

GX[®]

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

STETSONS AND SPURS

The History of the
Cavalry From
Horseback to
High-Tech



>> GX HERO

BEATING THE ODDS

SOLDIER BATTLES
CANCER
P. 76

>> ON THE ROAD

SALUTE TO AMERICA

VIKINGS
CELEBRATE
SILVER STAR
WINNER

>> GEAR

LIKE A ROCK

THE HEAVY
EXPANDED
MOBILITY
TACTICAL
TRUCK

>> SPORTS

STAR POWER

FANS TRAVEL
FOR DALE JR.'S
AUTOGRAPH

WE ALL SERVE



BOB BARABTY, VICE PRESIDENT OF HAWAII BASED COASTAL WINDOWS WITH EMPLOYEE AND U.S. ARMY RESERVE SERGEANT MICHAEL ECHIVERRI.

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COAST GUARD RESERVE ★ AIR NATIONAL GUARD ★ AIR FORCE RESERVE**

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RACING

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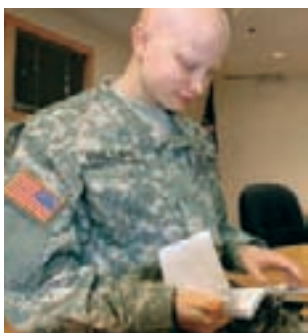
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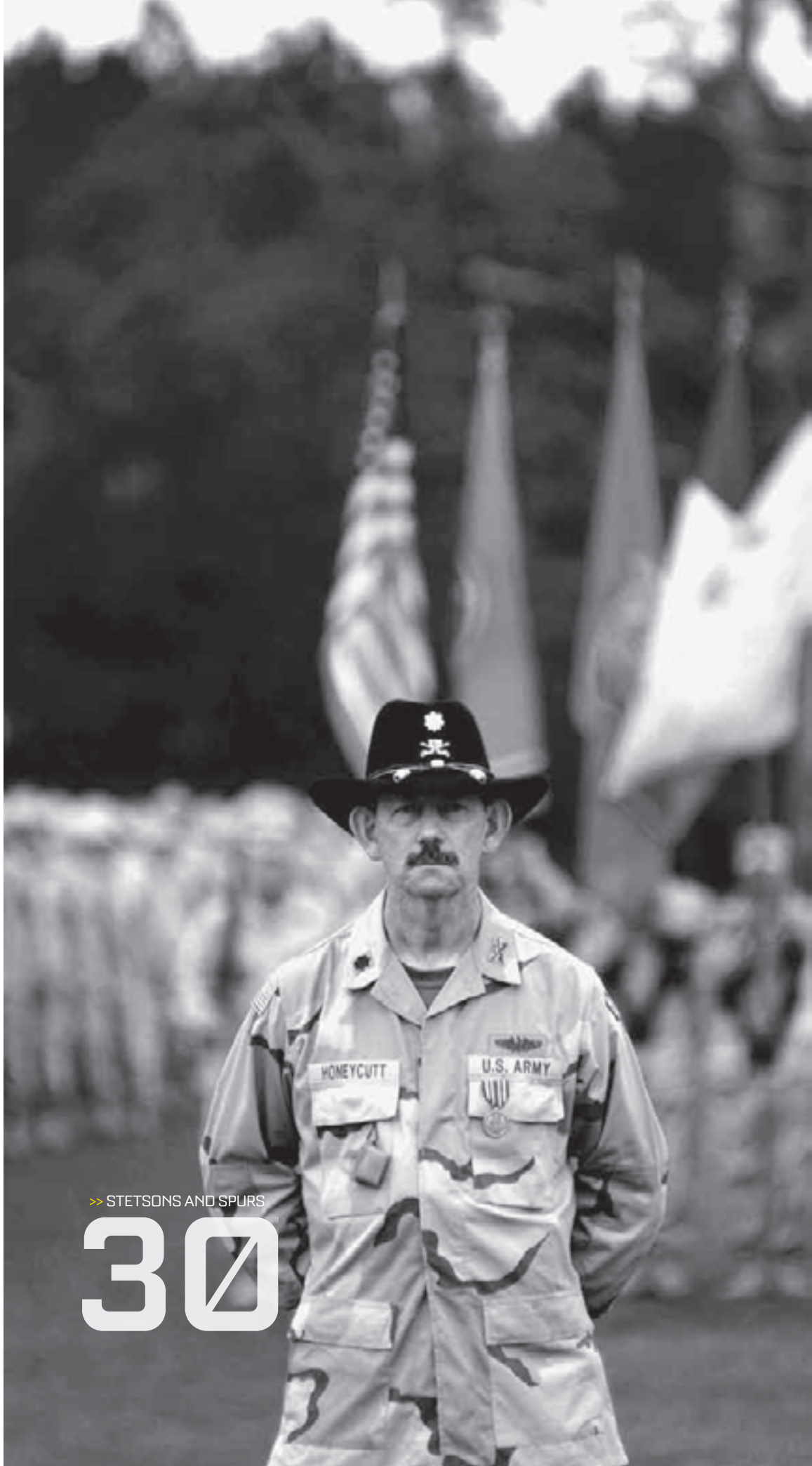
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Letter From Leadership



To the Soldiers: We All Serve

On behalf of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) Staff and our over 4,000 volunteers, I would like to extend our sincerest appreciation and best wishes to all.

Serving in the National Guard or Reserve presents unique challenges. Unlike their Active Duty counterparts, members of the Army National Guard, Army Reserve, Navy Reserve, Marine Reserve, Coast Guard Reserve, Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve serve their nation part-time and work for civilian employers full-time. Understanding this distinct difference, the Department of Defense established ESGR in 1972. ESGR has continually strived to promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the volunteer military service of their employees. We gain and maintain employer support for this Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflict through mediation. As America continues to depend upon her citizen Warriors to keep us safe on Main Street USA, help us recover from natural disasters or defend us in faraway places like Afghanistan and Iraq, ESGR stands steadfast in its mission of supporting our civilian employers and their Guard and Reserve employees.

Thank you for your service. ESGR is here for you as we continue to “Serve Our Nation—Together!”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Gordon Sumner, Jr." in a cursive script.

L. Gordon Sumner, Jr., Ph. D.

Executive Director

National Committee Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve

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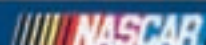


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“Failure just isn’t an option.”

>> Lara Phillips, 18-year-old Pennsylvania Army National Guard Soldier

Every now and then a story comes in that stops the presses. On Jan. 22, an article dropped in from 1LT Jay Ostrich of Pennsylvania. The subject line read “Survival School Story.” Sounded pretty hooah, so I clicked on it. Just four sentences into the article, I grabbed the phone and called Ostrich.

The story was about Lara Phillips, an 18-year-old Pennsylvania Soldier battling cancer. With a tenacious heart, Lara is holding to the *Soldier's Creed* for motivation and drawing on the iron will instilled by the Army National Guard for stability.

And she's got the 56th Stryker Brigade rallying for her. Prior to the turn in her health, Lara was a member of the 56th. This hard-core group of Soldiers is taking the fight to the enemy this spring and honoring Lara every step of the way.

You can read about Lara on p. 76. Please join us in honoring and supporting this brave Soldier. And Lara, we keep you in our prayers and thank you for your service to our Nation.



1LT JAY OSTRICH

Thanks!

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



ON THE COVER
PFC Alex Fan of B Troop, 1-18th CAV, California Army National Guard honors and upholds the proud tradition of the United States Cavalry.

PHOTO BY TIM TADDER



SGT JACK W. CARLSON III

Got a photo?

Send us a picture of you in service to our Nation, and we'll publish it in *GX*! Send your photo to Editor@GXonline.com

Out in the Cold Master Sgt. Mike Smith, Reporter, National Guard Bureau, Lt Col. Steve Carroll, Commander, 49th Missile Defense BN, and LTC Hunt Kerrigan, Alaska Army National Guard, push their way through the 40-degree below zero wind chill from the Interceptor Storage Building on the Missile Defense Complex at Fort Greely, AK. Located just north of the Alaska Mountain Range, Fort Greely has been recognized as the Guard's premier cold-weather testing grounds, and the home of the nation's ballistic missile defense capability.



*We want to hear from you!

Send your questions or comments to feedback@GXonline.com

What's one thing you love about *GX*?

My kids (all 4 of them) always love to read it and ask me questions.

1SG Galen Bret Allred, Utah National Guard

What's one thing you'd like to see more of in *GX*?

More articles from embedded reporters talking not just about the topic-de-jour, but about the day-to-day lives of Soldiers on the battlefield and some of the things they do to cope, what families are doing to cope. What's working and what's being done to change what isn't. Thanks for what you do!

MAJ Rusty Romans, North Dakota National Guard

I would like to see more personal stories of Soldiers.

CPT Heather Guck, Iowa National Guard





>> FROM AMERICA, WITH LOVE

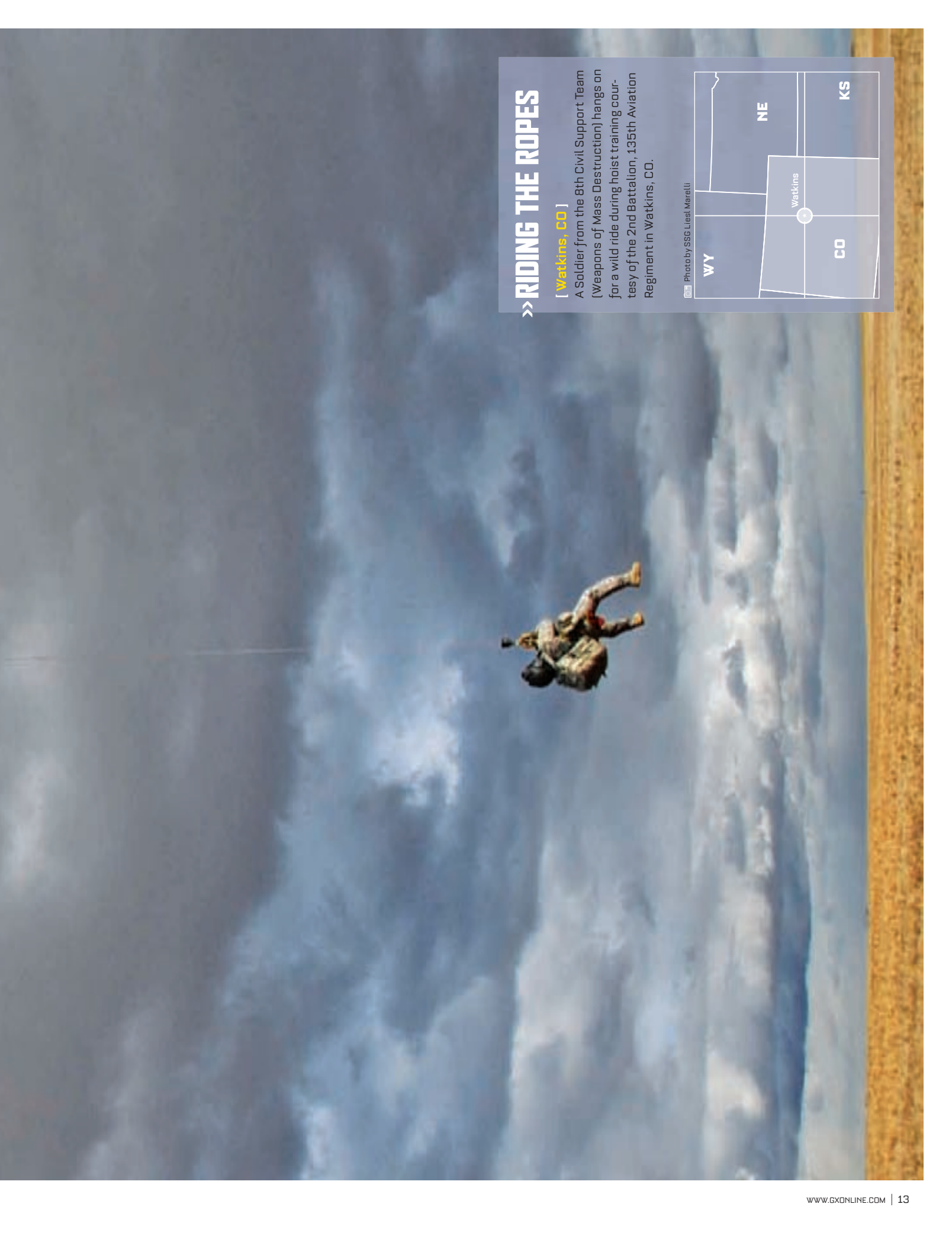
[Fort A.P. Hill, VA]

SPC Ryan Kamauf of B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 110th Field Artillery Regiment, sets the fuse on a 105 mm high explosive round during the last live fire of the unit's guns at Fort A.P. Hill, VA, Nov. 1, 2008.

Photo by SSG Jon Soucy







>> RIDING THE ROPES

[**Watkins, CO**]

A Soldier from the 8th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) hangs on for a wild ride during hoist training courtesy of the 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment in Watkins, CO.

