear. Eventually, though, the pings became fewer and further apart. That allowed the convoy to make up some lost time, though it still wasn’t able to travel quickly because of the poor

quality of the road.

Every so often Dornbusch would call for a halt, allowing tired, frazzled and dusty crews a few minutes’ rest and a chance to get out of their cramped vehicles to stretch their legs and limber up. The breaks were always welcomed, but never long enough. But with the luxury of being everywhere—and nowhere—at the same time, the enemy is relentless.

As the convoy plodded along, Specialist Jared Franka of Garrettsen, SD, suddenly broke over the intercom. “Hey—that kid at our 9 o’clock—he’s shooting video!”

The crew quickly looked to their left and saw three young Afghan men, one of whom was holding up what looked like a small cell phone, pointing it in the direction of the truck.

“Stop the truck!” said Albers, as Thomas planted his boot on the brakes.

From the gunner’s turret, Franka yelled to the men: “Stop!”

As Albers grabbed his weapon and began to exit the MRAP, the boys turned and ran, the one with the phone device

tossing it to the ground as he made his escape. As Franka covered him with his .50 cal machine gun, Albers cautiously made his way over to where the phone lay on the ground, checking the area as he walked. The boys had run a short distance to a nearby qalat. The boy with the phone stood and watched the crew intently. With the phone in hand, Albers made his way back to his truck and instructed Thomas to move out.

“Is it a phone?” Franka asked.

“Yeah,” Albers answered.

“Are there any pictures on it?”

“I don’t know,” said Albers. “We’ll turn it over [to military intelligence] and let them look through it.”

PERSPECTIVE

As the day faded into evening and the hot sun overhead sank lower into the horizon, exhausted crews shifted uncomfortably in their seats and continued their journey in darkness. But with Sharana just a few hours away, the encroaching darkness gave way to the light at the end of the proverbial tunnel.

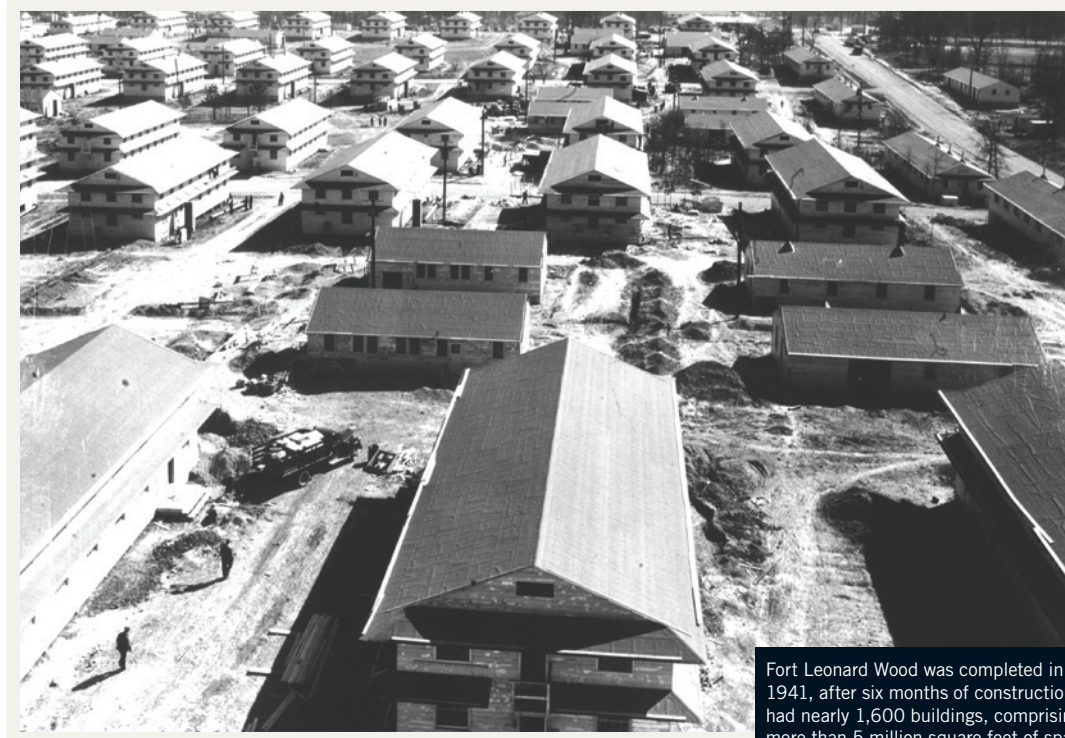
It had been an eventful day, and while nothing happened that the Big Dogs hadn’t experienced before or expected, their mission through “The Wilderness” had not been without loss. Nevertheless, 2nd Platoon at least managed to keep its sense of humor.

“Well, we almost found all of them,” said Dornbusch over the radio, referring to the IED blast that struck his vehicle earlier in the day. The nervous laughter aside, it was evident that crews were glad to be back. **GX**

Made in Missouri

A Look Inside Fort Leonard Wood

Courtesy of Fort Leonard Wood PAO; compiled by Clint Wood



Fort Leonard Wood was completed in June 1941, after six months of construction. It had nearly 1,600 buildings, comprising more than 5 million square feet of space. The cost was \$37 million.

BASIC COMBAT TRAINING (BCT) was probably furthest thing from the mind of the songwriter who wrote the lyric “Get your kicks on Route 66.”

But, thousands of future Army Soldiers have gotten their kicks—flut-kicks, to be specific—in BCT at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, located on the actual Route 66. For those of you too young to remember, Route 66 is a famous highway that originally ran from Chicago, IL, through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California. It ended in Los Angeles and spanned a total of 2,448 miles.

The fort, nicknamed “Fort Lost in the Woods,” covers more than 62,911 acres and is among five BCT sites for the Army and the National Guard. The other four are Fort Jackson, SC; Fort Knox, KY; Fort Benning, GA; and Fort Sill, OK. Fort Knox is the only one where males and females train separately. Fort Jackson is the largest site.

Fort Leonard Wood is located on the world-famous Route 66.

Soldiers with the military occupational specialties (MOSs) of 21B (Combat Engineer) and 31B (Military Police) will spend their nine-week BCT and 10-week Advanced Individual Training (AIT) at the facility concurrently. The 3rd Chemical Brigade trains Soldiers in Basic Training as

Established in 1940 as a BCT center, Fort Leonard Wood has been the starting point for the military careers of more than 3 million men and women.

well as offering AIT courses for 74D (Chemical Operation Specialist) and 88M (Motor Transport Operator).

The Engineer School moved to site in 1989, making it the training center for Army Engineers. When Fort McClellan, AL, was closed in 2000 as part of the Base Realignment and Closure process, the U.S. Army Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear School and Military Police Corps schools were transferred to Fort Leonard Wood, which was concurrently redesignated the U.S. Army Maneuver Support Center.

The center’s 58th Transportation Battalion receives BCT graduates for the 88M MOS or Motor Transport Operator AIT. These Soldiers will be trained to operate 5-ton tactical vehicles, petroleum supply vehicles and over-the-road semi-tractor trailers.

The 43d Adjutant Generals Battalion (Reception) has the distinction of being the second largest Reception Battalion in the U.S. Army. The battalion receives and processes approximately 30,000 Soldiers annually for BCT, One Station Unit Training, AIT and prior service Soldiers for assignments throughout the world.

HISTORY

In 1940, the War Department decided to establish a major training facility in the Seventh

Corps area. This command comprised most of the states of the central plains. Originally located near Leon, IA, the facility was later moved to its current location.

On Dec. 3, 1940, military and state officials broke ground for what was known as the Seventh Corps Area Training Center. The War Department designated the installation in early January 1941 as Fort Leonard Wood.

The facility, which still trained Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and international students, was named for Major General Leonard Wood, a surgeon and Soldier who dedicated his life to the military.

Born on Oct. 9, 1860, Wood graduated from Harvard Medical School in 1883 and entered the Army in 1885 as a contract physician.

His achievements include participating in the last campaign against Geronimo and receiving a Medal of Honor. The medal, awarded to him in 1889, was for his gallantry and service as a medical and line officer, commanding the 1st Volunteer Cavalry in the war with Spain, later to be known as the “Rough Riders.” Former Assistant Secretary of the Navy Theodore Roosevelt was his second in command and instrumental in developing the Maneuver Division and the Mobile Army concept.

Building the Fort Building a major training center in the rugged terrain of the Ozarks presented several challenges. The nearest rail service was several miles away, and there was no housing for the thousands of



Above: This is a typical barracks for Basic Combat Training Soldiers. **Right:** This is the entrance to the 43rd Adjutant General Battalion (Reception) center. Nearly all Soldiers entering the gates of Fort Leonard Wood for training will spend their first days here.



workers who would build the post. Also, the fort had to be built quickly because the first troops were scheduled to arrive in a matter of weeks.

Inclement weather complicated construction. Bulldozers were often needed to drag lumber trucks through the mud. But crews completed the task by June 1941. They had built nearly 1,600 buildings on more than 5 million square feet, at a cost of \$37 million—and had done the job in six months.

Original Training Mission Fort Leonard Wood was to be the home of the 6th Infantry Division. In time, four other infantry divisions—the 8th, 70th, 75th and 97th—trained at the installation.

During WWII, more than 300,000 Soldiers passed through Fort Leonard Wood on their way to service in every theater of operation.

Post-WWII After WWII ended in 1945, training declined at Fort Leonard Wood and ceased completely in the spring of 1946. The War Department placed the post on the inactive list.

For the next four years, Guard units used the site for their summer training. Much of the fort was leased to an Oklahoma rancher who used the area for grazing cattle.

Korean War The Department of the Army once again needed training areas when the Korean War started. On Aug. 1, 1950, the Army announced that Fort Leonard Wood was to be reopened to provide basic and engineer training for Soldiers destined for Korea.

Cold War Local community leaders helped the Army make Fort Leonard Wood a permanent installation. In 1956, the installation was designated the United States Army Training Center-Engineer.

Because of its new status as a permanent post, Fort Leonard Wood received substantial funds to replace the wooden construction of WWII-era buildings with permanent brick structures.

Construction included major troop barracks complexes, hundreds of military family units, and support and recreational facilities.

Vietnam In 1967, the post trained more than 120,000 Soldiers. Not all of this training involved either basic or engineer training. Skill training included such specialties as clerks, cooks, wiremen and mechanics.

With the reduction of the Army following the Vietnam War, the overall number of Soldiers training at the post declined. However, the composition of Soldiers arriving for engineer training changed in the 1970s and early 1980s.

By the mid-1970s, the Air Force and Marines began training their construction equipment operators at Fort Leonard Wood. The post also began providing engineer training to other nations.

Engineer School In 1985, Fort Leonard Wood entered yet another phase in its history. The Secretary of the Army announced that the Army Engineer School would move from Fort Belvoir, VA, to Fort Leonard Wood. For years, the Engineer School had suffered a lack of space for training.

The Engineer School completed its move in 1989, occupying a new \$60 million state-of-the-art training and education facility. For the first time in nearly 50 years, all engineer training—including officers, warrant officers, noncommissioned officers and enlisted personnel—would take place at the same location. The growth of the post brought even more construction, with new commissary, fitness and training facilities.

Post-Cold War During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, Fort Leonard Wood units were deployed to Southwest Asia. In addition, the installation processed more than 4,000 Reserve Component Soldiers mobilized in response to the Iraqi invasion. This included nine Army National Guard units. **GX**

IN 1967, THE POST TRAINED MORE THAN 120,000 SOLDIERS IN PREPARATION FOR THE VIETNAM WAR.

AMBUSH IN THE HILLS

Story by Chris West
Illustrations by Tom Milner



**SOLDIERS FIGHT THEIR WAY
OUT OF A TALIBAN TRAP**

>> The following article is based on the account of events by the Soldiers involved: Major Mike Ake, Captain Joe Minning, Captain Ed Madson, Master Sergeant Jason Riley, Staff Sergeant John Herbst



The following account is based on official U.S. Army documentation and the personal stories of an Army National Guard Embedded Training Team (ETT): Major Mike Ake, Washington National Guard; Captain Joe Minning, New York National Guard; Captain Ed Madson, New Mexico National Guard; Master Sergeant Jason Riley, New Mexico National Guard; and Staff Sergeant John Herbst, New York National Guard.

This battle is just one small glimpse into the difficult work our troops are doing in Afghanistan every day. Small-scale engagements like this happen constantly and are rarely reported in the news, but this is what the frontline of the War on Terror looks like today.

Special thanks to the New Mexico, New York and Washington National Guard for their assistance with this account.

VILLAGE OF TEZ NAWA, BAGHDIS PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

APRIL 28, 2008, 1000 HOURS

All Times Are Approximate

The sun was already climbing into the sky and laying down a punishing heat as the convoy wound up the narrow road to the Afghan village of Tez Nawa. Ahead of them, dominating the skyline, were the Hindu Kush Mountains, a formidable wall of rock that, despite being in the “quiet north,” was still a Taliban stronghold.

Tez Nawa was known to sympathize with and support the Taliban in the area. Enemy forces had recently ambushed these same troops as they left the village on an earlier humanitarian mission. And now, reports were coming in that a large Taliban Shura (meeting) had taken place at a Tez Nawa mosque. Joint Forces leadership quickly assembled a task force to investigate.

Given the high threat level for the area, the decision was made to send out a larger than normal convoy consisting of the 1st Kandak, 209th Corps, Afghan National Army (ANA), their National Guard ETT, and a few small units of Norwegian and Latvian Special Forces.

As the convoy rolled up to Tez Nawa from the north, the Guard Soldiers knew something was wrong. There were no children in the street, no adults ... just a few donkeys standing in the blazing sun. This was not a good sign.

There was only one narrow road through Tez, barely wide enough for a vehicle and hemmed in on both sides by houses and walled yards. The mosque was on the southern, far end of this road (approximately 1.5 kilometers away), and the mountainous terrain prevented any kind of flanking maneuver to the objective. There was one way in and one way out.

Ake (Faryab Police Mentorship Team Officer in Charge (OIC) – Mission OIC) consulted with the

other task force commanders, and they quickly deployed their forces. Madson (Faryab District (PMT) Mentor) would keep two of the uparmored Humvees (UAH) and approximately half the ANA forces to secure the northern entrance to the village. If something went wrong, this would be the only way out. It had to be held.

Ake, along with Minning (3rd Kandak Mentoring Team OIC), then proceeded to enter the village with the remainder of the forces. Still, the village was silent. The convoy reached the southern point of the village and quickly deployed their forces into defensive positions. A serious complication immediately became evident: Communications with the Northern force were spotty at best. The terrain here was wreaking havoc with their communications.

Ake, Riley (3rd Kandak Mentoring Team Noncommissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC)) and the ANA commander dismounted and moved to the mosque to seek out the village leaders to inquire about their recent Taliban visitors.

TROOPS IN CONTACT

1030 HOURS – 1100 HOURS

Minning and Herbst (3rd Kandak Mentoring Team NCO) took command of the Southern force and quickly deployed. As soon as they were in place, scattered reports of enemy troop movement started coming in.

Riley recalled, “I remember this coming across crystal clear: ‘ANA sees men with AKs and RPGs running in the hills to the southeast and southwest.’”

Ake and Riley, along with a few ANA Soldiers, entered and secured the mosque. Inside, they found evidence that Taliban officials had recently been in the building. The Soldiers double-timed it back to the southern position to report their findings when things became hot.

In an instant, the air was full of RPGs, AK-47 rounds, PKM machine gun fire and mortar explosions.



Distance to FOB: 200km, 124.27 miles



HILLTOP ASSAULT

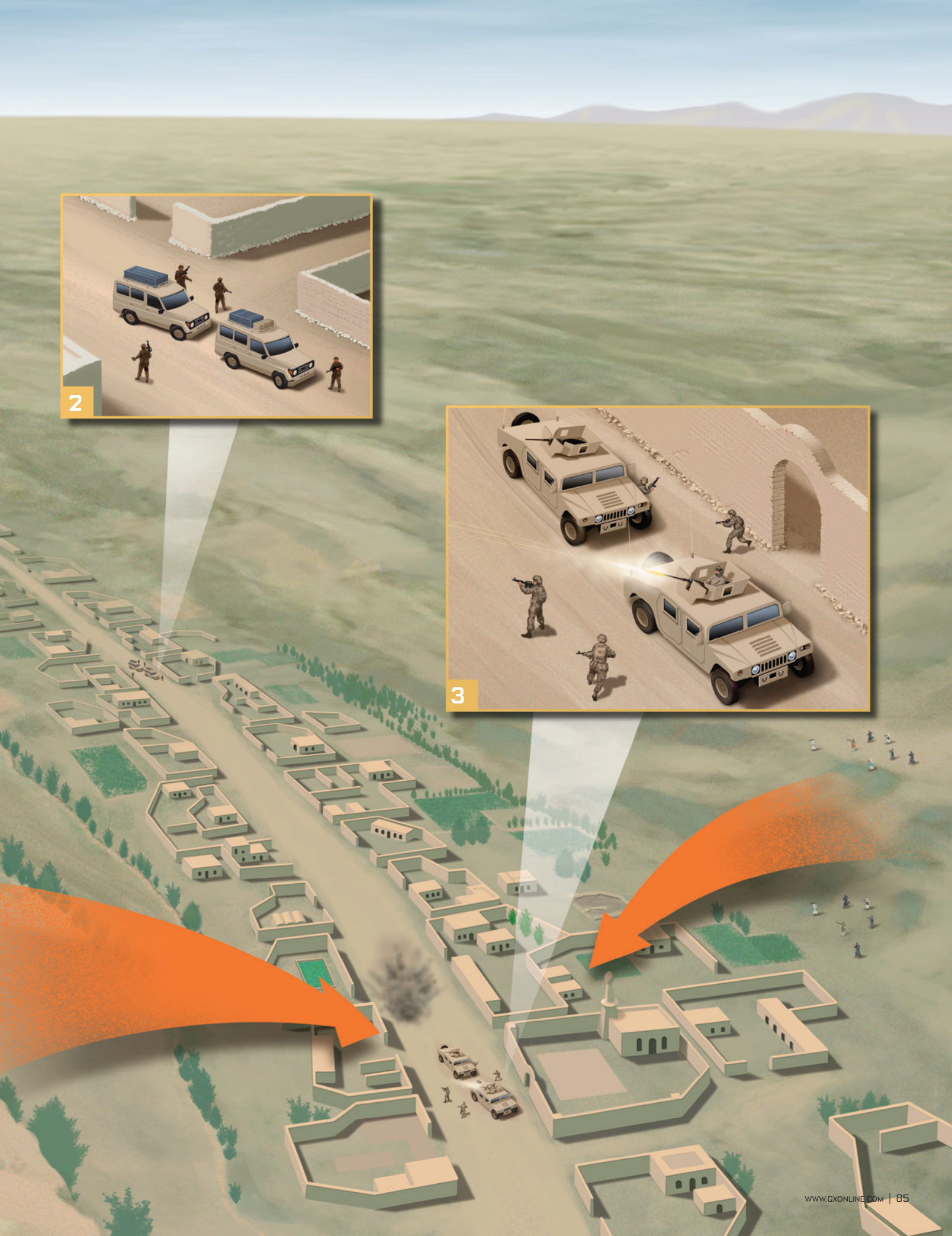
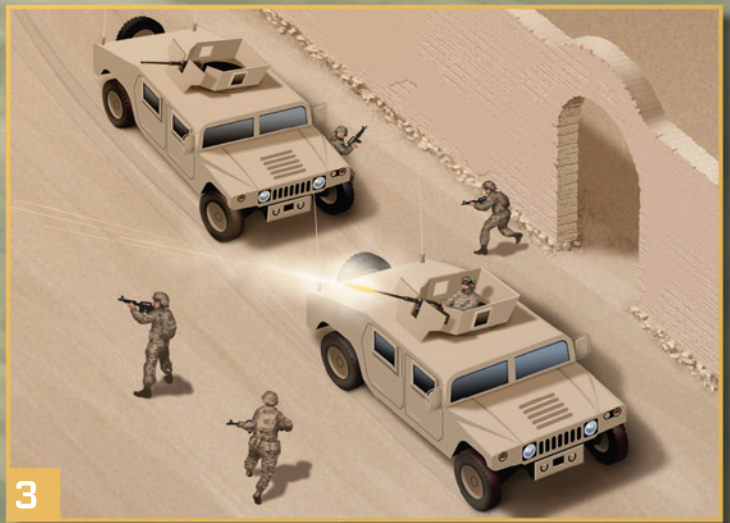
FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD EMBEDDED TRAINING team and their Afghan counterparts, the village of Tez Nawa was an icon of Taliban force. These Soldiers knew of the dangers there, but didn't realize the Taliban could muster a large force quickly. Shortly after entering the village, they were in a life and death battle.