Photo by SSG Liesel Marelli

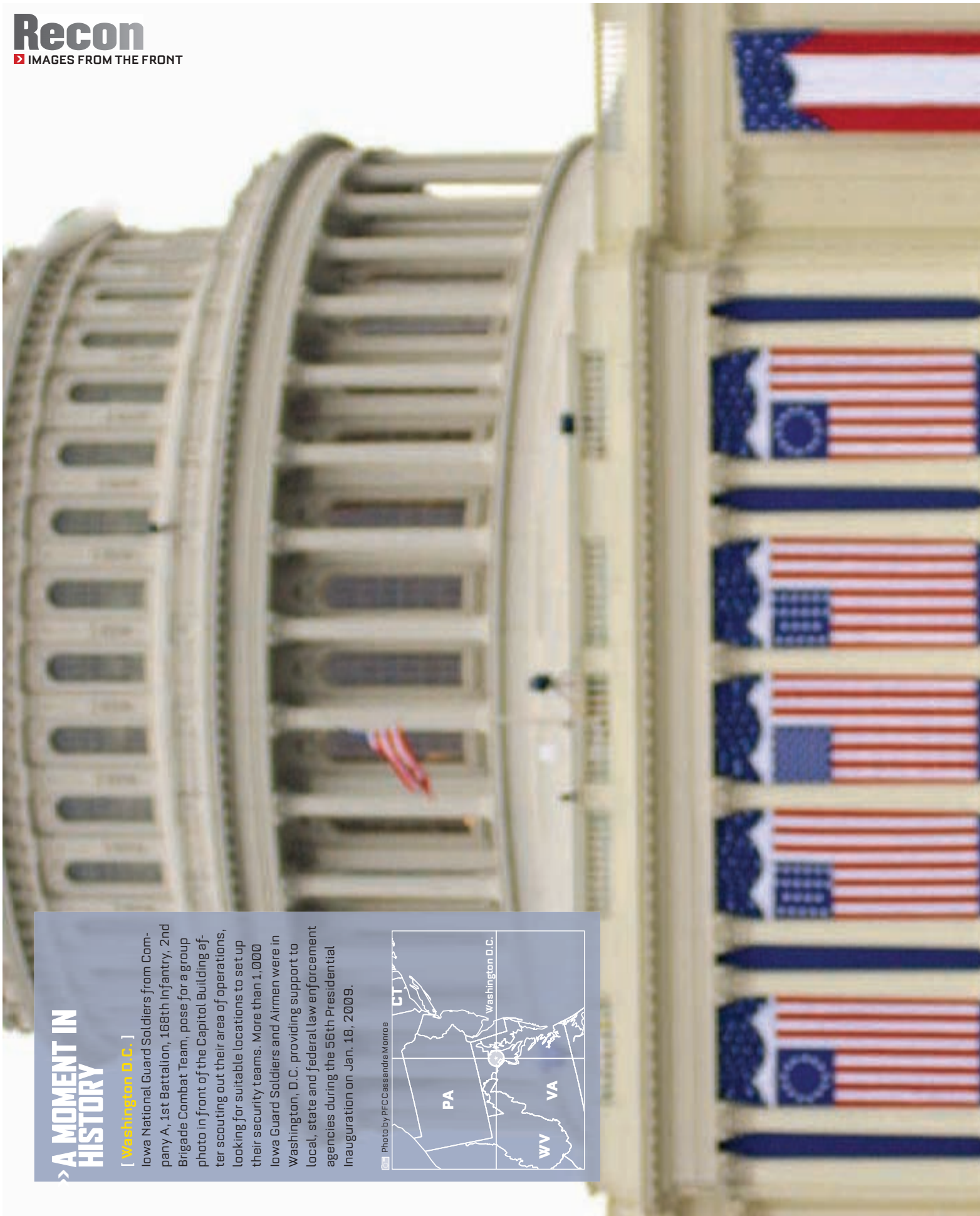


>> A MOMENT IN HISTORY

[Washington D.C.]

Iowa National Guard Soldiers from Company A, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, pose for a group photo in front of the Capitol Building after scouting out their area of operations, looking for suitable locations to set up their security teams. More than 1,000 Iowa Guard Soldiers and Airmen were in Washington, D.C. providing support to local, state and federal law enforcement agencies during the 56th Presidential Inauguration on Jan. 18, 2009.

Photo by PFC Cassandra Manros







KENTUCKY HEROES
Soldiers honored for service in Iraq.

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Guard battles ice and snow.

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Red Bull band goes to Iraq.

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THE SILVER STAR IS THE THIRD-HIGHEST DECORATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE U.S. ARMED FORCES, AFTER THE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS AND THE MEDAL OF HONOR.



HONORED HERO
SPC Jason Harrington was presented the Silver Star by BG Jerry G. Beck on Dec. 27 in Harrisburg, PA.

Honored For Heroism

SILVER STAR AWARDED TO PENNSYLVANIA SOLDIER

By SGM Walter S. Zapotoczny / HARRISBURG, PA

► **TRAINING IS WHAT GOT** SPC Jason D. Harrington into Iraq, and training is what got him out alive.

"I was just doing what I had to do," said Harrington, who was presented the Silver Star in a ceremony held in Harrisburg, PA, on Dec. 27. "I think any other Soldier would have done the same thing," he added. His actions were credited with saving the lives of fellow Soldiers during an incident in Iraq in September 2005.

Harrington joined the Pennsylvania National Guard to pay for college after graduating from high school in 2000. But once

he had completed all of his individual training, "I was kind of itching to go over there," Harrington told his hometown newspaper, the Lancaster (PA) *Intelligencer Journal*. He got his chance in June 2005, when he was assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 172nd Armor, as a member of a long range surveillance and sniper team.

On Sept. 19, 2005, three of Harrington's platoon members, including his platoon leader, were attacked with an improvised explosive device (IED).

According to his award citation, Harrington immediately volun-

teered to be part of a reaction force to respond to the scene. Along with another platoon, he left his base and moved into a known high-threat area with little friendly presence.

As the two Humvees in his group were moving to the scene, the vehicle in which Harrington was riding struck an IED, tearing off the front of the vehicle. "I was pretty fortunate to be able to walk away from that," Harrington told the *Intelligencer Journal*.

Disoriented from the explosion, not knowing the extent of his own injuries and suffering from a possible concussion, Harrington's training took over. First, he physically checked the crew in his Humvee for injuries. "There were 10 of us in my Humvee, and we all walked away," Harrington told the *Harrisburg Patriot News*.

out of the vehicle. Harrington helped a medic begin first aid on the wounded platoon sergeant.

With both Humvees now disabled and without communications, Harrington grabbed a radio out of his bag and established communications with headquarters. "If I had not had my radio, who knows what would have happened," Harrington told the *Patriot News*.

After the recovery effort was completed, he again assumed additional risk to himself by helping sweep the unsecured area for insurgents. According to his award citation, "SPC Harrington's calm under fire and personal courage were directly responsible for saving lives on a day when many more lives could have been lost."

Harrington, who left the Guard in 2006, is only the third 28th Infantry Division (ID) Soldier to

"SPC HARRINGTON'S CALM UNDER FIRE AND PERSONAL COURAGE WERE DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR SAVING LIVES." >> Silver Star award citation

After everyone was checked, he exited the destroyed vehicle and began to engage the enemy positions, fully exposed to small arms fire.

The platoon sergeant hooked a tow strap to Harrington's vehicle and began to pull it away from enemy fire. At that point, both Humvees were struck by a second IED, knocking the platoon sergeant

be awarded the Silver Star since World War II.

"The Silver Star is not something that is given out lightly," said BG Jerry G. Beck, the 28th ID commander, who described Harrington's actions as "a real hero's story."

"Every day, I know how lucky I was to make it out," he told the *Patriot News*. **GX**



PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT Alaska Army National Guard's CST members perform an extraction drill as they practice gathering suspicious powder from an office.

Suspicious Powder

ALASKA'S CIVIL SUPPORT TEAM REACTS *By Ben Warden*

▶ **ALASKA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S (AKARNG)** Civil Support Team (CST) recently put their training to the test when a suspicious envelope filled with white powder and addressed to former Gov. Frank Murkowski surfaced in a mail reception office in Juneau. Since their headquarters is hundreds of miles away in Anchorage, the team took to the air for the two-hour flight.

CSTs were established in 2000 to assess suspected Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) attacks, conduct onsite testing and advise civilian responders. The teams are comprised of 22 Soldiers: seven officers and 15 enlisted from both the Army and Air National Guard.

There are a total of 55 CSTs, with one per state or territory and two in California.

Not only does each team member have a variety of specialties, they have specific vehicles to go with them, including an operations van, a communications van, an analytical laboratory system van and other transportation vehicles.

CSTs are designed to work with state and local officials, but back in Alaska, they often find themselves in charge.

"We're the subject matter experts up here," said SGT Troy Godwin, an AKARNG CST member, "because most of our fire departments and HAZMAT (Hazardous Material) teams are volunteer."

SUSPECTED BIOLOGICAL ATTACK

With the situation in Juneau, GX asked the team to talk us through their experience in order to get a sense of how a CST processes a situation like this.

"When we get the call, we ask questions to pinpoint what we're actually being called to do and what the situation is," said MSG Mike Carruthers, an AKARNG CST member. "In this case it was a suspected biological attack, so that allows us to travel with a little bit less gear and thus a little bit quicker."

"TRUST YOUR TRAINING, TAKE GOOD NOTES AND FOLLOW YOUR CHECKLISTS."

>> **MSG Mike Carruthers**

After the briefings and the flight, the CST arrived in Juneau a few hours later. Before they could go in and retrieve the envelope however, they had to conduct nearly three hours of equipment checks.

According to Godwin, "Because of the altitude change and the cold, we have to recalibrate

our instruments and refill our breathing tanks, which takes time. We then do a few briefings to make it as safe as we can."

After the briefing, two men entered the office and took tests, photographs and samples. Initially the CST's tests showed the substance was non-threatening, but nothing is taken for granted until a higher-authority lab verifies it.

The men came out of the building after an hour and went through a decontamination process of being scrubbed with a bleach and water solvent. Carruthers said his team was careful not to disturb the actual letter to preserve possible evidence.

"There was a lot of material available from the letter itself, but we took mostly outer samples to preserve the actual letter for legal purposes," he stated.

GOOD TIMING

As frightening as the situation was, the timing was fortunate in that it happened very soon after the training drill and evaluation that the CST does every 18 months. Godwin noted that due to the drill, his office was operating at a fast pace over the past few months, and it helped prepare them for what happened when the letter was delivered.

"We've done this type of scenario quite a few times in the past few months, so at least for me personally, it wasn't all that scary," Godwin commented. "It really seemed more like an everyday thing to me."

Unfortunately these letter attacks have become a common thing. At the time of this writing, nearly 30 states have received similarly threatening letters. Local and federal authorities across the country have worked closely with their state's CSTs to assess and deal with each of the threats.

CSTs are often first on the scene, and Godwin attributes this to their equipment and relationship with other agencies.

"One of the biggest reasons we get called in is because of our instrumentation, and we have worked with our local FBI agency quite a bit, so they're pretty confident in our abilities," he acknowledged.

Since Alaska was the first state to receive the threat, GX asked Carruthers what advice he had for those who faced a similar position. "Trust your training," he advised. "Take good notes and follow your checklists. This is what we're trained to do, and unfortunately, we have to do it every now and then." **GX**

True Heroes

KENTUCKY SOLDIERS RECOGNIZED FOR BRAVERY

Story and photos by SFC Clinton Wood /
Kentucky Army National Guard

American heroes of the Kentucky Army National Guard's (KYARNG) B-Battery, 2/138th Field Artillery (FA) were recognized Dec. 6.

1LT R.J. Hill, SGT Michael Cepeda and SPC John Netherton were presented the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device for their combat actions during their unit's deployment in Operation Iraqi Freedom. When awarded with "V" device for valor and bravery in combat, the Bronze Star Medal is the fourth-highest combat award of the U.S. Armed Forces.

SSG Justin Jones and SGT Eric Conkright were presented the Soldier's Medal that the Army awards for acts of heroism when risking one's life to save another in a non-combat action. Fewer than 10 of these medals have been awarded to Kentucky Guard members and less than 110 have been awarded to Guard Soldiers nationwide. GEN (ret.) Colin Powell is among the recipients of this award, and an unprecedented 28 Service members were awarded this medal after the 9/11 attack on the Pentagon. Other medals were awarded as well.

SGT Rodney Turssel received the Purple Heart for wounds he received in April 2008 when the truck he was riding in was struck by an anti-tank grenade.

"We have examples of true Kentucky heroes out there today, guys who sacrificed themselves to save members of their unit," said BG John Heltzel, director of emergency management for the Kentucky Guard. "Every one of those guys deserves the awards they got today."

Hill, Cepeda and Netherton were recognized for their bravery when a roadside bomb hit the lead Armored Security Vehicle (ASV) during a convoy escort mission. Hill was the convoy commander riding in a vehicle behind the lead vehicle. Cepeda was the driver of the ASV that got hit and Netherton was a passenger in that vehicle.

Hill said he couldn't remember much about that night, but noted, "We saw the flames off in the distance and saw movement in the vehicle and so we were able to get our Soldiers treated



PROUD SALUTE 1LT R.J. Hill salutes BG John Heltzel after Heltzel presented him with the Bronze Star with "V" device.

**"WE HAVE
EXAMPLES OF
TRUE KENTUCKY
HEROES OUT
THERE TODAY."**

>> BG John Heltzel

and medevaced out."

That's just one of the many brave acts of this officer, who has been in the Guard for only four years. Others include leaving the safety of his vehicle to assist the wounded from the burning ASV under small arms fire from a nearby building and climbing atop the vehicle in an attempt to extract the seriously wounded truck commander.

He had to withdraw because the vehicle was becoming a cauldron from the intense heat, punctuated by the explosions of the ammunition, including 40 mm grenades.

"I really didn't have time to think and basically reverted back to our training," he said. "We had a defensive posture, and we were trying to be

swift and get through it. It wasn't expected. I don't really think any kind of training can mentally prepare you for that, but the training that we did receive kind of kicked in after the initial shock."

Cepeda couldn't react to the "initial shock." He was knocked unconscious by the blast momentarily. Once he regained consciousness, he attempted to reach his higher headquarters on the truck's radio and assess the situation.

"I thought it was over with," he said. "I was going to jump out of the top hatch, but I didn't know if we were being shot at the time or not. I jumped out of the vehicle at the absolute last second."

He said when he reached the other side of the truck that the blast hit, with assistance, he moved two of the other three Soldiers in the vehicle to safety. One was Netherton.

Netherton had already extinguished the fire in the gunner's compartment and removed the gunner from the vehicle.

"It was immediate—put the fire out, get out of the truck and help my buddy out," said Netherton of his actions. "Everything just like fell into place. There really wasn't any hesitation."

The latter statement takes on additional meaning considering that Netherton sustained two broken knees, burns and cuts to his face and shrapnel to his forearm.

Cepeda, who was also injured, performed brave acts including applying a tourniquet to the gunner's severely injured legs and rendering



GOOD JOB, SON SPC John Netherton shares a moment with BG John Heltzel after Heltzel presented him with the Bronze Star with "V" device.



HERO'S HANDSHAKE SGT Michael Cepeda shakes hands with BG John Heltzel after Heltzel presented him with the Bronze Star with "V" device.

medical aid to Netherton. His actions helped save their lives.