1 Major Ake and the Allied Forces agreed to leave two Humvees and 12 Afghan Soldiers at the northern entrance to the village, with Captain Madson in command. This entrance was the only way in and out of the village. When the battle began to rage, Ake decided to keep these forces there so the Americans and Afghans would not be cut off. Madson and his Soldiers hit the enemy hard, pushing them back up into the hills.

2 The Norwegian and Latvian Special Forces formed a perimeter halfway between Madson's forces and the mosque—the primary objective. This force was able to view the battle and relay information between Ake's group in the town center and Madson's group at the town entrance. The Soldiers here were leading the charge up the hill to engage the Taliban and to help guide the B-1 bomber.

3 The final two Humvees pulled into Tez Nawa. Captain Minning and several Soldiers set up a perimeter as Ake and Riley entered the mosque. This is where the Taliban launched its ambush. Minning got behind a .50 cal machine gun in the Humvee turret and pummeled the Taliban. This allowed the Guard Soldiers to organize themselves and repel the Taliban from their positions.







“THE BOMB SOUNDED LIKE A FREIGHT TRAIN OVERHEAD. THEN, THE WHOLE SIDE OF THE MOUNTAIN WAS JUST GONE.”

The enemy was on both sides of the road in elevated positions, pouring a tremendous volume of fire onto the road.

Minning described the scene. “They had that road bracketed ... rounds were impacting ‘danger close,’ RPGs were going by overhead; it was like a scene out of *Black Hawk Down* ... I still don’t know how no one got it ... they just missed.”

Herbst and Riley immediately worked to get the ANA forces into better positions, where they could effectively engage and suppress the enemy. Minning took control of the one working machine gun and began laying fire on both ridges, continuously traversing from left to right throughout the battle. When the dust settled, his boots were buried in brass.

Ake coordinated efforts and worked to regain communications, hoping to call in reinforcements. Unfortunately, the terrain had effectively cut them off.

The Northern group could not receive communications; in fact, they couldn’t even hear the tremendous firefight. The Northern force had deployed into defensive positions around an abandoned school (the Taliban attacked anyone who attended) and settled in for a long, hot wait. They continuously tried to contact the Southern force, as well as HQ, but they were not having much success.

In the end, Ake sprinted halfway back up the road in full battle rattle (more than 80 lbs.

in 120-degree heat) to regain contact with the Northern troops. This was a massive ambush and if they couldn’t get out of the kill zone, things were going to get ugly.

THE HILL ASSAULT

1100 HOURS – 1500 HOURS

At the southern position, the battle raged. It quickly became obvious that one hill in particular had a commanding field of fire over the entire village. With Taliban troops on that hill, there was no way to safely extract.

Riley and Herbst knew what had to be done—they had to take the hill. Despite having to assault over 300 meters of open ground, uphill all the way, they led a squad of ANA Soldiers forward and conducted a textbook daytime assault.

Bounding and firing their M4 rifles, they fought their way up the hill through heavy crossfire. Their first charge halted when the enemy took out two ANA Soldiers. The injured were quickly treated, and the troops mounted a second charge and battled their way to the top.

Riley and Herbst crested the hill and directed the ANA to occupy the now-empty foxholes and engage the enemy. With the Guard and their ANA allies holding that hill, the tide of the battle turned.

Over the next hour, the battle stabilized.

Minning moved to the hilltop with ammo and water. The Norwegian Special Forces followed to coordinate an airstrike. They had made contact with a B-1 bomber returning from another mission and received permission to retask the bomber to the fight.

The B-1 loitered over the position for as long as possible, making sure of the locations of all friendly and enemy forces. They were about to drop a 2,000-lb. bomb very close to friendly forces, and their shot had to be perfect.

The Norwegians coordinated with the B-1 and targeted a nearby cave complex that was serving as a fortified position for the Taliban, continuously resupplying their forces.

The descriptions of what happened next are all the same.

“The bomb sounded like a freight train when it went by overhead ... then, the whole side of the mountain was just gone.”

WITHDRAWAL

1500 HOURS – 1600 HOURS

The massive impact of the bomb provided the break in the battle that the task force needed.

They had come into contact with a large force of enemy. Past experience told them that the longer they hung around, the more ambushes they would encounter on the way home. It was time to get out of Dodge.

Riley told *GX* the thinking behind the decision: “We talked about it with the Special Forces guys ... We didn’t want to be driven out of Tez Nawa ... but, we understood that we were eight to 10 hours deep in enemy territory with no immediate backup. We knew that the longer we stayed, the worse it was going to be on the way out.”

Ake began an orderly extraction of his forces through the town, pulling his Soldiers off the hill and initiating a fighting withdrawal to the northern position.

During the battle, the major had made the decision to leave Madson at the northern position to secure their exit route.

“I thought about it for a second, and I said, ‘This is the only way for us to get out of here. You guys stay right here and make sure that, if we say we are going to exit out of there, that egress route [is] open.’ If that closed up on us, we were there for the night,” Ake recounted.

This proved to be a good decision, as Madson now engaged Taliban forces as they raced through the town trying to get ahead of the now-rolling convoy.

As soon as the Americans were off the hill and moving, the Taliban reoccupied their positions and began firing on the convoy. Ake and Minning placed the armored American

"I SAW INCREDIBLE ACTS OF HEROISM THAT DAY."

>> MAJ Mike Ake, Washington National Guard

vehicles at the rear of the column to provide cover. The ANA troops dismounted as soon as their unarmored rides started receiving fire and took cover. They had no choice, because staying in the trucks made them easy targets for the hilltop gunmen.

To get everyone moving, Riley dismounted and led the ANA out of the village on foot. Using the vehicles as cover, they moved forward under an ever-increasing volume of fire.

The nightmarish fight through the narrow street was a carefully coordinated dash for safety.

The Taliban were running ahead of the convoy in the town to fire on the column or throw grenades over the walls and roofs into the street. The enemy fire was so concentrated that the Norwegians and Latvians were forced to dismount from their unarmored vehicles and fight their way out of the village on foot alongside the ANA.

Minning described the scene: "... hand grenades [were] coming over the walls, and RPGs [were] impacting around us."

Despite fierce opposition, the column's training and leadership paid off. Ake and his staff, along with the other task force commanders, maintained good discipline and order, effectively engaging the enemy while moving to safer ground, and exiting from the tight confines of Tez Nawa.

ROLLING GUNFIGHT

1600 HOURS – 1830 HOURS

Of course, leaving the village was a mixed blessing. While they were no longer in close contact with the enemy, the volume of fire they were receiving was increasing constantly. What followed was a continuous



rolling gunfight that carried on for miles.

Stops were made for medevacs, repairs and various emergencies, but at each step, the Taliban were there, firing their RPGs and AKs from the hilltops, doing their utmost to destroy this convoy. After hours of close calls, the convoy finally reached the paved Ring Road (a new road that completely circles Afghanistan) and broke contact with the pursuing enemy forces.

Every member of that column returned to the Forward Operating Base alive. Miraculously, only three Soldiers were wounded that day: two ANA Soldiers were saved by their body armor and one, an ANA NCO, was hit in the hip while assaulting the hill. He was safely medevaced, but only after concealing the extent of his injuries to continue fighting.

Thanks to the training supplied by the

Soldiers of the Army National Guard, the 1st Kandak, ANA, performed admirably that day, displaying bravery and a fierce Warrior spirit. The Norwegian and Latvian Special Forces were a critical force multiplier, and their support provided the turning point in the battle.

Riley received the Bronze Star for his work in developing and leading the NCO corps of the 1st Kandak, 209th Corps ANA. Minning, Riley and Herbst all received Army Commendations with Valor for their actions on the battlefield.

Ake, the commanding officer, praised his team. "I saw incredible acts of heroism that day. Leading the ANA out on foot—and we had a bunch of new privates, brand new—that was [the ANA's] first mission ever. [The ANA] had never deployed and they did outstanding. The whole team—both ANA and our guys—were just outstanding." **GX**

After Action Report

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION REGARDING THE TALIBAN WAS received from an interview Major Mike Ake conducted with the enemy commander some months after the action at Tez Nawa.

At the height of the battle, the Taliban had deployed approximately 200 men against the column, which numbered less than half of this attacking force. When word came in to the Taliban leaders that the convoy was on its way to Tez Nawa, it was decided that they would

rally everyone from the surrounding villages to wipe out the convoy. They hoped to send a message.

The insurgents coordinated their movements on cell phones and mobilized to their assigned ambush points using motorcycles. Their mission, though claimed as a victory, failed. A total of 17 Taliban were killed that day, including three high-value targets. The task force came out strong, suffering zero fatalities.

Fighting Spirit

▶ SHARP AND STRONG





Three Deep

Dale Jr. races side-by-side with three of his competitors at the Heath Calhoun 400 at the Richmond International Raceway in Richmond, VA, on May 1, 2010.

SPORTS

GX goes into overdrive with Dale Jr., switches gears with Jeff Gordon and stays fit with Jake Zemke

90

FITNESS

Gain some serious functional fitness with SGT Ken's Operation Deep Impact

94

GEAR

Meet the Guard's big rig, the Oshkosh Heavy Equipment Transporter

100



Although Dale Jr. drives one of the fastest cars in NASCAR, he couldn't wait to get in the driver's seat of a Bradley Fighting Vehicle.

Overdrive

Dale Earnhardt Jr. tries on the Bradley

By Clint Wood

WHEN DALE EARNHARDT JR. drives his National Guard/Amp Chevrolet Impala in NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races, it's all about being able to see other cars in all directions.

So when he had the opportunity to drive a Bradley Fighting Vehicle, he was somewhat taken aback. In an exclusive interview with *GX*, he talked about this adventure, and he also told us about his experience with sniper rifles.

"Just being in that [Bradley] was a neat experience," he explained. "No matter what position you're in, you're doing all your work within the

vehicle. You're not poking your head out and looking around, doing things by visual outside the vehicle. I thought that would be very difficult to get used to. Trusting your instincts and having to rely on the technology instead of your own eyesight."

GX: What's the one thing that has impressed you most about the National Guard's fighting equipment?

DJ: I just like the guns, .50 calibers and stuff like that. I went out to a couple of ranges and shot auto-

matic weapons with Soldiers, which was a lot of fun. Sniper rifles too. A sniper rifle that can shoot dead on at 1,000 yards—that's pretty cool.

GX: Have you fired any sniper rifles?

DJ: I actually own a competition sniper rifle that is much like what they would use in the field of battle.

GX: What is the farthest target you've shot at?

DJ: A thousand yards. I did well. This was before I worked for the Guard. I went to a place in Virginia where they train Secret Service agents. A lot of the agents are into competitive shooting, where they actually build their own rifles for prizes. I thought, "Heck, I wouldn't mind having one of those rifles. How would I be able to get one?" And they built me one. **GX**

For more on Dale Jr., go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/880verdrive

Switching Gears

Jeff Gordon visits Special Forces

By Clint Wood

JEFF GORDON WENT FROM clicking a lever on his No. 24 National Guard/DuPont Chevrolet Impala to clicking the selector switch from safety to semi auto on an M4 carbine, on a rainy Texas afternoon in April.

This was all part of his several-hour visit at a law/training enforcement facility in Maxwell, TX, with the “best of the best”—or, Texas Army National Guard Special Forces Soldiers.

Gordon, who arrived on a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, also fired a sniper rifle and a 9 mm semi-automatic pistol, breached a door with a 12-gauge shotgun twice, and entered and cleared rooms in a

shoot-house three times.

GX chatted with Gordon about his visit and about how it feels to represent the Guard.

GX: How was your Black Hawk ride?

JG: It was cool. I've never ridden in a Black Hawk before. Its power is really impressive. It was a lot of fun.

GX: What impressed you the most about the Special Forces Soldiers?

JG: They're so comfortable in their environment. You can tell that they've had a lot of training because they make it look easy. They're the elite of the elite. They do things the rest of us would never want to do. They're better prepared and more versatile than any

group out there. It's been a real honor to be part of it—and to mix some fun in with it too, shooting all these different guns and breaching doors.

GX: What was the most fun thing you did?

JG: I like the sniper rifle stuff. I like that long range, looking through the scope. There was a lot to take in, with the close-range target stuff. Once we got inside the rooms, when we were actually going to breach rooms as a team, I started to understand why we did all that other prep work. And how important it was. That was pretty intense. At the end of the day, that is probably the thing that I would like to come back and do more of.

GX: What impresses you about the Guard?

JG: The opportunities they provide. Not only to represent our country, but for jobs, GEDs and education. Also, how broad they are and how much they reach out. They do a lot of great things beyond just training Soldiers for battle.

GX: What was your most memorable moment of last season?

JG: Certainly, winning the Texas race. We had great results with the Guard on board. We kind of felt like we started a tradition of not only winning, but also of having good results. Which is important for the championship. So we hope we can continue that this year.

GX: What impresses you the most about Guard Soldiers?

JG: Their dedication and their professionalism. How they carry themselves. You can tell that there is a lot of pride. Not just in who they are, but what they do and what they represent. **GX**



Jeff Gordon looks through the scope of a sniper rifle during his visit with Army National Guard Special Forces Soldiers in Maxwell, TX, in April.

For more on Jeff Gordon, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/24FieldDay

Showing Gratitude

Magazine editor offers deployed Soldiers free subscriptions

By Clint Wood

A VETERAN MOTORCYCLE RACER and journalist has found a way to show Army National Guard Soldiers serving overseas that they are not forgotten.

John Ulrich, editor of *Roadracing World & Motorcycle Technology* (www.roadracingworld.com), will provide a free, one-year subscription for all Army National Guard Soldiers to his magazine.

"I feel if we can do something to show a little gratitude to National Guard men and women who are deployed, and if we can send them a motorcycle magazine, well, that is something we want to do," said Ulrich in a phone interview.

This isn't the first time that Ulrich has shown support to Service Members deployed overseas. For several years, a reader could purchase a one-year subscription for a Service Member. If a reader wanted to donate a subscription but didn't know a Service Member overseas, the magazine would choose one for them.

"We just kind of expanded the program from there," said Ulrich.

The reason that he offers this benefit only to Army National Guard Soldiers is the Guard's involvement in motorcycle road racing. The Guard



John Ulrich, left, celebrates with one of his racers, Martin Cardenas, after Cardenas won a race last season.

is the title sponsor of American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) American Superbike class and sponsors the No. 54 National Guard Jordan Suzuki driven by Jake Zemke. Zemke gave the Guard team its first two victories in the season opener at Daytona International Speedway in March.

"Obviously, they have a commitment to serve [Guard members]," he pointed out. "With the kind of deployment schedule they have, it would be a lot easier for them to just stay in civilian life. What impresses me most is the fact that they cared enough about serving their country to sign up and go do this thing." **GX**



Staying Fit

Jake Zemke discusses how he stays in shape

By Clint Wood

BY THE TIME YOU READ THIS ISSUE, Jake Zemke, who races the No. 54 National Guard 2010 Suzuki GSX-R 1000 Superbike, will have raced in at least nine heart-pumping rounds of the AMA Pro Racing National Guard Superbike Championship Series.

Zemke, who's in his first year of racing for Michael Jordan Motorsports, opened the season with all cylinders, winning both races at the opener at Daytona International Speedway March 3-5—a first for a National Guard Superbike racer.

GX chatted with Zemke just before the season opened. Foremost on our mind: how he stays fit.

GX: What type of workouts do you do in the gym?

JZ: It's usually a combination of things. It really depends on what's going on. Like for this year, [it's about] getting back onto the Superbike. Superbikes are a little bit heavier than the 600s, so it takes a

little bit more strength. So I'm doing some weights. I still do a lot of cardio work. Just keeping myself on top of it. I want to be not only mentally, but also physically prepared when the season starts.

GX: Do you run?

JZ: I used to run a bit, but my knees aren't the best. I haven't been running in a couple of years. I had a partial tear of my ACL [anterior cruciate ligament] and MCL [medial collateral ligament] for quite a few years. So running is a little bit tough on me.

GX: What kind of training do you do in the weight room?

JZ: It's just a combination and it's always changing. Over the years, I've had a couple different trainers that have helped me along the way. It really is good to mix up the routines, so we don't get stuck on one thing. Not only that, but it's usually a full body [workout]. We're trying to work every muscle that we can. **GX**

www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/ZemkeFit



Climbing New Heights

Tennessee Soldier takes on 50-mile race

By CPT Darrin Haas, Tennessee National Guard Public Affairs

SGT Richard Easter runs a half-marathon in Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, in 2009.

IN THE EARLY MORNING HOURS of April 17, Richard Easter finished stretching and loosening himself up. After checking his water one last time, he waited for the 6 a.m. race to start. It would be on the Ouachita Trail 50, a grueling 50-mile trail at Maumelle Park in Little Rock, AR, that would test his strength and, especially, his endurance.

To most people, the idea of even walking 50 miles is incomprehensible. But for Easter, a 23-year-old Tennessee Army National Guard sergeant from Memphis, this was just the next step in training to compete in a 100-mile race this July.

"I plan to compete in the Burning River Endurance Run in Akron, OH, this July," Easter said. "It'll be tough, but it's what I've always wanted to do."

Once the race began, Easter ran three miles with the pack on the main paved road until they reached the base of Pinnacle Mountain. "From there, we had to climb to the top," he said. "It's

not a big mountain, but it is almost straight up for a mile, so we climbed over boulders and rocks until we reached the more sloped west side. After that, we could start running again."