"I remember my lieutenant saying we need to get them in the vehicle when I was treating [the gunner]," he said. "And I just picked him up, threw him on my back and just ran to whatever vehicle we were going to put him in."

IN THE FACE OF DANGER

Two Soldiers are credited with saving two lives from a burning, overturned ASV in a v-shaped ditch.

Conkright and Jones were the first on the scene and used every fire extinguisher available in an attempt to knock down the flames that witnesses said they could see 1,500 meters away.

The pair ignored the exploding ammunition from inside the ASV and continued to move back and forth from nearby trucks to the accident site bringing all the fire extinguishers they could find.

Unknown to them, the two Soldiers who they later rescued had incapacitating injuries. One had contusions on his head and a back injury, and the other had a broken back and several cuts.

"The flames were going up so quick, [so] we were just fighting the fire more

FAST FACTS

B-Battery, 2/138th Field Artillery deployed to Taji, Iraq, in June 2007. It returned May 2008. The Soldiers performed convoy security for the 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (BN), the largest in theater.

than anything," said Jones.

Conkright crawled down in a confined area about two feet high beneath the ASV and pulled the two Soldiers out of the vehicle. Jones assisted him in moving the two Soldiers to safety and a military ambulance. They also provided first aid to these Soldiers until a medical evacuation helicopter arrived on scene.

Conkright administered intravenous (IV) fluids into both Soldiers. He also contacted the medical evacuation helicopter and supervised the handoff of the casualties.

Jones summed up the day this way: "It's a good feeling to be recognized. It was just something I felt I had to do." **GX**



THE SOLDIER'S SOLDIER (L-R) SGT Eric Conkright and SSG Justin Jones were each awarded the Soldier's Medal.

VICTORY MAP



ALABAMA

The Alabama Army National Guard made history at a change of command ceremony Feb. 7 at Headquarters, 62nd Troop Command in Montgomery. COL (Promotable) Sheryl E. Gordon of Eclectic accepted the 62nd colors, symbolizing her assumption of command of the unit. Once her federal recognition to the rank of brigadier general is confirmed, she will become the first female general officer in Alabama National Guard history. The 62nd Troop Command is the largest of four major commands in the Alabama Army National Guard with 5,000 personnel around the state.

FLORIDA

"Cool Tools" on the DIY Network visited members of the Florida Army National Guard in January to produce an episode highlighting the unique tools and equipment used by the Guard. "Cool Tools," a fast-paced showcase of the most fascinating, useful, gee-whiz tools on the market, visited the Florida National Guard's Army Aviation Support Facility at Cecil Field and wrapped up their visit on location with the 202nd REDHORSE Squadron at Camp Blanding.

LOUISIANA

SFC Larry Jester, a full-time Louisiana Army National Guard Soldier, has once again taken the lead in his dedicated service to other Veterans. Jester was selected to serve as road manager for the Road 2 Recovery California Challenge. Along with Jester, dozens of injured warriors, celebrities, athletes and elected officials participated in the 7-day, 420-mile, 2008 bike ride across the state.

The Louisiana National Guard celebrated the completion of a multi-million dollar project at Camp Beauregard in Pineville on Feb. 17. The new building houses the Joint Force Headquarters and the Joint Operations Center. Equipped with an automatic back-up generator throughout, and a staff of more than 100 personnel capable of conducting 24-hour operations during emergencies, the headquarters building is specifically designed to enable operations throughout the state for emergency response missions and year-round planning and preparation.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

VICTORY
MAP



MISSOURI

The Missouri National Guard's 1438th Multi-Role Bridge Company is the first Guard unit to receive two new Light Equipment Transporter vehicles from Oshkosh Corporation. The M983A2 Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck Light Equipment Transporter will transport engineer construction equipment and materials vital to completing the unit's mission: to transport, assemble, disassemble, retrieve and maintain bridging systems.

NEW YORK

Infantry Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry and the New York Army National Guard's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package, known as a CERFP, transferred command of the statewide response mission to fellow Soldiers from Central New York in a ceremony Jan. 11 at the New York State Armory. The ceremony recognized the contributions of Gloversville Soldiers for nearly two years of training and incident preparedness.

TENNESSEE

A special team of Tennessee Army National Guard Soldiers who specialize in agricultural business will be teaching basic farming techniques such as planting and harvesting wheat, planting corn and using trellises to grow tomatoes and grapes to Afghan citizens. The Agri-business Development Team left for training at Camp Atterbury, IN, before heading to Afghanistan for a yearlong deployment.

BALAD, IRAQ

For the second year in a row, volunteers from Soldiers' Angels in Louisiana, in conjunction with the Louisiana Family Readiness Group, are sending the carnival spirit of Mardi Gras to deployed Louisiana National Guard Soldiers. This year, 1st Battalion, 244th Aviation Regiment of Hammond, LA, was chosen as the recipient of Operation Overseas Mardi Gras 2009. The unit is currently deployed to Balad, Iraq.

HEAVY EQUIPMENT

Massachusetts Army National Guard Soldiers from the 379th Engineer Company use a front-end loader to get a better look at a damaged utility pole in Phillipston, MA.



CUTTING AND CLEARING


A Soldier cuts a tree that is blocking traffic after harsh winter storms blanketed the region with ice and sleet.



Answering a Neighbor's Call

NEW ENGLAND GUARD UNITS HELP FELLOW STATES

By SSG Jon Soucy

 MASSACHUSETTS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD Soldiers received a helping hand from their New England counterparts in recovery operations after a severe winter storm that dropped ice, freezing rain and sleet throughout the region recently.

Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick doubled the number of his Guard Soldiers on duty with the call-up of about 700, bringing the total to almost 1,500 personnel.

He also requested assistance from the governor of Connecticut under the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. He specifically asked for help in route clearance and debris removal.

The Connecticut Army National Guard provided 23 personnel as well as equipment ranging from chainsaws to mobile excavating equipment, said John Whitford, the state public affairs officer.

"This request came down very fast," he said. "We had close to 40 volunteers, but only 23 were needed."

The Connecticut Soldiers were from the 192nd Engineering Battalion of Stratford, the 248th Engineer Company of Norwich, the 250th

Engineering Company of New London, and the 246th and 256th Firefighting Detachments of East Lyme.

Whitford said this battalion is unique because it has the only authorized chainsaw operators in the state. "So they have these special skills sets to help out. They can hit the ground running when they get in state, get their taskings and immediately go to work."

Additional Massachusetts Guard personnel assisted in the recovery efforts with chainsaws, communications equipment, front-end loaders, dump trucks, armories, water and fuel transportation and generators. They also provided security at more than 60 shelters while augmenting local police in communities.

In New Hampshire, more than 350 Soldiers from 197th Fires Brigade and 54th Troop Command operated in the Concord and Manchester areas. They provided shelter support, security, debris-clearing and commodity distribution. **GX**

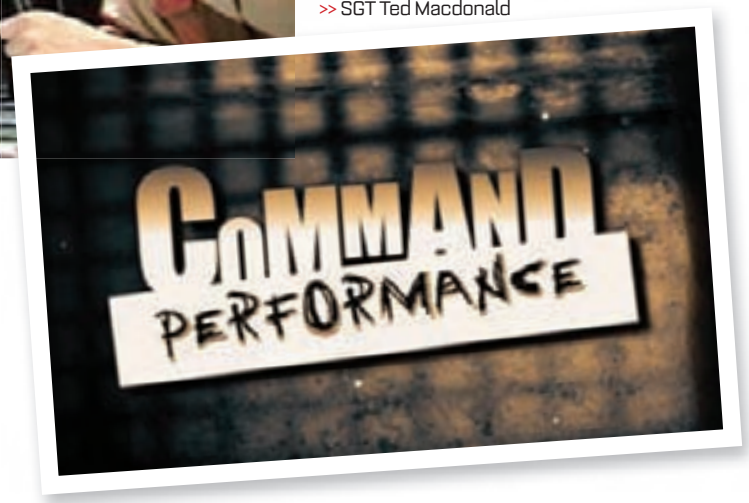
SGT JAMES JALBY



HANGING WITH THE BAND A Marine with the Pentagon Channel interviews Brad Arnold from 3 Doors Down about his work with the National Guard.

“WORKING ON ‘COMMAND PERFORMANCE’ IS GREAT BECAUSE THE ARTISTS SEEM AS INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT THE MILITARY AS WE ARE IN GETTING TO KNOW THEM.”

>> SGT Ted Macdonald



‘Command Performance’

NEW VODCAST CONNECTS SOLDIERS WITH MUSICAL ARTISTS

By Michel Winneker, the Pentagon Channel

IF YOU'RE LOOKING for something new on your favorite performer, something unique, something you can relate to, or a way you can connect with big artists and rising stars, check out “Command Performance.”

Coming soon, the Pentagon Channel will add this new and exciting vodcast to its current top-notch collection available on iTunes as we strive to keep Service members informed and entertained.

“Command Performance” aims to bring the world of music and entertainment to Service members and their families. It also brings the Service members to the artist!

Each week, the Pentagon Channel will interview artists, but *you* ask the questions. Email us questions you never thought you would have the chance to ask these stars like, “How did Larry the Cable Guy develop his act?” or “How do The Killers stay close to family when they’re always on tour?”

“Command Performance” looks for life experiences that artists may have in common with military members—from dealing with constant travel to, in one case, Post-Traumatic Stress

“Getting to go behind the scenes and watch the process of how a concert is being put together is really fascinating. Being able to sit down and talk to the artists while all of that is going on is even better!”

>> MC1 LIZ MURRAY

Disorder. For many of these artists, it’s the first time they’ve had the opportunity to interact with Service members in this manner.

SGT Ted Macdonald, an anchor on the show

says, “Working on ‘Command Performance’ is great because the artists seem as interested in learning about the military as we are in getting to know them.”

The artists range in musical genres from rock to jazz and pop to blues. “Command Performance” offers a unique interview point of view you can’t find anywhere else, and with such a wide range of artists, there’s going to be something for everyone.

Anchor MC1 Liz Murray, stated, “Getting to go behind the scenes and watch the process of how a concert is being put together is really fascinating. Being able to sit down and talk to the artists while all of that is going on is even better!”

Episodes already completed include: Three Doors Down, smooth jazz trumpeter Chris Botti, The Killers and Cat Power. **GX**

LOOK ONLINE TO FIND UPCOMING SCHEDULED ARTISTS AND SUBMIT YOUR QUESTIONS ON WWW.PENTAGONCHANNEL.MIL.



COVERING FIRE!
A four-man team approaches a building through smoke and rain to clear it after an ambush on their convoy during a Special Forces training event held at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center in Indiana.

Prepping for Battle

SPECIAL FORCES TRAIN TROOPS FOR COMBAT

Story and photos by SPC John Crosby | BUTLERVILLE, IN

► **FREEZING RAIN**, cold, muddy terrain, loud explosions and enemy fire all worked simultaneously against the Soldiers of the Special Forces Basic Combat Skills course as they navigated the final phase of the course at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, a sub-installation of Camp Atterbury.

The 19th Special Forces Group directed the training given to Soldiers assigned to support the unit. Special Forces Soldiers are highly trained military teams or units who conduct specialized operations such as reconnaissance, unconventional warfare and counter-terrorism actions. The six-day training was designed to bring troops up to speed in preparation for operations in a combat zone. The participating Soldiers ranged in rank and jobs from privates to captains and administrative specialists to mechanics—all with one common goal—to become qualified to provide support to the SF Soldiers.

The course was designed for support personnel—like administrative specialists and mechanics—to learn a wide range of combat operations maneuvers while supporting SF elements. On today’s battlefield, any Soldier is capable of being engaged in combat. When leaving the security of a base, a supply Soldier is just as likely to encounter danger as a combat-arms Soldier whose job is to fight.

“They need basic warfighter skills to support us,” said the 19th SF Group team leader and officer in charge of the training course. “We ensure they have the mission skills to be ready for anything that comes their way, making them fully mission capable.”

“If something happens, they will have a better chance at survivability,” he said. During the course, SF Soldiers instructed the Soldiers on “shoot, move and communicate” tactics as well as convoy operations and room clearing procedures.



TEAMWORK Soldiers “buddy carry” a wounded Soldier to evacuate him after an ambush during a six-day training course given by Special Forces members at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center in Indiana.

“It’s the bare bones—what you need to know to survive,” said the SF Bravo Company executive officer. “We’ll be spending a lot of time on the roads in theater. Whether we need to hold security or wait for assistance, we know that the men to our left and right are competent.”

The group team leader said many Soldiers admire and respect their SF trainers. He said the admiration goes as far as Soldiers volunteering to become SF support assets to have a better chance for being selected to train to become an official SF Soldier.

“They see the SF trainers out here,” he said. “They see their strength and knowledge, and they say to themselves, ‘I want to be that guy. I want to be that quiet professional. I want to be a team member.’”

The group team leader also said the training was an excellent opportunity for training and advancement of Soldiers’ military careers.

One SF Support Company Soldier, a logistics sergeant who was training in the course, said that as a National Guard Soldier, it is wise to volunteer for all the training you can get. The more experience you have, he said, the more competent and knowledgeable you are in your job.

“You can’t beat it,” he said. “The SF guys know a ton about the tactics and teamwork required to move together fluidly as one element. They don’t harp on you when you make a mistake. They

“IT’S THE BARE BONES, WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO SURVIVE.”

>> SF Bravo Company Executive Officer

quickly tell you what you’re doing wrong, and show you how to fix it.”

The Executive Officer said the SF trainers took the training very seriously, and they worked hard to ensure every Soldier participating in the course got the most out of it.

“I think the SF role is misunderstood,” he said of the common misconception that, when deployed, SF troops are constantly engaged in gunfire. “Their primary mission is to train, advise and assist military elements. They do a great job. They are extremely professional and good at what they do. Most of these [support Soldiers] are getting a lot out of this course.” **GX**

Honing Warrior Skills

CALIFORNIA'S 1/185TH CAB HEADS TO KOSOVO

Story and photos by SGT Sheila Holifield, 177th Armored Brigade, Public Affairs | CAMP SHELBY, MS

► **NEARLY 100 CALIFORNIA** National Guard Soldiers are preparing for a deployment to Kosovo in the spring, where they will serve as the NATO Kosovo Force's quick-reaction force.