"I really liked the change in terrain. The scenery was incredible and there was a beautiful view of the mountain as I ran."

>> SGT Richard Easter, Tennessee Army National Guard

Next, the trail turns into a hilly single track, allowing everyone to spread out and begin running at their own pace. For the next 46 miles, Easter ran on a rocky dirt trail, traversing hills and running through creek beds to get to the finish line.

"I really liked the change in terrain. The scenery was incredible and there was a beautiful view of the mountain as I ran. We also crossed some white-water streams and brooks," Easter said. "At one point I got distracted and took a wrong turn, which added an extra three miles to my race."

"I did have some problems keeping a good pace, though. I held myself back in the beginning, unsure if I would use up too much energy. After the halfway point, I began striding it out. When the race was finished I had plenty left," he said.

When Easter crossed the finish line, he had been running for a little over 12 hours, nonstop. Out of the 81 runners that participated in the race, only 54 completed it. Even with the three extra miles he ran, Easter finished 36th.

"After I was done, I felt really good. But, I was very hungry. I'd been eating throughout the race, but when it was over, I ate five hamburgers," he said. "I'm really looking forward to the 100-miler in July. I'm going to run for 24 hours straight." **GX**

OPERATION **Deep** **Functional Fitness Training** **Impact**



By Ken and Stephanie Weichert • Photos by Adam Livingston

FROM: SGT Lewis

TO: SGT Ken

I wanted to start by saying that your fitness programs have helped me get a 300 in the APFT in just six months! I always look forward to getting GX, and the moment that I get it in the mail I go right to your section and try your new program.

I am going to try out for Special Forces in a few months. Do you have a program that will help?

Thanks for all that you two do!

Hooah!

SGT Lewis

California Army National Guard

TO: SGT Lewis

FROM: SGT Ken

Thanks for the compliment! In order to get you ready for Special Forces try-outs, we've prepared an intense training plan for you! Called "Operation Deep Impact," you will work every single muscle in your body and burn over 700 calories in 60 minutes. "Deep Impact" specializes in combining diverse movements and endurance and strength challenges. "Deep Impact" challenges you to perform the muscular endurance and aerobic conditioning drills with little or no break in between exercises.

Let us know how it works for you.

Stay the course!

HOOAH!

SGT Ken



WARM-UP PHASE:

1 AEROBICS: Perform 6-8 minutes of aerobics exercises, such as Running in Place, Side-Straddle-Hops (Jumping Jacks) or High Steps/Knees.

2 STRETCHING: Perform 4-6 minutes of flexibility exercises.

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:

1. TRX
2. Ammo Cans
3. 5-gallon Fuel or Water Cans
4. Duffel Bag
5. Body Armor (Extreme level)

MUSCULAR STRENGTH AND BALANCE PHASE:

3 TRX REAR DELTOID "T" FLY

START: Stand facing the anchor with your feet together, or up to 12 inches apart, holding the handles shoulder level, palms inward. Position your feet in front of your hands. Lean back and fully extend arms, maintaining a slight bend in your elbows.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, squeeze your shoulder blades together and pull your arms out to the sides at shoulder level. Keep tension on the TRX and maintain alignment with your shoulders, hips and legs. Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you pull your arms out to the sides, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.



MALE STANDARDS:
Basic
1-10 reps
Intermediate
11-25 reps
Advanced
26-50 reps
FEMALE STANDARDS:
Basic
1-6 reps
Intermediate
7-15 reps
Advanced
16-25 reps

4 TRX BACK ROW

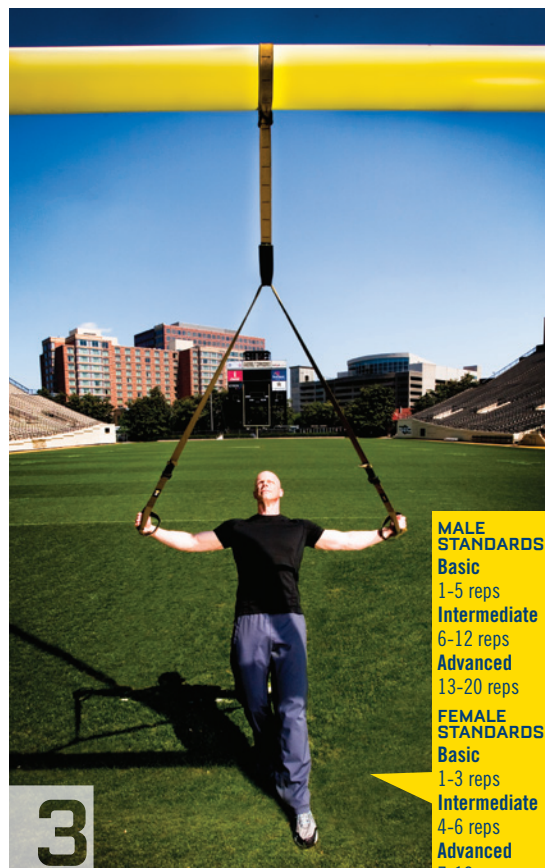
START: Stand facing the anchor with your feet together, or up to 12 inches apart, holding the handles shoulder level, palms inward. Position your feet in front of your hands. Lean back and fully extend arms, maintaining a slight bend in your elbows.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, pull your body toward the anchor by bending both elbows. Keep tension on the TRX and maintain alignment with your shoulders, hips and legs. Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you pull your arms back, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

5 TRX ATOMIC PUSH-UP WITH PIKE [\[pictured, next page\]](#)

START: Lengthen the TRX until the foot cradles are 8-12 inches off the ground. Place your feet into the foot cradles, toes down, and feet under the anchor point. Assume a normal-grip push-up position by balancing your body on your hands with your back forming a straight line, hands directly under your shoulders. Look forward and keep your feet together.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, drop your body straight down by bending both elbows. Return to the start position and perform a pike by lifting your hips upward, keeping your knees and elbows straight. Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you push up and pike, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

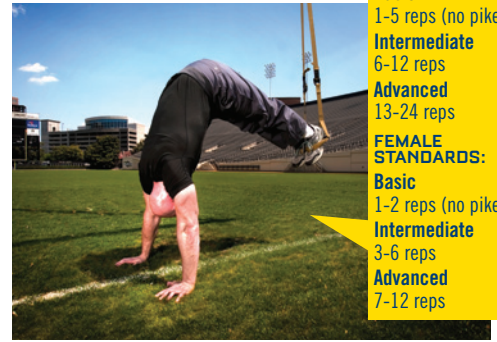


MALE STANDARDS:
Basic
1-5 reps
Intermediate
6-12 reps
Advanced
13-20 reps
FEMALE STANDARDS:
Basic
1-3 reps
Intermediate
4-6 reps
Advanced
7-12 reps

[TRX Atomic Push-up with Pike from previous page]



5



MALE STANDARDS:
Basic
 1-5 reps (no pike)
Intermediate
 6-12 reps
Advanced
 13-24 reps
FEMALE STANDARDS:
Basic
 1-2 reps (no pike)
Intermediate
 3-6 reps
Advanced
 7-12 reps



6

Basic
 10-20 feet
Intermediate
 21-40 feet
Advanced
 41-60 feet

PLYOMETRIC PHASE:

6 DOUBLE-LEG FORWARD HOPS

START: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

ACTIONS: Bend forward at your hips and bring your arms behind you. Jump forward over the cone, bringing your knees into your chest as you jump. Keep your knees slightly bent as you return to the ground. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you jump, and inhale through your nose as you land.

>> **Note:** You can substitute any kind of object that is roughly the same size as a 12" or 18" safety cone.



7

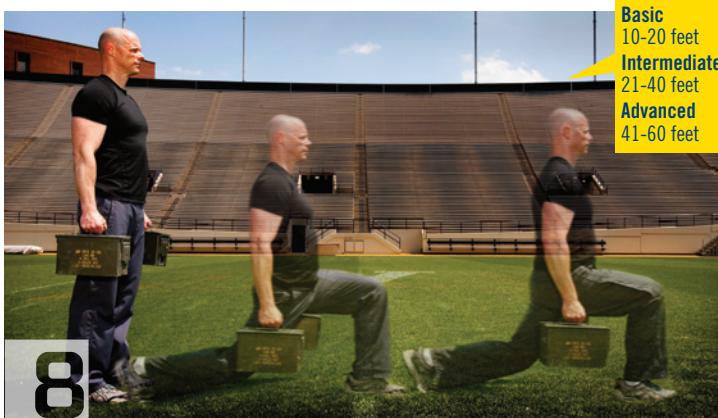
Basic
 1-10 reps
 (each direction;
 no cones)
Intermediate
 11-20 reps
 (each direction)
Advanced
 21-30 reps
 (each direction)

7 DOUBLE-LEG SIDE HOPS

START: Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

ACTIONS: Bend forward at your hips and bring your arms behind you. Jump laterally over the cone, bringing your knees into your chest as you jump. Keep your knees slightly bent as you return to the ground. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached. Change directions and continue. Exhale through your mouth as jump, and inhale through your nose as you land.

>> **Note:** You can substitute any kind of object that is roughly the same size as a 12" or 18" safety cone.



8

Basic
 10-20 feet
Intermediate
 21-40 feet
Advanced
 41-60 feet

MUSCULAR ENDURANCE PHASE:

8 AMMO CAN WALKING LUNGES

START: Grasp two ammo cans and stand with a neutral spine.

ACTIONS: Step forward with your left leg. As your leg reaches the ground, immediately go into a lunge by bending both knees until your forward leg achieves 90 degrees of knee flexion. Maintain your balance in the center.

Warning: Do not let your forward knee bend beyond your toe line

Stand up and switch legs by stepping forward and lunging with your opposite leg. Continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you step up, and inhale through your nose as you lunge.

>> **Note:** You can substitute gallon milk jugs or dumbbells for ammo cans.



Basic
10-20 feet
(light-medium weight)
Intermediate
21-40 feet
(medium-heavy weight)
Advanced
41-60 feet
(medium-heavy weight)

9

Use discretion while filling your equipment to add weight. Only carry what you can handle.

9 5-GALLON FUEL CAN CARRY

START: Grasp two 5-gallon fuel cans, stand with a neutral spine, shoulders retracted, elbows slightly bent.

ACTIONS: Walk forward in a straight line as fast as you can until you reach your goal. Breathe naturally.

>> **Note:** You can substitute water cans or dumbbells for 5-gallon fuel cans.



Basic
10-20 feet
(light weight)
Intermediate
21-40 feet
(medium weight)
Advanced
41-60 feet
(medium-heavy weight)

10

10 DUFFEL BAG OVERHEAD CARRY

START: Grasp a duffel bag from the sides, raise it over your head and stand with a neutral spine, elbows slightly bent, and relaxed shoulders.

ACTIONS: Walk forward in a straight line as fast as you can until you reach your goal. Breathe naturally. **Warning:** Do not allow your back to arch.

>> **Note:** You can substitute a standard 10, 25, 35 or 45-pound plate for a duffel bag.

11 DUFFEL BAG DRAG

START: Stand in front of a duffel bag, turn around, lower your body by bending both knees, reach behind and grasp the top of the bag, elbows slightly bent. Stand up straight and lean slightly forward from the hips.

ACTIONS: Walk forward in a straight line as fast as you can until you reach your goal. Breathe naturally.

>> **Note:** You can attach a rope to the duffel bag to add distance between you and the bag. You can substitute a heavy boxing bag for a duffel bag.



Basic
10-20 feet
(light-medium weight)
Intermediate
21-40 feet
(medium-heavy weight)
Advanced
41-60 feet
(heavy weight)

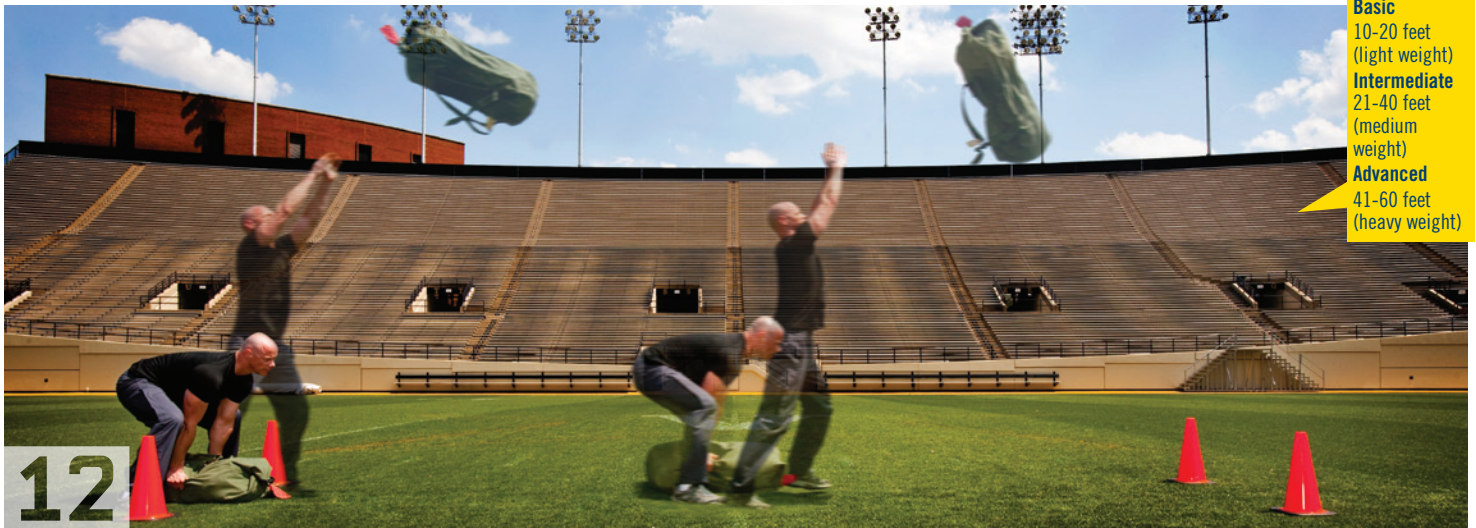
11

12 DUFFEL BAG SCOOP AND FORWARD THROW

START: Stand in front of a duffel bag, squat down by bending both knees and grasp the bag from the sides, elbows slightly bent, head forward.

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominals and lower back, quickly extend your body upward and throw the bag up and in front of you as far as you can. Run to the bag and repeat the actions until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you throw the bag.

>> **Note:** You can substitute a full laundry bag for a duffel bag.



Basic
10-20 feet
(light weight)
Intermediate
21-40 feet
(medium weight)
Advanced
41-60 feet
(heavy weight)

12



Basic
10-20 feet
(light weight)
Intermediate
21-40 feet
(medium weight)
Advanced
41-60 feet
(medium-heavy weight)

13

13 DUFFEL BAG SCOOP AND BACKWARD THROW

START: Stand in front of a duffel bag, turn around, spread your legs and straddle the bag, aligning yourself over the center of the bag. Squat down by bending both knees and grasp the bag from the sides with your elbows slightly bent.

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominals and lower back, quickly extend your body upward, and throw the bag up and behind you as far as you can. Run to the bag and repeat the actions until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you throw the bag, and inhale through your nose before you throw.

>> **Note:** You can substitute a full laundry bag for a duffel bag.

AEROBIC CONDITIONING PHASE:



For advanced athletes, make it **EXTREME** by wearing body armor during exercises 6 through 15!

14

Basic
3 sets
Intermediate
6 sets
Advanced
9 sets

14 SHUTTLE RUN

START: Place the cones or markers approximately 10 feet apart (see photo). Assume a "standing start position" by placing your toes behind the start line, next to cone one, with one leg 12-18 inches behind you. Shift your weight to the front leg and bend your lead knee 90 degrees. Bend your trunk slightly forward and look forward to your target location.

ACTIONS: Sprint forward to the second cone, reach and touch it with your fingertips. Sprint back to the start position and touch the first cone. Sprint to the third cone and touch it. Sprint back to the start position (the first cone). Repeat until your goal is reached. Breathe naturally.

15 DUFFEL BAG STADIUM CLIMB

START: Grasp a duffel bag from the sides, raise it up and place it on your right or left shoulder. Wrap the duffel bag around the back of your neck by balancing it on both of your shoulders. Use your hands to keep it in place. Assume a "standing start position" by placing your toes behind the start line with one leg 12-18 inches behind you. Shift your weight onto the front leg and bend your lead knee 90 degrees. Bend your trunk slightly forward and look at the stairs in front of you.

ACTIONS: Sprint up the stairs as fast as you can. Descend carefully. Repeat until your goal is reached. Breathe naturally.

Warning: Do not allow your back to arch.



15

Basic
10-20 feet or
8-24 steps
(no duffel bag)
Intermediate
21-40 feet or
32-64 steps
Advanced
41-60 feet or
72-120 steps

COOL-DOWN PHASE:

16 STRETCHING: Perform 4-6 minutes of flexibility exercises.

STAMINA STOPWATCH



The Stamina Stopwatch includes the estimated time it will take to complete each set of the fitness program.

Quick Fix:

1 full set =
approximately 30 minutes

Fast and Furious:

2 full sets =
approximately 45 minutes

Combat Ready:

3 full sets =
approximately 60 minutes

NUTRITION ADVICE



1 To lose additional body fat, try reducing your intake of white breads, pastas and sugar. Try to incorporate additional colorful vegetables such as spinach, cucumbers and bell peppers. Cut out soda and sugary drinks. Eat "good" fat such as almonds, olive oil and avocado instead of fried foods.

2 Consult your physician before making any changes to your diet or exercise plan.

3 Want to read more diet advice? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness/healthy, and download our Savory Survival Guide.

THE DEEP IMPACT 7-DAY WORKOUT CALENDAR



MONDAY

>> Perform 1-3 sets of the entire program

TUESDAY

>> Running Long Distance x 3-6 miles
>> Crunches x 2-3 minutes

WEDNESDAY

>> Perform 1-3 sets of the entire program

THURSDAY

>> Rest

FRIDAY

>> Running Interval Training* x 2-4 miles
>> Crunches x 2-3 minutes

SATURDAY

>> Perform 1-3 sets of the entire program

SUNDAY

>> Rest

▶ Repeat 7-day schedule x 4 sets to complete the month.

▶ Rest periods may be adjusted, as needed. However, be certain to include 1-2 rest days per week for rest and recovery. Never perform more than two consecutive rest days at any time.

▶ Perform no fitness training 24-48 hours prior to a fitness test or competition.

***Running Interval Training** is running at moderate and fast speeds. **Example:** Choose to run on a treadmill, track or well-known route. After a thorough warm-up, run at a moderate speed (jogging) for 30 seconds and sprint as fast as you can for 30 seconds. Repeat this sequence for the remainder of your run. Or, if on a track, sprint the stretch and jog the curve.

THE COMBAT FITNESS CHALLENGE

The Combat Fitness Challenge is where you can test your overall strength and stamina by performing exercises 6 through 15 as fast as you can. Use our diagram as a template while setting up the challenge. Remember to perform the repetitions or distances that are within your capability (your level - Basic, Intermediate or Advanced). Keep record of the time that it took to complete one set of the challenge and send it to us. We would love to see how your time compares to others! **For a free copy of the Combat Fitness Challenge, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/fitchallenge**

IMPACT REPORT

SGT Ken,

I needed a new diet plan to lose weight. I followed your "Savory Survival Guide" from www.NATIONALGUARD.com and lost 23 pounds in six weeks.