Members of the 1/185th Combined Arms Battalion (CAB) from Bakersfield, CA, recently arrived at Camp Shelby to train with their M2 Bradley fighting vehicles.

"Over 50 percent of our Soldiers have prior deployment experience to a combat zone doing this type of mission, so we know what to expect," stated CPT Michael Riley, commander of Company C, 1/185th CAB.

Riley said the Soldiers could draw from their prior deployment experiences when interacting with the local population. "We understand cultural sensitivity, and no matter where you are

"WE UNDERSTAND CULTURAL SENSITIVITY, AND NO MATTER WHERE YOU ARE BEING DEPLOYED TO, THAT IS IMPORTANT."

>> CPT Michael Riley

being deployed to, that is important," Riley said.

Although the unit's Soldiers are not new to the deployed environment, Riley believes this particular mission will be challenging in its own way.

"Our focus is to help Soldiers understand current battlefield parameters and adhere to their current



FRONT ROW SEATS CPT Michael Riley, commander of Company C, 1/185th Combined Arms Battalion, and BG Keith Jones, assistant deputy adjutant general for California's Army National Guard, get front-row action as they observe a M2 Bradley fighting vehicle live-fire exercise at Camp Shelby, MS.

standards," Riley continued. "It's not easy for an infantry Soldier to transition out of that mode into a more 'friendly' role and still be able to transition right back to being an infantryman."

Upon their arrival here in late November, the Soldiers focused on Bradley gunnery training. "It's just like

qualifying with an individual weapon," Riley contended, "but we also have to qualify as a crew." According to Riley, 100 percent of the Soldiers qualified.

In mid-December, the 1/185th CAB traveled to Camp Atterbury, IN, where they continued their mobilization training for the Kosovo deployment. **GX**

"Hell Fighters" Get New Commander

By LTC Richard Goldenberg



► **FOR THE FIRST TIME** in its history, a female will command the famous 369th Sustainment Brigade, otherwise known as the "Harlem Hell Fighters."

COL Stephanie Dawson is the first female officer in New York Army National Guard (NYARNG) history to command a brigade. Prior to serving in the 369th, she served as commander of the 27th Rear Operations Center and deployed to Iraq in 2003–2004.

As executive officer for the 369th Corps Support Battalion during the unit's 9/11 activation, she helped spearhead battalion relief, security, supply, transportation and other logistical support missions for initial Ground Zero operations.

Dawson is a 2007 graduate of the Army War College, as well as the Army's Command and General Staff College and the Combined Arms and Services School.

Her awards include the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Iraq Campaign Medal and the Global War on Terrorism Medal.

In her civilian job, she is a certified Project Management Professional (PMP) and works for the Chief Operating Officer for the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, where she is Assistant Director of Operations.

The 369th Sustainment Brigade has a storied past. The "Harlem Hell Fighters" traces its heritage back to the 15th Infantry Regiment of the NYARNG, an all African-American unit organized in 1916. In 1917, the regiment was sent to France for WWI and renumbered as the 369th Infantry. In May 1918, the Soldiers of the 369th went into the trenches.

For its fierce fighting in France, the unit was awarded a regimental Croix de Guerre from the French Army and became known as "the regiment that never lost a man captured, a trench or a foot of ground." Additionally, 200 individuals were presented the Croix de Guerre.

The unit won itself the nickname "Harlem Hell Fighters" and the respect of its German opponents. The 369th saw more frontline service than any other American unit in WWI. In fact, the 369th was the first Allied unit to reach the Rhine.

In WWII, the unit served as the 369th Antiaircraft Artillery Regiment, and during the Gulf War of 1991, it served as the 369th Transportation Battalion. **GX**



PLAYING IN THE DOME SGT Justin Fisher was among the band members of the 34th ID "Red Bull" band performing at the Metrodome Nov. 9.

Soundtrack for Progress

RED BULL BAND TO IRAQ AS MUSICAL AMBASSADORS TO DEPLOY TO IRAQ

By SFC Clint Wood

When the 34th Infantry Division (ID) "Red Bull" Band of the Minnesota Army National Guard deploys to support Operation Iraqi Freedom later this year, it will become only the second National Guard band to deploy to Iraq.

The Red Bull band, one of 52 ARNG bands, will be among the more than 1,000 Guard Soldiers from the 34th ID deploying to southern Iraq. The Minnesota musicians will follow in the footsteps of the New York National Guard's 42nd ID band, which deployed to Iraq from January 2005 until November 2005.

The Soldiers' mission is to support Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) in eight of the country's 18 provinces. The division will replace the Active Duty Army's 10th Mountain Division, based in Fort Drum, NY.

This is the first time that a version of the Red Bull band—currently comprised of 43 musicians based in Rosemount, MN—has deployed since World War II. Ironically, when this contingent arrives on Feb. 10 at Fort Lewis, WA, for mobilization training, it will mark a band an-

niversary. On the same day more than 65 years ago, their WW II division counterparts arrived for training at Camp Claiborne, LA.

MUSICAL MISSION

CWO Trygve R. Skaar, the band's commander/bandmaster, said in a phone interview that his band's tour of duty will be a "100 percent musical mission [as much] as feasible."

"We will be entertaining our troops that MG Richard Nash (the 34th ID commanding General) is in command of," he said.

Skaar also intends to instill the intentions of Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I), GEN Raymond T. Odierno. In a 2008 letter and

"I have many outstanding soloists that could be guest soloists with the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra." >> CWO Trygve R. Skaar

COURTESY OF THE MINNESOTA NATIONAL GUARD

“Deployment was surreal.”

broadcasted to all MNF-I members, Odierno stressed the need for transition, saying operations in Iraq must work increasingly “by, with and through the ISF.”

Skaar, who teaches tuba at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul MN, said one of the ways he will follow this directive is to have his band play at ISF graduation ceremonies. He would also like his band to participate in a joint training exercise with the Iraqi army band.

And this Iraqi band will have new uniforms, courtesy of the U.S. Army Field Band. The U.S. band exchanged their old dress blue uniforms for new ones that resemble the Army Combat Uniform (ACUs).

In fact, Skaar said there were about 300 of these demilitarized-uniforms in the division's shipping containers headed to Iraq.

This is how SSG (ret) Kristin Duarte, described the 42nd ID's band deployment to Tikrit, Iraq.

“We played at all different kinds of events but probably the most famous would be the closing down of the FOB Danger and turning it over to the Iraqi people,” said Duarte, who retired Dec. 7 after more than 20 years as a band member.

She said her band performed at several memorial ceremonies and other functions, including Iraqi Police (IP) and Iraqi Army (IA) graduations.

“But we did a lot of esprit de corps as well,” she said.

This “esprit de corps” really came into play when the band traveled to an island in the middle of the Tigris River where American Soldiers trained the IP and IA. The band had a two-fold mission—performing for the Iraqis and guard duty.

For this reason, Duarte offered this advice to the Red Bulls. “My best advice is be as flexible as possible,” she commented.

“If we have leftover uniforms, we will see if there is an Iraqi school that needs them,” said Skaar.

Skaar said he has two other wishes, too—to be able to provide soloists for the Iraqi National

Symphony Orchestra and perform with the orchestra in a joint concert.

“They are a wonderful performing group that is now beginning to flourish after the regime change,” noted Skaar of the Iraqi ensemble. “I have many outstanding soloists who could be guest soloists with the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra.”

Overall, Skaar said he would be proud serving his country and using his talents to honor all past and present Veterans, and to represent the United States in America and abroad.

“Many units have deployed before us, and we are proud to deploy as Minnesota Citizen-Soldiers and represent the U.S.,” he added.

In Iraq, the Red Bull band will work with the 41st Fires Brigade (BDE), 172nd Infantry BDE, 2nd BDE of the 4th ID and 4th BDE of the 1st Cavalry Division. **GX**

RED BULL PRIDE: A Soldier from the 34th ID Band sings the National Anthem before a Vikings football game in 2008.



FAST FACTS

There are two Military Occupational Specialties (MOSs) for band members—42R (Army bandperson) and 42S (special band member).

The four MN units that will deploy with the 34th ID besides the band are the Rosemount-based division headquarters, the Inver Grove Heights, MN-based 34th ID Special Troops BN, and the Stillwater, MN-based Military Police (MP) Company.

Living It Up on Leave

GX FOLLOWS UP WITH ECHO CO. COUPLE

By SFC Clint Wood

How long do you think it takes for an Army National Guard spouse to get reacquainted with their wife or husband after they've been overseas for several months?

Not long, according to Vanessa J. Herman, wife of SFC Michael Donohue. Michael is among the

Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's Echo Company, 3rd Battalion and 142nd Aviation.

We first met this couple in *GX 6.1* (go to GXonline.com to download). Here we follow up on Michael's time on leave.

"In a way, almost within 24 hours, it was as if he never left," said Vanessa. "It was just the feeling of seeing my best friend, and of course, my husband. Just having him home, even if only for 15 days, was definitely worth it."

Michael spoke to *GX* via cell phone from the Atlanta airport while waiting for his return flight to Iraq. "Some of the best times we had were just sitting on the couch, lying next to each other and hanging out. It was very relaxing," he said.

SURPRISE STOPOVER

Michael helped put his wife at ease before he even left Iraq, by ensuring that she knew his flight schedule home, almost to the hour. He bought an international package for his cell phone so they could keep in touch, and Vanessa tracked his flights online.

This turned out to be a good thing, because Michael's flight was delayed in Shannon, Ireland, for a day due to mechanical problems.

Michael remembers the exact words the flight crew used to describe the problem: "The 'MacGyver' trick didn't work, and they are going to have to wait for parts."

While in Shannon, Michael and the rest of the flight crew and passengers were housed at a local hotel. He said they were offered all the tea and crumpets they could eat.

Vanessa laughed that because of the delay,

Michael was a "little cranky and stinky" when his flight finally arrived. But it didn't matter. Even before he arrived at the Islip MacArthur Airport in Long Island, NY, Vanessa said, "I had a feeling of elation. My heart was up, just to see him. It was great."

DEPLOYMENT DIET

Michael admitted that his first concern upon arriving in New York was the winter weather. Fortunately, the cold didn't create any additional delays, and Michael wasn't especially surprised by the chilly temperatures.

However, his wife was very surprised by his being 35 pounds lighter. He had told her he'd lost weight, but not how much.

"JUST HAVING HIM HOME, EVEN IF ONLY FOR 15 DAYS, WAS DEFINITELY WORTH IT."

>>Vanessa Herman

"She was a little blown away," he chuckled. "She is upset ... she [feels like she] has to lose weight now. Apparently, I did an underhanded thing."

"Seeing that was pretty interesting," Vanessa said, laughing.

Michael credits his weight loss to SGT Ken's fitness articles, published in *GX* magazine. He specifically mentioned "Operation Back to Basics" and "Operation Diet Dissection." (*GX 4.1*)



Ideas for a delectable last-night-of-leave dinner:

VANESSA: Dirty Grey Goose martini, a glass of Chianti Reserve with dinner, sautéed fresh mozzarella appetizer, filet mignon and pecan pie.

MICHAEL: Malibu Bay Breeze cocktail, baked clams appetizer, penne a la vodka, apple crisp and a cappuccino.

THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART

Speaking of diets, what was the first meal that Michael had at home? That would be his favorite—skirt steak, made with sautéed mushrooms and caramelized onions.

For those of you who, like me, have never heard of skirt steak, it's a sweet, slightly tough meat, often used in fajitas.

Vanessa said she cooked the steak rare, the way Michael likes it. "I'm Italian; I can cook anything," she quipped.

Michael agrees, "She's an excellent cook. Her whole family is in the restaurant business, so I'm a little bit spoiled."

But Michael didn't have time to get accustomed to home cooking. Within 48 hours after he arrived home, he and Vanessa were en route to Tucson, AZ, for a trip.

"Our plan was to go home, go to sleep, and then pack and go to Arizona the next day," Michael said matter-of-factly.

Vanessa, the assistant director of governmental relations at Stony Brook University, attended the Association of American Universities Council on Federal Relations annual retreat at

ISTOCKPHOTO



>> Vanessa and Michael were married at Villa Sorrento's, an upscale Italian restaurant. A friend of Vanessa's owns the restaurant and closed it for them. Another friend is a New York State Supreme Court judge. "She came to the restaurant and married us," Vanessa said. "The ceremony lasted 15 minutes and the party immediately after was three hours."

ONLINE SUCCESS Vanessa J. Herman and SFC Michael Donohue, a member of Echo Company, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation, were married Jan. 31, 2005, after meeting online.

Tucson's Westward Look Resort. She and Michael attend the event together every year.

During the mornings, Vanessa would attend meetings, and Michael used the time to catch up on more than 1,000 emails from his civilian job. Then, afternoons and evenings belonged to the couple.

What was on their agenda? Michael described the trip.

"Horseback riding, hiking, taking a nap, eating a good meal and taking another nap," he laughed. They hiked more than 5 miles in Sabino Canyon in the Coronado National Forest.

"We had a ball," Vanessa smiled.

They also squeezed in a visit to the Pima Air and Space Museum near Davis-Monthan Air Force Base and the famous Airplane Graveyard-Boneyard. Officially termed an Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Center, the Boneyard is a massive salvage/parts facility for retired military aircraft.

THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

When the couple returned home, Vanessa was able to use vacation time, so they could spend all of Michael's remaining leave together. She did a little cooking, and he feasted on his second favorite meal, spaghetti and meatballs—even for breakfast.

"I explained to him that it's okay to eat cold pasta in the morning," Vanessa joked.

Vanessa said a new TV was among several items she had needed during this deployment, so the couple purchased a new 55-inch LCD flat-screen TV.

Being from New York, you would think Michael was anticipating watching some of the New York professional sports teams. But that wasn't the case.

Vanessa said they usually watch "NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" and "Frontline" on Public Broadcasting Service. She said they also watched the 2009 Presidential Inauguration.

"That was a lot of fun to watch," said Vanessa of the inauguration. "Times like this make you feel hopeful ... we will see."

Food obviously played a big part in Michael's visit. While he was home, Michael's father-in-law treated him to dinner at an upscale Italian restaurant on Long Island. The entrée was a three-pound "lobster special." To put this in perspective, a good-sized steak is 16 ounces—this was a 48-ounce lobster!

The couple spent their last night together celebrating their wedding anniversary—eight days early—by going to the same restaurant where they were married.

So what observation did Vanessa offer regarding Michael's visit?

"Fifteen days seems like a long period of time, but not so," she said.

As for advice to our readers, Michael summed it up: "Make the most of every moment you can." **GX**



PROUD SOLDIERS
The 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment (Selected Honor Guard), led by COL Sterling MacLeod, marched in memory of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and in the Inaugural Parade for President Barack Obama in Washington, DC, on Jan. 19–20.

Guard Soldiers Stake Claims to Obama Inaugural

Story and photos by MSG (ret.) Bob Haskell

SGT Theodor Bowen, “Doc” to his friends, will have much to tell his grandchildren about his days as a Soldier. Well over 20 years—perhaps 30—in the Massachusetts Army National Guard. Combat medic. Back-to-back tours in Iraq—in Mosul and at the infamous Abu Ghraib prison. Combat Action Badge. Friendships forged in combat zones that will last the rest of his life.

And, oh yes, regimental flag bearer during the Inaugural Parade for President Barack Obama on Jan. 20, 2009.

“That was the pinnacle of my entire career,” said Bowen, who was 40 and who had served for 22 years in uniform when he experienced his own date with destiny during the 56th Presidential Inauguration on a long, cold afternoon and evening in Washington, D.C.

Bowen is an African-American who carried a special flag and marched with a special unit during the first parade for the first African-American to become president of the United States. The 25 Massachusetts Guard Soldiers were members of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment (Selected Honor Guard) which in November was given the name of the first all-black regiment to be raised in the North during the Civil War.

Furthermore, it was the first time that flag and that unit had ever been to Washington because the original 54th Massachusetts served in the South, but never saw the nation’s capital.

All of those factors made for a memorable visit to Washington during the electrifying few days when Americans remembered the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. (on Jan. 19) and when the peaceful transition of power from the Bush to the

“I WAS EXCITED ABOUT DOING THIS. IT’S A HISTORIC OCCASION, AND I’M GLAD TO BE PART OF IT.” >> SGT Robert Fitch

Obama administrations captivated the world on January’s third Tuesday.

The 54th Massachusetts Regiment, commanded by COL Sterling MacLeod, participated in two events. It led a Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade from the Tenth Street Baptist Church, following an interfaith Prayer, Peace and Praise Service, through Northwest Washington to

the African-American Civil War Memorial where the civil rights leader was remembered again with speeches, songs and a wreath-laying ceremony. The regiment also marched in the Inaugural Parade the next day.

The two days of tributes to King and celebrations for Obama brought together

Americans from all walks of life, including some 9,300 members of the National Guard from 11 states and the District of Columbia.

It was the largest National Guard force to ever participate in a presidential inauguration, the National Guard Bureau reported.

Guard members marched in the Inaugural Parade. They performed during an Inaugural Ball. They monitored traffic at busy intersections and beside the Pentagon. They helped watch over the city and the record 1.8 million people who braved below-freezing temperatures to embrace the new president and his family. They interviewed and photographed their National Guard brothers and sisters. They worked 12-hour shifts in the penetrating wind and ear- and mind-numbing cold. They would not have missed it for anything.

SOME HIGHLIGHTS

SFC Josh Luck and other Soldiers from the Iowa Army Guard’s 113th Cavalry Regiment, out of Sioux City, controlled traffic outside the Tenth Street Baptist Church during the MLK Day service.

“It’s a great opportunity,” Luck said. “We’re acting in a more positive role than going overseas or reacting to floods. This is a little different spin on what we normally do. About 75 percent of this unit has been to Iraq or Afghanistan, or Kosovo or the Sinai. We’ve been busy little bees.”

About two dozen members of the 257th Army Band from the District of Columbia Army Guard performed the Presidential Honors for President and Mrs. Obama during the Inaugural Ball for southern states at the DC Armory. It was the first time in history that a Guard band did that.

CW3 Sheila Klotz directed the band during its 30-minute performance which began about midnight, SSG Brian Jones explained. The military musicians played “Hail to the Chief” as the Obama’s entered the armory. They played “At Last” for the official dance. They sent the honored couple on their way to the strains of “Stars and Stripes Forever.”

“It was like the [basketball] movie *Hoosiers*,” said Jones, who has performed at three other inaugurations with the U.S. Air Force Band. “This was one for the little guys.”

SSG Rebecca Doucette, a Guard Bureau Public Affairs staff member, pulled double duty. She played a Civil War-era coronet while dressed in Union Army blue as a member of the Baltimore-based Federal City Brass Band, which specializes in Civil War music, during two performances at the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History on Monday afternoon. Then she changed into her Army Combat Uniform to video that evening’s rehearsal by the 257th Army Band at the nearby Anacostia Naval Station.

“It means everything to me,” Doucette said. “You have to take advantage of these opportunities. Everyone has such high hopes for Obama. Now I can say I participated in his inauguration. How many people can say that?”

Maryland Army Guard PFC Ralph Evans, SPC Andrew Green and SGT Robert Fitch are among a host of Guard Soldiers who can also say that. The unarmed troops sworn in as special police helped Secret Service and Metropolitan police officers control the crowd that jammed onto the National Mall for the inauguration ceremony.

“I was excited about doing this. It’s a historic occasion, and I’m glad to be part of it,” said Fitch, who dug out his insulated long underwear, his



CALLIN' THE SHOTS Iowa Army National Guard SFC Josh Luck was in charge of a traffic control detail at the Tenth Street Baptist Church during a Martin Luther King Jr. Day observance in Washington, DC, on Jan. 19.

knit hat, his heavy socks and his jacket liner to be adequately dressed for the cold-weather detail.

Alarming and lighter moments punctuated the day. Guard Soldiers at the intersection of Independence Avenue and 14th Street Southwest, near the Washington Monument, were urged to look for a little girl wearing a light blue jacket and a pink hat who had gotten separated from her mother. And many people, Fitch recounted, asked the Guard Soldiers to pose with them for pictures.

The Soldiers’ efforts did not go unnoticed. “It’s only fitting that at one of our most secure inaugurations, the National Guard would be involved,” Al Roker of NBC’s “Today” show told National Guard Bureau SSG Jim Greenhill. “When it

comes down to our security, both domestically and internationally, the National Guard is obviously an integral part of that.”

The size of the crowd surpassed some of the Soldiers’ expectations.

“We were told to expect ‘in the millions,’ but this was more than we thought there would be,” acknowledged CPT Kazem Adigun of the Maryland Guard’s 175th Infantry. “It was interesting to see people showing up on the Mall at 5 o’clock in the morning.”

It was also remarkable that so many people crowded so closely together had such a good time. “The whole day I didn’t see anyone in a bad mood,” recalled SGT James Lally, a Massachusetts public affairs specialist who devoted his day to covering the Inaugural Parade. “Everyone seemed to be in a good mood despite the cold.”

It’s hard to imagine that anyone was in higher spirits than Sgt. “Doc” Bowen as he carried an exact replica of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment’s Civil War flag past the presidential box on Pennsylvania Avenue at about 6 p.m., well after dark, during the Inaugural Parade.

Marching along the 1.5-mile route from the U.S. Capitol to the White House was a special occasion for the 25 men and women of the 54th Massachusetts Honor Guard that renders honors during funerals for military veterans throughout Massachusetts and takes part in other state functions.

The original 54th made its name on July 18, 1863, during a heroic but ill-fated assault against Fort Wagner in South Carolina. More than 265 of the regiment’s 600 Soldiers were killed, wounded or captured. But that action at Charleston Harbor, dramatized in the 1989 movie *Glory*, paved the way for nearly 180,000 more African-Americans to serve in Union armies.

Finally, more than 143 years after the Civil War regiment was disbanded in South Carolina in 1865, the 54th Massachusetts made it to Washington.

“Those men fought for their country, and now their colors have finally been carried to the seat of the government that they helped to preserve,” COL MacLeod pointed out.

“Doc” Bowen said it even more succinctly: “People saw us marching. They knew who we were. It made me feel good to know they really cared. It was just amazing.” **GX**

Bob Haskell is a freelance journalist who resides in Falmouth, MA. He has recently retired from the Army National Guard.



PROUD HERITAGE SGT Theodor “Doc” Bowen (center) had the distinction of carrying the regimental flag for the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Regiment (Selected Honor Guard) while marching in Washington, DC, on Jan. 19–20.



STETSONS AND SPURS

THE HISTORY OF THE CAVALRY FROM HORSEBACK TO HIGH-TECH

THEY DIDN'T EVEN SEE IT COMING. It was 1781, and the British soldiers trudged ahead through the field, fully aware that there were American patriots waiting to engage them on the other side. The Royal Army was tired and hungry, as they had practically been force-marched to the small town of Cowpens, SC, with little sleep and hardly any food. But they were confident and ready for battle, and their commander, COL Banastre Tarleton, was so sure of victory that he arrogantly walked right into a trap set by BG Daniel Morgan of the Continental Army.

By CHRISTIAN ANDERSON





**"I AM PROUD TO BE
IN THE CAV, AND I AM
PROUD TO BE IN THE
GUARD. EVERY TIME
I PUT MY STETSON
ON, I SWELL UP
WITH PRIDE."**

>> PFC Alex Fan, Troop B, 18th CAV,
California Army National Guard

Photo by TIM TADDER

M

MORGAN'S PLAN WAS TO HAVE SEVERAL LINES OF militia fire two volleys each into the charging British, then retreat back to the main line. Once the Redcoats were in musket-shot distance of Morgan and his men, LTC William Washington's cavalry unit and the regrouped militia forces would then strike around the British flanks from opposite sides and envelope the battered enemy.

Tarleton took the bait, and his men slowly but surely started to take the field as several lines of militia fired and then retreated. But the British had started taking so many casualties, that by the time Tarleton ordered his men to charge the remaining line of the Continental Army, their numbers were already greatly reduced by the vicious combat.

What happened next, no one—including the Americans—expected. Morgan gave his signal to Washington's cavalry, and the wild and ferocious mounted detachment charged around the flank of Tarleton's Legion, instilling a level of panic in the British troops that put their reputation as the world's best fighting force to shame.

Washington moved swiftly and struck with a furious might that many Soldiers, including seasoned British officers, had never seen. The sight of Washington and his horsemen, waving their sabers in the

back. And every great European army had some version of cavalry, even as late as WWII.

Here in the New American colonies, the Continental Army was still comprised largely of volunteer militias. The backbone of these militias—the earliest version of the National Guard—was the infantry, since most settlers owned muskets for hunting and defense against raiding tribes. Artillery was seeing increasing military use, but pieces were scarce and the colonists had to melt church bells to cast the massive barrels. Cavalry, with an awesome thunder of galloping horses and the ability to move quickly, soon became an important weapon for the young Army.

By the 1800s, cavalry units played major roles in many Civil War battles, on both sides. The U.S. cavalry later became the protection force for westward-bound settlers, against what some consider the greatest light cavalry in history: the Plains tribes.

At the turn of the 20th century, Teddy Roosevelt's Rough Riders would add to the cavalry's legend, storming San Juan Hill during the Spanish-American War. But as the world's armies developed bigger weapons, thicker armor and more mechanized transportation, it

“WE ARE VERY PROUD OF OUR HERITAGE, AND TRADITION IS A BIG THING IN THE CAV SINCE THE FIRST CAV UNITS WERE ESTABLISHED BACK DURING THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.”

>> CSM John Hoxie

air, screaming and fighting as if possessed, proved too much for the British. More than half simply gave up and surrendered before Washington's troops could reach them.

Although Morgan took most of the credit for the victory—and rightfully so, since he planned the battle strategy—Washington and his men earned a place in history and ensured that the cavalry would always be a valuable and respected part of America's Army.

SOLDIERS IN THE SADDLE

LTC Washington's Continental Light Dragoons were hardly the first to discover the power of the Soldier on horseback. The concept of cavalry dates far back in history: the Assyrians; the nomadic Steppe horsemen; the dreaded Mongols and Turks all waged war on horse-

back. And every great European army had some version of cavalry, even as late as WWII.

But the cavalry wasn't about to go away. Fast-forward through time, and you can easily see just how far they've come.

HUEYS AND HILLTOPS

The 1960s were more than just an era of radical social and political change. The decade also introduced advanced tactics in warfare, which included the modernized cavalry (CAV). As the conflict in Vietnam grew, the top brass and politicians realized the need to form a fighting unit that could travel by helicopter at a moment's notice and deliver swift blows to the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and the Viet Cong (VC) that occupied the many valleys and hilltops of Vietnam.



CHARGE! The Battle of Cowpens was one of the first battles in the American Revolution in which the Continental Army realized just how important the “horse Soldiers” were.

So on June 16, 1965, the Air CAV was born, ushering in a whole new way to fight the enemy and overwhelm positions in far less time than Soldiers traveling on foot or by ground vehicles could.

Cavalry units had seen success in WWI, WWII and Korea, but forged a new identity in Vietnam. Helicopters increased troop mobility and gave Soldiers access to dense jungles and high mountaintops that armor could not. Combined with the Air CAV, the traditional cavalry Soldiers on the ground became some of the most effective and lethal American fighting forces in the Vietnam War.

The UH-1 Iroquois, affectionately dubbed the Huey, may have been the most influential instrument of war since firearms. A Huey could pick up a squad and carry them wherever and whenever they were needed. Many Hueys were heavily armed with rockets and machine guns, so as they dropped off their Soldiers, they could provide fire support as well. Along with the Huey, the AH-1 Cobra also became a popular Air CAV weapons platform, as it spewed even more firepower than an armored Huey.

The NVA and VC often wouldn't know the Air CAV was coming until it was too late. The only notification to “Charlie” was the approaching sound of the helicopter rotors—which meant that, in a matter of seconds, the earth they were standing on would become a living hell. The Air CAV units would fire upon the landing zone and enemy positions if they were present. Then the choppers would unload the troopers, so they could mop up what was left and continue to engage the enemy.

INSIDE THE UNIT

Although cavalry units—combining Armor, Infantry and Air groups—operate as one, there is no single type of CAV Soldier. Just as these units employ many different weapons and vehicles, they also consist of a diverse group of Soldiers trained in several specialties.