> **SPC Pena**
Kansas Army National Guard

SGT Ken,

Thank you for coming to our high school to lead us through your fitness program. I am joining the Guard this summer, and your program took my own training to a whole new level.

Hooah!
> **Devin S., Colorado**



KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT

A six-time Soldier of the Year and Veteran of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie, a certified personal trainer, founded the START Fitness® program, a San Francisco-based group exercise and hiking business that delivers military-inspired, boot-camp style workouts to Soldiers and civilians. The program now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors. Ken is currently a staff sergeant in the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Warning: Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or short of breath.

Watch fitness videos and download workouts at

www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/Fitness
or email SGTken@GXonline.com.

WHAT'S UNDER THE HOOD

The success of the HET wouldn't be possible without a little horsepower under the hood: 700 horses to be exact. The 18-liter diesel engine by Caterpillar can haul up to 70 tons.

The beefy Allison transmission transfers enough power and torque to get this mammoth vehicle cruising at 50 mph.

BEHIND THE STEERING WHEEL

The HET has a six-person cabin, enabling the crews of the vehicles being transported to travel with their vehicle. The crew of the HET can adjust the tire inflation from inside the cabin. Each HET is equipped with air conditioning, and the cabin can be equipped with an array of navigational equipment, such as GPS devices and radios.

Fast Facts

- > **CAB SEATING:**
6-person (2 + 4)
- > **MAXIMUM SPEED:**
50 mph (80 kph)
- > **TIRES:**
16.00 R20 XZLT Michelin
- > **NUMBER OF TIRES:**
8 + 1 spare
- > **AIR CONDITIONING:**
Standard
- > **TRANSPORTABILITY:**
C-5A and C-17
- > **ENGINE:**
CAT 700 hp 18.1 liters
- > **TRANSMISSION:**
Allison 4800SP
- > **ELECTRICAL SYSTEM:**
24V start • 24V lighting
24V and 12V accessory
- > **BRAKES (PARKING AND EMERGENCY):**
Dual air • spring brakes on axles 2, 3 and 4 • modulated emergency system
- > **STEERING:**
Axle 1 and 4 steering
- > **WINCHES:**
2 at 55,000 lbs.
(24,948 kg)





Big Rig

The Guard's Heavy Equipment Transport

By Christian Anderson

AS ONE OF THE LARGEST FIGHTING forces in the world, the Army National Guard requires heavy-duty equipment. Nothing in its arsenal is as tough as Oshkosh's Heavy Equipment Transporter, commonly known as the HET.

RELIABLE AND READY

The HET's job is arguably one of the most important in the Guard: rapidly deploying and transporting valuable equipment wherever the Guard needs it—fast. Tanks, fighting vehicles, armored vehicles, recovery vehicles, self-propelled howitzers and construction equipment—the HET does not discriminate.

Cost-efficient and expeditious, it has earned a reputation as a reliable and trusted tool in the Guard's inventory.

AROUND FOR THE LONG HAUL

With a simple design and real-world practicality, the HET is a natural fit for Guard operations both stateside and worldwide. As the Guard becomes more mobile, the HET will become an increasingly more valuable tool.

IMAGE COURTESY OF OSHKOSH CORPORATION

BIG WHEELS

Part of what puts the HET above the other classes of transportation vehicles in the Guard is its unique chassis. The HET has four axles to accommodate its eight all-terrain tires. The driver has the option of steering the first (front) and last (rear) axles independently, so the HET has an edge in maneuverability over other heavy transport vehicles.

GX Hero
SGT JOHN STONE



A *Real* GAME CHANGER

Connecticut Guard Soldier Earns Second-Inning Save

By Rachel Gladstone • Photos courtesy of Connecticut National Guard Public Affairs

Sergeant John Stone, from Uncasville, CT, has spent years in the Army National Guard training as a medic, preparing to meet emergency situations head-on. Stone expected to use these skills in battle. But, on a Wednesday afternoon in the Bronx, he saved a woman's life at a Yankees game.

SECOND INNING

Accompanied by his brother Jamie, who is also a member of the Guard and home on leave from Afghanistan, Stone was determined to catch a game at the new Yankee Stadium in April—no matter what.

“We didn’t have any idea how much tickets were going to cost,” Stone said. “I just knew that one way or another, we were going to a ball game while Jamie was home.”

As luck would have it, the brothers, along with Jamie’s girlfriend, were seated in a section behind home plate.

In the middle of the second inning, Stone noticed a commotion about 10 rows below. A woman was hunched over and gasping for air. Before he realized it, he was on his feet and moving toward her.

“At first, I noticed a bunch of people around her who looked like they were trying to help, but it didn’t look like they were having much success,” Stone shared. “You could tell this woman was bad off. She was in trouble and she was slumped over and trying to get air, with a look of panic on her face.”

The woman, Toby Weiss, had begun choking on a piece of steak and was barely breathing. Among those trying to help were two police officers, staff from Yankee Stadium and a man who was attempting to perform the Heimlich maneuver.

“I am a medic and that’s what we do; we try to save people’s lives whenever we can.”

>> SGT John Stone

“He wasn’t doing it; [the piece of steak] just wasn’t coming out so I went down there and tapped this guy on the shoulder,” Stone said. “I told him: I’m a medic and if you need help, I’m right here to help you.”

No more prompting was necessary. The man who had been trying to help the woman stepped aside and shouted, “Go for it!”

“I asked her, ‘Can you talk at all?’ because I didn’t know if [the steak] had come up a little bit. But, she just shook her head. So I tried giving her a few abdominal thrusts, continuing to do the Heimlich maneuver,

but it wasn’t working very well,” Stone continued. “She was still conscious, but she was unable to speak and I could tell that she wasn’t passing any air.”

At this point, Weiss had begun to turn blue and Stone told her to stand up as straight as she could, so he could really get under her.

“I had to get [my arms] under her diaphragm really well and once I had, I gave her a few more strong thrusts and out came [the piece of steak]. It was pretty incredible.”

INSTANT CELEBRITY

Stone, who has been in the National Guard since 1991, trained as a medic after several years of serving as an infantryman. He believes that the training he received in the Guard prepared him for just such an emergency.

“I did what anybody who is a medic or has [medical] skills would have done,” he told *GX*. “I just did it. After the fact, I stepped back and said ‘Whoa!’ But really, I was just on auto-pilot the entire time. But, you know, I was

glad I could help. After she spit up the piece [of steak], she started talking to me, which was good.”

Weiss and her husband thanked Stone repeatedly. He remained humble but was eager to get back to watching the game. It took him a little while to get back to his seat as fans crowded around to thank and congratulate the Soldier.

“I was just happy that Mrs. Weiss was all right,” said Stone. “She’s a really nice lady.”

Before Stone could settle back into his seat, officials from Yankee Stadium were escorting



Even police officers from the NYPD want to meet the now-famous SGT John Stone. **Right:** SGT John Stone and Toby Weiss have kept in touch ever since that fateful day at the Yankees ball game.

him and his companions to the front row of the Legends section, and they were treated to all the food and beverages they could consume. That was when everybody began to tell him he was a hero, something he hadn’t expected.

“I didn’t feel like a hero,” Stone admitted. “I was just doing what anybody who has the skills [I do] would have done.”

It wasn’t long before the media got wind of Stone’s good deed. He was featured on the cover of *The Daily News* newspaper.

“My brother brought over a big stack of copies,” said Stone. “It was unbelievable!”

Then, several other newspapers and television stations chased the story, including CBS, which sent a car to take him and his wife, Kimberly, to New York City for a television appearance.

“I was on *The Early Show* and Jeff Galore did the interview. They had the doctor [from Yankee Stadium] on there with me. [The doctor] described what the Heimlich maneuver is, and she demonstrated it on the air. It was pretty cool; it was a good time,” described Stone.

But, in Stone’s mind, he was just doing what he was trained to do.

“The difference is that what I did is just part of my job,” stated Stone. “I am a medic and that’s what we do; we try to save people’s lives whenever we can.”



Stone works as an operations noncommissioned officer at Camp Rell, in Niantic, CT. And, he has been receiving his share of friendly flak from his fellow Soldiers.

"I get the 'Hey, hero!' thing all the time at work. It's like ribbing. 'What's up, hero?' It's pretty funny," he laughed. "Everyone I know has been amazed by everything that's been going on. My family got in touch with me and told me how proud of me they are."

It cannot be too surprising for Stone's family members to see him as a hero, though. Stone's family has a long history of military service, which is one of the reasons he joined the National Guard in the first place.

"My dad was in the National Guard; he [was] a sergeant major, and my brother is on his second deployment to Afghanistan. Every male member of my family has served in either the Marine Corps or the Army. I joined Army when I was 18 because it seemed like the right thing to do, and it's been a good ride," Stone shared.

"I was an infantryman for a couple of years and then I went on Active Duty," added Stone. "And when I did, I had an opportu-

nity to change MOSs, I decided to become a medic. I figured there would be more of a job market for that kind of thing after the military. I enjoy my job at Camp Rell. Our unit supports the training site, and I work in the operations area where we support the units that are training on Camp Rell or Stones Ranch. I get to meet a lot of different people and you never know what's going to happen next. Sometimes, I think it's like being in a sitcom. Like 'The Office' meets 'M*A*S*H' or something."

ON AUTOPILOT

From 2004-2005, Stone deployed to Iraq serving as a medic with the 118th Medical Battalion. He compared saving lives there to performing the Heimlich maneuver on Weiss at Yankee Stadium.