“Since our two missions are reconnaissance and security, we have all types of weapons systems, all types of combat MOS's,” explains CSM John Hoxie of the 124th Mechanized Cavalry Reconnaissance Squadron, Texas Army National Guard. “We perform a myriad of different missions to accomplish the two main missions of reconnaissance and security.”

Since each unit has a different role on the battlefield, the unit commander might custom-tailor his Soldiers' training to better meet their operational readiness needs. If you had a handful of Soldiers from the various Guard CAV units across the country, there might be a different school for every Soldier.

“They get to go to Ranger school, Pathfinder school, and those positions are authorized by command so there will be a platoon Sergeant authorized to go to Ranger school or Pathfinder school,” Hoxie explains. “We have a sniper section, so these guys get to go to Sniper school.”

Some of the ground Soldiers, particularly the dismounted troops, attend some of the Guard's more select schools. Since there are many different elements of the CAV, one Soldier might be picked to attend a school such as Airborne while another Soldier might attend Mountain Warfare.

“A Cavalry Trooper can find himself in a number of different training schools,” explains 1LT Michael Brandt of the 152nd Recon and

LTC Wayne Honeycutt, RXO of the 278th RCT, out front at a send off parade for the 278th on Veterans Day at Camp Shelby in 2004.



 WATCH VIDEO OF CAVALRY IN ACTION AT:
WWW.NATIONALGUARD.COM/CAREERS



SNATCH AND GRAB Soldiers from the 278th ACR, TNARNG, take a suspected insurgent prisoner in Iraq in 2004.

“WE PERFORM A MYRIAD OF DIFFERENT MISSIONS TO ACCOMPLISH THE TWO MAIN MISSIONS OF RECONNAISSANCE AND SECURITY.”

>> CSM John Hoxie

Surveillance Squadron, Indiana Army National Guard. “They start like any Soldier, by going through Basic Training, and then to AIT, where they learn not only basic infantry skills, but fundamentals of reconnaissance, vehicle identification, light and heavy weapons systems, employment of demolitions, vehicle operation and maintenance, and much more.”

“Then as they progress in their careers, there are schools such as the Master Gunners course, and the Army Reconnaissance course,” he added.

WELCOME TO THE FRATERNITY

When a new Soldier is finished with his cavalry training and assigned to a unit, there is an initiation ritual that he still must complete to become a CAV Soldier: The Spur Ride. This initiation has long been the way cavalry units induct Soldiers into the ranks.

“It’s a series of different common skills that Soldiers are tested on, as well as unit history and a lot of physical events,” Hoxie says.

Lasting anywhere from three to 10 days, this training pushes the Soldier to new limits, testing his strengths and proving to the unit that the Soldier will be a worthy member of the cavalry. The reward is something that few other Soldiers might understand or appreciate. But to the CAV Soldier, this is one of the greatest moments of his life. And there is no set formula to the Spur Ride; each unit performs this initiation as it sees fit, and puts its Soldiers through rituals and training that might be specific to the unit.

“The Spur Ride candidate has no idea what event will be tested until he gets to that station,” Brandt says. “It could be First Aid, call for fire or a gunner’s skill test. This is all incorporated within a 15-mile course over rough terrain, in which the troopers must also react to contact with opposition forces.”

But the reward is worth all the sweat, strain and sleep deprivation, as each Soldier is inducted into a brotherhood few Soldiers get to be a part of.

“They are presented with spurs by the squadron commander and myself,” Hoxie adds. “It really

makes the Soldiers feel like a part of the unit, and it’s like an equivalent to the Infantrymen’s [Expert Infantryman Badge]. He wears them for the rest of his military career. It’s a rite of passage.”

SEEK AND DESTROY

Cavalry operations rely on reconnaissance, and although all CAV Soldiers are always searching for the enemy, several units are specialized in surveillance techniques.

“The role of the 2/152nd Recon and Surveillance Squadron is Battlefield Surveillance ... we are part of the Battle Field Surveillance Brigade, which is a new concept in the Guard’s force structure, and the role is still developing,” Brandt says. “Our primary mission is to provide the eyes and ears on the battlefield for a division-level command, so that maneuver forces can be better utilized.”

Some commanders with main Infantry or Armor units might not understand where a CAV Soldier and his unit excel, but when they are called in to do their job, there is no more valuable fighting unit. By coordinating the firepower of Armor, Infantry and Air groups, the many elements of a cavalry unit work together to accomplish an operation.

“We are very flexible in our capabilities, and because of that, we tend to operate more out of the box, coming up with unconventional solutions to everyday situations,” Brandt adds.

LIGHT OR HEAVY?

Just like the horsemen before them, modern cavalry Soldiers can be differentiated by the terms “Light CAV” or Heavy CAV”—which basically means how much American-made mind-blowing Armor they carry. The designation usually indicates how many Abrams tanks roll with the unit, but either force is fully capable of delivering an awesome punch—and they are equally valuable.

“Heavy CAV would normally be the cavalry units assigned to the Armor forces. They are equipped with heavier vehicles, such as the Bradley,” Brandt says. “Light CAV normally refers to

LIGHT CAVALRY VS. HEAVY CAVALRY

The terms “light” and “heavy” historically refer to the type of armor worn by cavalry members. Light CAV Soldiers were first equipped with swords, bows and spears, before advancing to modern firearms. With their main missions of reconnaissance and carrying messages, Light CAV Soldiers acted as scouts for the rest of their unit.

Mounted on the largest war-trained horses, Heavy Cavalry Soldiers wore dense armor into battle, where they were used for a shock effect. Though these Soldiers have been called different names through the centuries—such as knights during the Middle Ages—their mission has remained the same: to charge the enemy, who, on foot, could not compete.



MOUNT UP Montana Guard Soldier CPT Jeremy Hedges of Helena, MT, rides over the Armed Forces Memorial Bridge into Polson, MT, followed by SGT Mike Keck of Helena and SGT Angela Ribech of Dillon, MT, during the bridge dedication ceremony Sunday May 27, 2007.

the forces mounted in either Strykers or Humvees. There are also dismounted cavalry and air cavalry forces, all of which have basically the same mission set: reconnaissance in front of combat forces.”

“[The 124th] just made a transition from a Heavy CAV unit to a Light CAV unit,” Hoxie explains. “We previously had a lot of firepower when we were Heavy CAV. But now we are Light CAV, where we have up-armored gun trucks and Humvees with the focus on being more stealth, moving fast and being fast.”

There are certainly pros and cons to being light or heavy, but each provides the cavalry with a unique set of options to complete their missions. One of the perks of Heavy CAV is awesome firepower and support that even now is unmatched on the battlefield by any foreign military. The Light CAV makes up for the lack of heavy armor by providing covert missions behind enemy lines that require lightning-fast groups of Soldiers.

“Now that we are a Light CAV unit, we do move fast,” Hoxie adds. “We have a dismounted infantry troop and these guys, they move them by helicopter behind enemy lines looking for the enemy. It’s very high-speed.”

AIR DELIVERY

Just like their predecessors in Vietnam who paved the way for helicopter combat, Air CAV pilots provide a huge part of the success to modern day cavalry operations. The old Hueys and Cobras have been replaced with Black Hawks and Kiowa Warriors, but the mission has remained the same—and the enemy knows what is about to come when he hears those rotors thumping in the air.

“In combat, our role is the same as any other unit in the CAV, and the missions really haven’t changed over time,” SGT Justin Babb, a Black Hawk Crew Chief with the 230th Air CAV, Tennessee National Guard says. “Vietnam was your first view of the Air CAV, and those guys were always at the front of the line. They were often the first guys in and some of the last guys out.”

Improved technology has certainly benefitted the air cavalry. Today’s high-tech Air CAV thrives on speed and agility, and they provide an integral component of the reconnaissance and security missions for cavalry units in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Kiowa Warriors are the eyes and ears of the sky, looking silently and swiftly for enemy movement. If and when a Kiowa finds activity, the commander will make a decision to radio in either Apaches or Black Hawks.

The Apaches play the main role of dealing quick, decisive blows, with their awesome 30 mm chain guns, rockets and Hellfire missiles at the ready. But the Black Hawks bring an equally effective element to the battle, delivering CAV Infantry Soldiers, ready to rock. These ground troops are prepared to engage or to provide up-close, first-hand reconnaissance of enemy positions and activities, bettering the chances of a successful CAV operation.

The Guard’s Air CAV units often find themselves attached with active-duty units, and they take pride in performing at the same level as—if not better than—their regular counterparts. Friendly rivalries are a good thing between active and Guard CAV units, and they only strengthen the bond in the CAV brotherhood.

“We were the only Guard unit attached to the 101st at the time, and we had the number one Operational Readiness rating in all Black



GO GET THOSE SPURS A CAV officer with the 1st Squadron, 153rd Cavalry Regiment addresses his men before a Spur Ride in Ft. Rucker, AL, on Jan. 10, 2008. CAV officers and enlisted Soldiers live and fight by a code of honor and loyalty to the many CAV Soldiers that have fought before them.

Hawk, active and Guard units in Iraq at the time,” Babb says. “We are a very good unit that I am very proud to be a part of.”

“I know guys that are in active duty units that notice the difference between the closeness of active and Guard units, and those ties and bonds that I have made within my unit have kept me in the Guard,” Babb confesses.

MAKING A GOOD THING EVEN BADDER

Tennessee is home to a very unique CAV unit: the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, which is the only enhanced Armored Cavalry Regiment in the Guard. “Enhanced” is a loose way of saying this unit is armed to the teeth, offering a unique one-two punch that no other Guard unit can offer. The 278th rolls in with tons of firepower from Abrams tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles, howitzers, Infantry, and last but not least, choppers!

Created on July 31, 1946, the 278th was originally comprised of men from the 117th Infantry Regiment, which distinguished itself in Europe in several operations, including Normandy and the Battle of the Bulge.

Initially named the 278th Armored Infantry Battalion, the unit deployed to Iraq in 2004 as the 278th Regimental Combat Team, with Soldiers from Tennessee, Wisconsin, Texas, Massachusetts, New Jersey and Vermont. This became the largest deployment of Tennessee National Guard Soldiers since WWII.

CELEBRATED LINEAGE

All fighting units recognize and celebrate the Soldiers who carried their colors or wore the badge in previous conflicts. The cavalry doesn’t just recognize and celebrate their history—they live it every day.

“The CAV has a very distinguished history, as do all of the branches. But the CAV stands out in history, from the frontiers to the Civil War, to the first tanks in WWI and the tank battles of WWII,” Brandt says. “The CAV lineage and traditions parallel those of the Army itself. Today’s cavalry is one of the most flexible forces in the Army arsenal. A CAV Trooper can find himself in a variety of roles, ranging from infantry to recon, to engineering to convoy escort.”

But this pride isn’t self-contained in a handful of units or certain regions of the United States. All CAV units, Guard and active duty, are honored to be a part of something so special.

“We are very proud of our heritage, and tradition is a big thing in the CAV since the first CAV units were established back during the Revolutionary War,” Hoxie explains. “Tradition is big, to the point that we wear Stetsons and spurs.”

The CAV spurs are special, and you can tell how far a Soldier has been on the CAV journey by the color of his spurs.

“We have silver spurs when a cavalryman goes through the Spur Ride, a rite of passage for a cavalryman,” Hoxie confirms. “And we have gold spurs, or combat spurs, when a Soldier goes through combat.”

CAV units, including the 124th, try to honor their history and heritage as much as possible, including formations and special occasions. They often maintain much of this history themselves.

“We have horses with saddles and a regimental room with all types of memorabilia from all the wars we have been through. When we have whole formations or special occasions, all our Soldiers are wearing their Stetsons,” Hoxie says. “It’s a big thing, traditionally. It’s huge in the CAV, and builds that camaraderie and esprit de corps, and gives our Soldiers what we like to call the ‘CAV Swagger.’”

But all this celebration of heritage—keeping the historical tradition of the cavalry Soldier on horseback—is not simply a way for these modern Warriors to call attention to themselves. It is something much deeper than that.

“The biggest ... misconception is that we are mavericks,” Brandt confirms. “The cavalry is a proud and professional organization.”

“There is a different level of pride within the CAV. And then you step it up even more, and the difference with that is you stand taller,” Babb explains. “You want everyone to know you are a cavalry Soldier.

“For every CAV Soldier who reads this article: Always stand taller and prouder, because we are the best the Guard has to offer,” he continues. “And even though we do the same job as everyone else, we are always a step ahead with our Stetsons on!” **GX**

Cavalry Heroes

There have been many famous cavalry scouts in U.S. history, and many of them went on to receive public recognition for achievements after their military service. These are some of the CAV’s celebrated heroes:



WILD BILL HICKOCK



BUFFALO BILL CODY



KIT CARSON



GEN GEORGE A. CUSTER



GEN J.E.B. STUART



GEN GEORGE S. PATTON

The Bugler

STRENGTH MAINTENANCE



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 monthly right here in GX.

Info and photos courtesy of NGB-ASM



>> GED PLUS

The Army National Guard broke ground on an \$18.4 million construction project in Camp Joseph T. Robinson, AR, Jan. 25, 2009 that will triple the amount of attendees for the GED Plus Program.

Scheduled for completion in 2010, the training complex will allow up to 7,500 students to pass through the program each year.

The GED Plus program allows non-high school graduates to enlist in the Army National Guard with the stipulation they earn their GED prior to attending Basic Combat Training. In order to reach that goal, those in the program attend a resident course at the Army National Guard's Professional Education Center here that prepares them to complete the GED exam.

Implemented in 2006, the program, which runs anywhere from 12 to 21 days based on the students' test scores prior to enlisting, has seen more than 5,100 attendees with more than 85 percent earning their GED, according to school officials.



>> "WARRIOR"

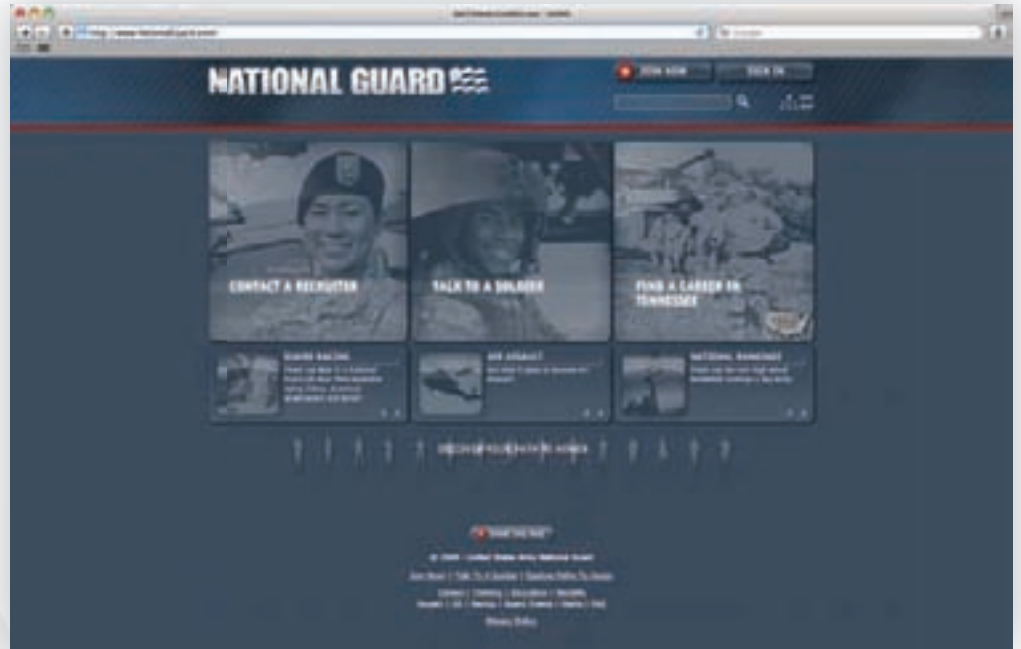
During the months of February and March 2009, movie patrons across the nation will have another chance to enjoy the "Warrior" film featuring Guard Soldiers, Kid Rock and Dale Earnhardt Jr. The film will be shown on more than 10,000 screens in 1,665 theaters. Additional campaign support will be in the form of advertising slides, lobby area marketing, branded popcorn bags and enhanced online support to increase awareness of the "Warrior" message, and ultimately generate leads from viewers who are interested in National Guard opportunities.



NATIONAL
RECRUITING

>> **WWW.NATIONALGUARD.COM**

To maximize exposure in Internet searches, the Guard has changed the Web address of its Recruiting and Retention Web site, www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com. The new address is www.NATIONALGUARD.com. This change will enable the site to appear higher in search results for the National Guard.



>> **B2X RSP BATTLE BOOK**

Once a recruit enlists in the Guard, there is a big jump from being an RSP Warrior to becoming a Soldier. To make the transition from civilian to Soldier more streamlined, the Guard is releasing *B2X* (Battle Book Extreme), which has every thing an RSP Warrior needs to know about becoming a Soldier. This book is vital to the success of a Soldier in the National Guard and contains among other sections, a personal

planning portion with a calendar, so the Soldier can streamline their life, commitments, daily tasks and goals. Also containing a resource directory, the *B2X* allows the Soldier to access valuable information pertaining to the National Guard. From important Web sites and phone numbers to Soldier education, physical fitness training and appearance standards, this section will guide new Soldiers in the right direction.



Attorney General Recognized for Support

Courtesy of ESGR

▶ **Attorney General Bob McDonnell** received the prestigious “Seven Seals Award,” which is presented by the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve to employers who go above and beyond in their commitment to employees serving in the Guard and Reserve. The award was presented by Roger Trout, Chairman of the Virginia Committee of the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

A number of military officials attended the event, including several attorneys in the Office of the Attorney General who are currently serving in the Guard and Reserve.

Speaking about the award, Attorney General McDonnell noted, “This award is one for our entire office. We have a commitment here at the Office of the Attorney General to serve well those who serve our nation. I understand what it is like to work every day, while also serving your country. I served for 16 1/2 years in the U.S. Army Reserve, and had to balance work, home and duty. It can be difficult. We have worked to establish a culture of assistance and understanding at the Office of the Attorney General for all the members of our team who have so generously and bravely volunteered to serve our nation. We must do our best to help them as they give their all in defense of our country.”

Roger Trout, of the ESGR, noted, “Today, we are honoring Bob McDonnell, not for his military service, for which we owe him a great deal of gratitude, but for his exceptional support of fellow Reserve and Guard members as an employer. Bob McDonnell has gone above and beyond in supporting the employees in his office who are also Citizen-Soldiers; but his support is not just for those service members in his office. The Wall of Honor, honoring those service members who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Global War on Terrorism, is the



FULL SUPPORT Attorney General Bob McDonnell takes a moment to address the audience during his “Seven Seals Award” presentation.

direct result of the hard work of the Attorney General and other members of his staff. Attorney General McDonnell and his staff exemplify the spirit of America in their unwavering support of our Citizen-Soldiers.”

Currently five attorneys in the Office of the Attorney General serve as members of the Guard and Reserve, with one member currently on active duty. Earlier in his term as Attorney General, McDonnell signed the Statement of Support for the Guard and Reserve and became a Five Star Supporter for the Guard and Reserve.

The Attorney General served 21 years in the U.S. Army, both active duty and reserve, retiring as a LTC in 1997. His oldest daughter, Jeanine, recently completed service in the U.S. Army, including a tour of duty in Iraq in 2005–2006. **GX**

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. The mission of ESGR is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflicts through mediation. ESGR volunteers provide free education, consultation, and if necessary, mediation for employers of Guard and Reserve employees.

As the 1.3 million members of the National Guard and Reserve continue to perform an increasing number of unique missions within America’s borders and beyond, ESGR will continue to be the resource for the employers of Citizen-Soldiers. More information about ESGR Employer Outreach Programs and volunteer opportunities is available at ESGR.mil.

“ATTORNEY GENERAL MCDONNELL AND HIS STAFF EXEMPLIFY THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA IN THEIR UNWAVERING SUPPORT OF OUR CITIZEN-SOLDIERS.”

>> Robert Trout

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Air Assault

THE INFAMOUS ZERO DAY

Story by SFC Ken Suratt

THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD AIR ASSAULT SCHOOL is an 11-day course that teaches Air Assault techniques and procedures that qualify Soldiers to wear the Air Assault Badge.

ZERO-DAY

Cadets are not considered “Air Assault Students” until after successful completion of Zero Day.

ZERO DAY TASKS ARE:

- Inspection of all uniforms and equipment:
 - This is an extremely meticulous inspection.
 - Cadets must have all items on the IAW packing list; all items must be clean and serviceable.
- The Obstacle Course: designed to assess a Cadet’s upper body strength, agility, endurance, confidence and ability to perform at

heights without displaying fear or distress. This test is critical in determining if Cadets will be able to complete Air Assault School without becoming a safety risk to themselves, instructors or other students during the tough and demanding training events conducted throughout the course.

- Cadets are given a briefing on all obstacles prior to negotiating the course.
- Cadets who fail an obstacle will be given a second attempt; after failing the second attempt, the Soldier will be a “No-GO” for that obstacle.
- A Cadet must successfully negotiate two “Mandatory” obstacles: the “Tough One” and the “Confidence Climb.”
- A Cadet may not miss more than one “Non-mandatory” obstacle.

- 2-Mile Run. Immediately after the Obstacle Course, Cadets must complete the 2-mile run in ACU’s and running shoes in 18 minutes or less, regardless of age or gender.

PHASE ONE – COMBAT ASSAULT

This Phase is three days long. During the Combat Assault Phase, Cadets receive instructions on the following tasks:

- Aircraft Safety
- Aircraft Orientation—includes familiarization with the characteristics and capabilities of Army aircraft.
- Aero Medical Evacuation—includes the capabilities and request procedures for MEDEVAC aircraft.
- Pathfinder Operations—HLZ selection, marking and operation for day and night missions involving multiple aircraft, to include sling loads.
- Hand and arm signals—Soldiers are taught hand and arm signals used during sling load operations.
- Combat Assault Operation—components of an AASLT mission, the reverse planning sequence, duties and responsibilities of platoon level personnel during an Air Assault, static load training and a simulated combat assault on UH-60 aircraft.

During Phase I, Cadets are given two tests:

- Written—50-question multiple choice—Soldiers must achieve 70% to receive a “GO.”
- Hands-on—Hand and arm signals—Soldiers must correctly perform seven of the 10 to receive a “GO.”
- Cadets must pass both tests to move on to the Sling Load Phase (Phase II); they are allowed one retest per exam.

PHASE TWO—SLINGLOAD OPERATIONS

This Phase is three days long. During the slingload phase, Cadets receive instruction on various aspects of sling load operations. This includes:

- Planning and preparation for slingload operations
- Capabilities, characteristics and use of slingload equipment
- Duties and responsibilities of a slingload personnel
- Familiarization with slingload theory and rigging of non-standard loads

Cadets receive hands-on training in preparation, rigging and inspection of several certified or suitable external loads. These may include the following loads:

- M998 HMMWV
- M998 HMMWV, shotgun/side-by-side configuration
- M149 Water Trailer
- LMTV
- A-22 Cargo Bag
- Fuel Blivets
- 5,000 lb or 10,000 lb Cargo Net

The Cadets will also conduct an actual hook-up of a load underneath a CH-47 or UH-60 aircraft.

Cadets are given two tests:

- Written—50-question multiple choice—must score 70% to receive a “GO.”
- Hands-on—Tested on four of the six loads taught. Must identify three out of four preparation and/or rigging deficiencies within two minutes per load to receive a “GO.”
- Cadets must pass both tests to move on to the next phase. They are allowed one retest per exam.

PHASE THREE—RAPPELLING PHASE

This phase is three days long. During this phase, Cadets receive instruction on basic ground and aircraft rappelling procedures, including the following tasks:

- Tying of the hip-rappel seat (Swiss seat)
- Hook-up techniques
- Lock-in procedures
- Rappel with and without combat equipment
- Belay procedures

Cadets will conduct rappels on the wall side of the 34-foot tower. 9–12 rappels from the open side and one from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter hovering at 70–90 feet. All rappels are conducted with and without combat equipment.

Cadets are tested on:

- Tie the hip-rappel (Swiss) seat within 90 seconds with no deficiencies.
- Hook-up to a rappel rope within 15 seconds, without deficiency.
- Conduct three rappels: lock-in rappel, rappel without combat equipment (Hollywood) with three controlled brakes, combat equipment rappel with three controlled brakes.

- Cadets must pass all tests to move on to the next phase and are allowed one retest per exam.

12-MILE FOOT MARCH

The final event is the 12-mile foot march. Soldiers must complete the 12-mile foot march, with the prescribed uniform and equipment, in three hours or less in order to graduate. The foot march is a graded task and a graduation requirement for Air Assault School.

UPON GRADUATION:

Graduates are awarded the Air Assault badge and become a more valuable asset to their unit.

Additional information about the National Guard Air Assault School can be found at www.benning.army.mil/wtc. In next month's issue, we will cover the obstacle course and packing list used at the school. **GX**



CW4 O'NEIL WILLIAMS / ALASKA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Super Tuesday

MINNESOTA ENLISTS 143 SOLDIERS IN ONE DAY

Story by SFC Clint Wood | ROSEVILLE, MN

THE MINNESOTA Army National Guard (MNARNG) Recruiting and Retention Battalion (RRB) made history Sept. 9 in this suburb of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Of the more than 180 applicants attempting to join the MNARNG, an unprecedented 143 became new Minnesota Guard members. The day started with about 100 Recruiting and Retention Noncommissioned Officers and recruiters from all corners of the state bringing the applicants to the Roseville armory, headquarters of Minnesota's RRB.

LTC Jake Kulzer, the battalion's commander, described the event as a "recruiting festival."

"We saw this as an opportunity to just get ahead and set a great tone for 2009," said Kulzer of the day he called "Super Tuesday."

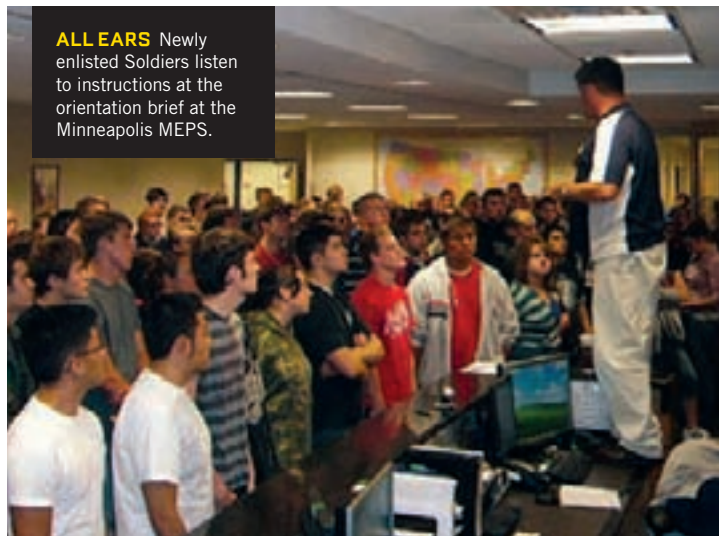
Kulzer's command had a "super" Fiscal Year 2008, too. The state met its NGB-assigned recruiting mission in April with nearly 1,400 contracts, and achieved the MN Guard Adjutant General's mission of 1,800 new enlistees by July.

He said that on average, about 12 applicants are processed daily, leading to approximately 346 monthly applicants (of which roughly 200 are enlisted).

The RRB also broke a record in March by enlisting 324 Soldiers into the Active First program—exceeding the command's goal of 300 enlistees.

Active First allows Soldiers to enlist for eight years, with 36 months of Active Army Service before transitioning into the ARNG.

Kulzer said this program is great in many ways. It offers enlistees op-



ALL EARS Newly enlisted Soldiers listen to instructions at the orientation brief at the Minneapolis MEPS.

tions by allowing them to choose the Guard instead of the Active Duty Army after graduating from Basic Training.

Of course, the Active Duty Army also offers large enlistment bonuses.

"It was just a win-win for us," he said.

TAKING THE GENERAL'S ADVICE

Kulzer said LTG Clyde A. Vaughn, director of the ARNG, asked all of the RRB commanders

nationwide to consider promoting the Active First Program.

Vaughn added that the Army was very supportive of this program and the ways that it would benefit the ARNG.

Kulzer pointed out that the MNARNG already dominates the market share for military recruiting.

"More people join the Minnesota Army National Guard than any other branch of service," he added.