"I have treated a lot of Soldiers that were wounded on the battlefield and I definitely did more good than bad and definitely saved lives," he shared. "But saving Mrs. Weiss was the first time I ever had to perform the Heimlich maneuver on anyone for real."

Continuing to describe what his experiences on the battlefield were like, he expounded. "There was one time when there was a rocket attack right across the street from [where we were stationed] and it hit one of the buildings. So many Soldiers were wounded, and because it happened right across the street from us, we were able to get to the site very quickly. It was the middle of the day and it was really hot; I definitely will never forget that experience. I was just on autopilot. This is what you've been trained for. You just do what you have to do and move on to the next guy."

"The training I got in the National Guard absolutely prepared me for [the moment] I performed the Heimlich maneuver on Mrs. Weiss," Stone declared. "They train you to take care of whatever you need to take care of and treat the patient on the spot. If I had just sat there and done nothing, and something had

happened to her I never would have been able to forgive myself."

BACK TO NORMAL

Stone doesn't doubt that joining the military was the right decision.

"When you're 18, you really don't know what's going on. And the [military] definitely gets you pointed in the right direction. But, it brings enormous discipline into your life. I am proud to be a part of the National Guard," he continued. "It's definitely brought a lot of good qualities to my life. For instance, just knowing I got the training I got that enables me to help people who are hurt is a great feeling. I am really proud to be able to serve my country in that way."

At 37, Stone has been serving for almost 20 years.

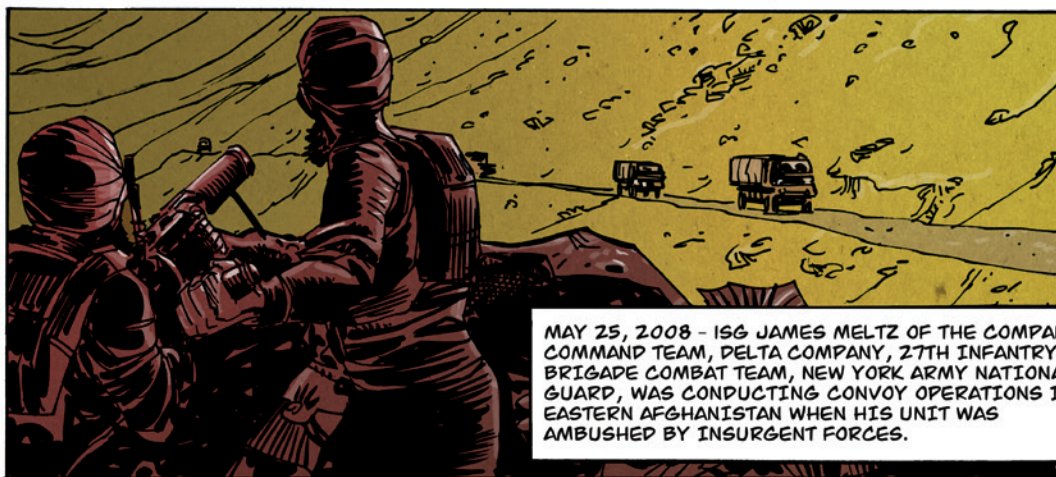
"I really believe in this country and I find that most people in America are very patriotic," said Stone. "After 9/11 happened, you could look and see American flags flying everywhere and the people were really coming together; you could really see the pride that people had for their country. It was a great thing and it still is. Could we use more of that? Always. But, there are a lot of great people in this country. There are a lot of good people out there that love their country, that pull together to show it."

Now that the commotion surrounding Stone's action has begun to settle down, he can get back to life as he knows it, and that makes him happy. That said, Stone looks forward to seeing the Weisses again soon.

"We're still in touch. Her husband has called a couple of times to say hello and see how we were," he said, speaking of himself and his wife, Kimberly. "I just got off my annual training, and I intend on giving them a call in the next few days. They definitely want to keep in touch and that's cool. That's fine by me. They're really great people." **GX**

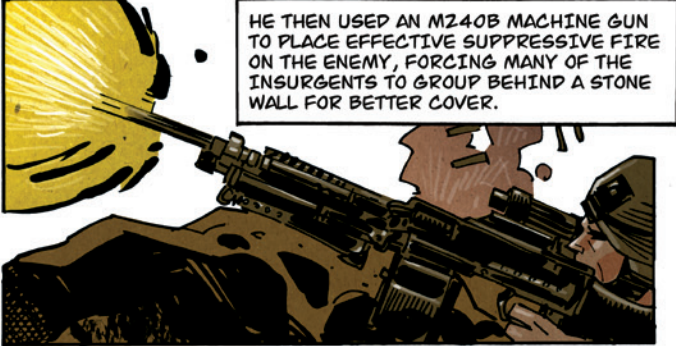
Tell us about Heroes you know at editor@GXonline.com.

ROADSIDE COUNTERATTACK

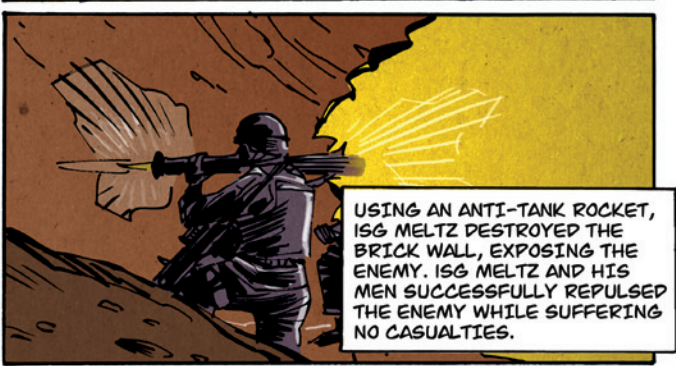


MAY 25, 2008 - ISG JAMES MELTZ OF THE COMPANY COMMAND TEAM, DELTA COMPANY, 27TH INFANTRY BRIGADE COMBAT TEAM, NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, WAS CONDUCTING CONVOY OPERATIONS IN EASTERN AFGHANISTAN WHEN HIS UNIT WAS AMBUSHED BY INSURGENT FORCES.

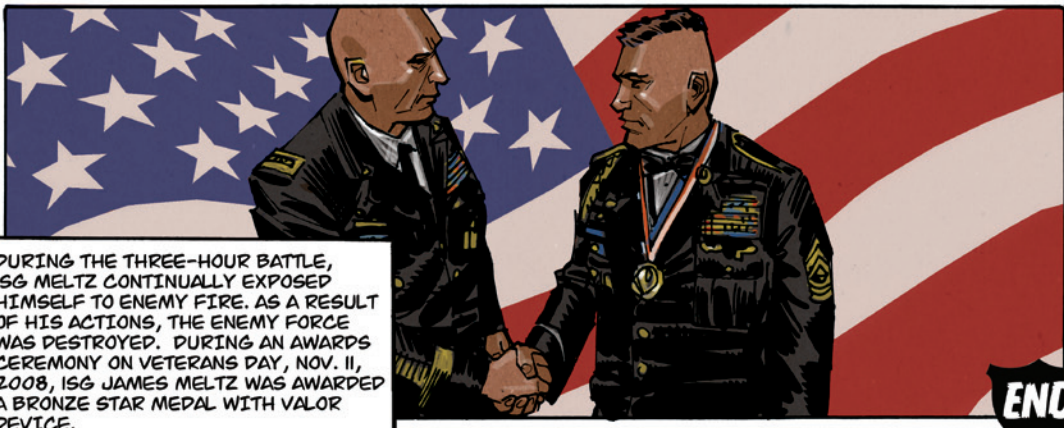
INSURGENT SMALL-ARMS FIRE AND GRENADES RAKED UP AND DOWN THE CONVOY. AN UP-ARMORED HUMVEE WAS STRUCK BY AN ANTI-TANK ROCKET. ISG MELTZ RUSHED THROUGH A HAIL OF ENEMY BULLETS OVER TO THE STRICKEN VEHICLE AND HELPED ALL THE OCCUPANTS OUT OF THE BURNING HUMVEE.



HE THEN USED AN M240B MACHINE GUN TO PLACE EFFECTIVE SUPPRESSIVE FIRE ON THE ENEMY, FORCING MANY OF THE INSURGENTS TO GROUP BEHIND A STONE WALL FOR BETTER COVER.



USING AN ANTI-TANK ROCKET, ISG MELTZ DESTROYED THE BRICK WALL, EXPOSING THE ENEMY. ISG MELTZ AND HIS MEN SUCCESSFULLY REPULSED THE ENEMY WHILE SUFFERING NO CASUALTIES.



DURING THE THREE-HOUR BATTLE, ISG MELTZ CONTINUALLY EXPOSED HIMSELF TO ENEMY FIRE. AS A RESULT OF HIS ACTIONS, THE ENEMY FORCE WAS DESTROYED. DURING AN AWARDS CEREMONY ON VETERANS DAY, NOV. 11, 2008, ISG JAMES MELTZ WAS AWARDED A BRONZE STAR MEDAL WITH VALOR DEVICE.

END

WE ALL SERVE



Jim Ainsworth of Nevada ESGR and Mike Williams, Operations Vice President of Nevada based REMSA, with employees and U.S. Army National Guardsmen Specialist Tyler Teese, Sergeant Steve Park, Sergeant Kevin Basta, Sergeant Nich Hammond, and Specialist Mike Roen.

**ARMY NATIONAL GUARD ★ ARMY RESERVE ★ NAVY RESERVE ★ MARINE RESERVE
COAST GUARD RESERVE ★ AIR NATIONAL GUARD ★ AIR FORCE RESERVE**

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