He added that at one time last year, 50 percent of Minnesotans enlisting in the military joined the MNARNG.

Kulzer cited several reasons for this: First, there are 72 armories in the state, and second, he has close to 100 recruiters.

With the Active First Program, it gets even better. Now his recruiters can write either an ARNG contract or an Active Duty Army contract.

Previously, applicants interested in starting their military careers in the Active Duty Army were turned

"Patriotism, giving back and being part of something bigger than themselves—that's why people are joining here."

>> LTC Jake Kulzer

COMRADES Then-MAJ Jake Kulzer meets with Iraqi villagers and Coalition Forces in Iraq in 2006. Now LTC Kulzer, he continues to make a positive impact at home in recruiting for the Guard.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LTC JAKE KULZER



NEW RECRUITS LTC Jake Kulzer (right), commander of the MNARNG Recruiting and Retention Battalion, poses with new MNARNG Soldiers (L-R), PVTs Nicole Clark, Kain Steele, Joesy Musil and Jacob Martinez, PFCs Michael Vance and Erik Mossberg, PVT Michael Hoium and PFC Patrick Gallagher, near the Roseville, MN armory.

New Recruits

PFC Michael Vance, 19

He chose to be a UH-60 Black Hawk mechanic because he thought it would be the best way to either become a crew chief or a pilot.

PFC Erik Mossberg, 17

He chose to be an infantryman because it is the toughest job in the military.

"I'm all about success and getting 100 percent on everything that I do."

PVT Michael Hoium, 21

He plans to make a career out of the military and signed an initial eight-year contract.

"I plan on re-upping and re-upping."

PVT Nicole Clark, 17

She said as a Soldier, she would feel good about herself.

"Because I'm out there to serve the country and people."

"The Guard is perceived as a high-quality organization that contributes to the overall benefit of society," he said. "So it's a win."

"People aren't only joining today because of the college money and other benefits; people are joining to serve their country and serve their community," Kulzer remarked. "Patriotism and giving back and being part of something bigger than themselves—that's why people are joining here."

And as 21-year-old PVT Joesy Musil said, "It feels really good to be a Guard member. It makes me feel better knowing that I'm going to be out there helping my country. I'm excited." **GX**

Discover more about Active First at www.NATIONALGUARD.com

over to the United States Army Recruiting Command (USAREC).

Kulzer added that his recruiters, especially in the rural areas, are the "most well-known recruiters, because they're from there. Now they recruit for the Army as well," he said.

An additional benefit of the Active First program is that it doesn't require an ARNG slot. Considering that Minnesota is operating at 125 percent of its authorized strength, finding a position for every Soldier creates a challenge.

When these Soldiers do return to the MNARNG, finding a slot will be easier because most will be Sergeants or Staff Sergeants.

Kulzer noted that most of the vacancies in the Minnesota Guard are for these two ranks.

TWO WEEKS TO SHOWDOWN

Kulzer said the National Guard Bureau (NGB) approved him and his team to start Fiscal Year '09 early. A military fiscal year normally runs from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30 of the following year.

He said his team had two weeks to prepare for Super Tuesday.

FAST FACTS

LTC Jake Kulzer was the Civil Affairs Team leader for the First Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Infantry Division in its 16-month deployment to Iraq. He was also featured as a GX Hero in GX 4.6. Download it now at www.NATIONALGUARD.com/downloads/gxmagine

Each month, a Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) also hosts a Mission Day, in which it stays open as long as needed.

He noted that he worked closely with the Minneapolis MEPS, which brought on extra doctors and staff.

One hundred and twenty-three recruits were enlisted at the Minneapolis MEPS and the remaining 23 were divided between the Sioux Falls, SD, and Fargo, ND, MEPS.

There also were five guidance counselors working that day, along with two former guidance counselors still serving in the RRB.

Kulzer said his recruiters and applicants filled out as much paperwork as possible prior to going to MEPS to expedite the process. More than 90 percent of the applicants were entering the military for the first time.

This "jump start" to the new year also means that Kulzer's team is ahead of its recruiting mission. The mission's early success means his team can now recruit higher-quality applicants.

"You get better-qualified kids, so there is no pressure on the recruiter or the applicant," he noted.

MINNESOTA PRIDE

Why has the MNARNG been so successful in its recruiting mission?

Kulzer pointed out a few reasons. He began with the fact that Minnesotans really care about their country, their communities and the state, making the ARNG a "great fit" for this type of mentality.

"No matter where people line up politically, they are supportive of the armed services. They're supportive of their state and communities. So the Guard resonates because the values match."

"Being able to serve in the U.S. Armed Forces at a local level really fits the climate here in Minnesota," he continued. He added that media attention to the MNARNG's successful missions in overseas deployments, including Operation Iraqi Freedom, has resulted in it being a very well-known and very well-respected organization.

"Being part of the Guard is really good," Kulzer said. "So I think because of the support for the Guard and the way that the Guard is viewed ... it is a really good climate for us to recruit in."

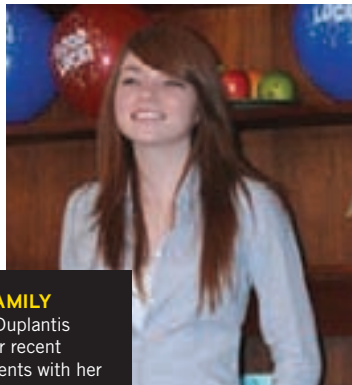
"It all boils down to community support and how the Guard is perceived in those communities. And in our case, both are very positive," he continued.

Kulzer added that a good recruiting staff working in supportive communities also assists in recruiting success.



A PROUD FAMILY

PVT Jessica Duplantis celebrates her recent accomplishments with her family and recruiter SSG Michael I. Davila.



“There are just so many doors that are open; so many things that I can accomplish.”

>> PVT Jessica Duplantis



Family Honors Outstanding Guard Enlistee

RECRUIT IS RECENT YOUTH CHALLENGE PROGRAM GRADUATE

Story and photos by SFC Paul Meeker | COVINGTON, LA

FAMILY AND FRIENDS of one new Louisiana Army National Guard (LAARNG) recruit gathered recently to celebrate three of her significant accomplishments: graduating from the LAARNG's Youth Challenge Program, earning her GED and enlisting in the LAARNG's 415th Military Intelligence Battalion.

PVT Jessica R. Duplantis, 17, graduated third in her class in at the Youth Challenge Program (YCP) in Carville, LA, but the September 2008 graduation ceremony was cancelled due to Hurricanes Gustav and Ike. Nevertheless, her experience in YCP convinced Duplantis that she wanted to pursue a military career. She followed through by swearing in as a member of the LAARNG on Jan. 9.

At a reception hosted in her family's Covington, LA, home, Duplantis shared a little about her motivation to excel in life and in the military.

“I have a future for myself,” she said. “I have goals. I have dreams. I have ambitions, and working towards them is very empowering. I feel like God has put this huge fire inside me to become everything I can be.

“I may not know something about everything, and I'll probably never

know everything about something,” Duplantis continued, “but I'm capable of learning anything and just striving toward that and being in the Guard. There are just so many doors that are open; so many things that I can accomplish.”

Anna Ricks, Duplantis' mother, said that she was not surprised by her daughter's recent successes, noting that since birth, Duplantis had always been “large and in charge.” Her stepfather, Malcolm Ricks, echoed this sentiment adding that growing up, she was “very strong-willed” and would succeed at whatever she attempted.

Duplantis' National Guard recruiter, SSG Michael I. Davila, recognized her accomplishments by formally presenting her with graduation and GED certificates. Davila shared with the guests some of the qualities that the new recruit demonstrated throughout her YCP term.

“She's very intelligent, and she's very thoughtful. I saw right away that she's got a future.”

>> SSG Michael I. Davila

“She's very intelligent, and she's very thoughtful. I saw right away that she's got a future.”

“She's very intelligent, and she's very thoughtful. I saw right away that she's got a future,” said Davila. Duplantis then recited the entire *Soldier's Creed* without error for her guests. Davila remarked that all recruits learn the *Soldier's Creed* in training, but Duplantis was the first he had recruited who memorized it before training. It was this kind of ambition and attention to detail that convinced Davila he was mentoring a very special Soldier.

Duplantis will begin the LAARNG's Recruit Sustainment Program at Camp Villere, LA, and then begin basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, in August. She will receive advanced training at Fort Huachuca, AZ, and at the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, CA. **GX**



I Did What an Investor Should **Never** Do

By John Gilliam, Courtesy of USAA

As a financial writer with access to the brightest minds in the investment business, I'm constantly asked, "Where's the best place to invest my money?"

Family, friends, people I've just met—it doesn't matter—they all want a crystal-ball synopsis about where the market is headed, what's the next hot asset class or sector, and what great stock tips can make them money.

I do have plenty of informed opinions, but at the end of the day, they're just opinions. And in my personal investing experience, they

haven't always led to stellar results. Why?

- * Investing in the financial markets involves buying and selling, and to make a profit you have to get both decisions precisely right.
- * To buy and sell successfully you must be able to monitor and interpret countless pieces of information that can change in a heartbeat.
- * When the market has its ups and downs, emotions can easily cloud your judgment.

Classic investing mistakes

Even though I have written endlessly about the importance

of investing fundamentals, I have ignored them. For example, in the years preceding the Great Bull Market of 2000 to 2002, I, like so many others investors, jumped on the dot-com bandwagon.

Starting in 1998, I bought stocks, mostly in TMT—technology, media and telecommunications. My brokerage account tripled in three years. The thinking on Wall Street was that the Internet boom changed everything, and if you turned on CNBC what you heard was, "It's different this time."

Well, it was different until it wasn't, and in the bear market that followed, my brokerage account fell

by 60 percent. I sold everything in one day and remained in cash from the beginning of the bull market that started in 2003 until early 2006.

I did exactly what a disciplined investor should never do. Once I'd experienced huge losses, I waited to get back in the market until it felt safe to do so, thereby missing out on the lion's share of the gains.

In short, I completely ignored the basics. My decisions were based first on greed, then fear. And I couldn't accurately weigh the risks versus the rewards.

The importance of asset allocation

Investment research shows that 90 percent of a portfolio's return over time is attributed to having the right investment mix. That means having the right combination of asset classes—stocks, bonds and cash.

Why? Because it helps smooth out the ups and downs of the markets.

Investing for the long haul

Since experiencing these setbacks in 2006, I chose an asset allocation solution tailored to fit my needs and risk tolerance. I've consolidated all my retirement assets into that product and my non-qualified taxable assets into a similar one that takes my tax burden into account.

I've learned that losses hurt more than gains help. For example, if you have \$100,000 in assets and you lose 20 percent, you then have \$80,000, which means you have to make 25 percent just to get back to \$100,000. There are plenty of opportunities in today's markets, but you have to maintain a disciplined approach when things get rocky. Staying diversified is the key to not only surviving, but thriving in the financial markets. **GX**

John Gilliam is a freelance financial writer who has written on financial topics for many of America's leading financial institutions.

Staying diversified is the **key to not only surviving, but thriving** in the financial markets.



Ready and Resilient in 2009

DECADE OF HEALTH LAUNCHES NEW CAMPAIGN

By Ann M. Stark, ARNG Decade of Health Team

The Army National Guard's Decade of Health (DOH) program is marking its fourth year by announcing the "Ready and Resilient" outreach series for 2009. DOH is a 10-year readiness plan that supports personal responsibility for health and wellness.

Each year, DOH helps Soldiers and their families focus on readiness by getting and staying healthy as

well as relating ideas for resiliency. DOH's motto is: "Always Ready, Always There, Always Healthy," which spotlights fit Soldiers who maintain force strength and sustain critical operations.

Resistance to stress is equally important for Soldiers because resiliency has a direct impact on health. Soldiers' resiliency to stress is more of a state than a trait. It is learned behavior, amenable to the positive impact of good leadership and the

experience gained from education—real and vicarious—and training.

Stressors occur in both the home and in military settings; consequently, at the center of the program are education and training resources, links to Soldier and family support services as well as personal stories of readiness and resilience.

Focus groups and electronic surveys are being used to gather Soldier and family feedback to tailor the series to meet their needs.

The many links to existing support programs will make support more readily available to Soldiers and their families.

Information designed for leaders will highlight their sentinel role in managing the stress placed on their units by high mission demands. Strong partnerships with both the National Guard Family Program and the ARNG Soldier/Family Support and Services Division (S/FSS) will strengthen the program's ability to reach out to members of the National Guard and family members.

DOH and the Army National Guard (ARNG) has partnered with the American Heart/American Stroke Associations (AHA/ASA) to create a culture of wellness

ARNG Ready & Resilient!®



Maintaining force strength and sustaining critical operations rely heavily on healthy, fit Soldiers. Soldier resilience to stress is more a state than a trait.

for all Americans. The AHA/ASA annual campaigns help expand community outreach nationally and locally. The ARNG offers the AHA/ASA unique participation in DOH's innovative health promotion and prevention activity, thus carrying the AHA/ASA message to more than 1.5 million Soldiers, family members and Veterans.

Cardiovascular Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) training will be offered as a tool for family

readiness. The Ready and Resilient Program will strive to enhance mission accomplishment and support the development of ready and resilient Soldiers and families. Enhanced readiness is a benefit accrued by optimizing Soldiers' capability to adapt to and recover from the stresses of the military setting, whether they are caused by a military situation or by issues of home and community. For more info visit DecadeofHealth.com. **GX**



*Commit to readiness...
Strengthen resiliency...*



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

www.decadeofhealth.com



Economic Downturn = Back to School



By Johanna Altland, Grantham University

In today's shaky economy, many more working professionals are heading back to school to earn undergraduate or graduate degrees. Over the last few decades, there have been some uncertain times for various industries like textiles, trucking and aviation. For many workers in those fields, going back to school to broaden their skill set or to get trained in another industry was the solution to their problems. That still holds true for workers today.

Over the last few months, media outlets across the country have been reporting on the growing number of professionals returning to school. It's

common to read headlines such as, "Economic Downturn Buys Enrollment," "More Students Head Back to School During Slow Economy" and "College and the Ailing Economy" in popular publications like *CNN Money*, *USA Today*, *U.S. News & World Report* and *The Business Journal*.

As the unemployment rate continues to climb, so does the number of college enrollments. Many two- and four-year colleges across the United States are reporting a record number of applicants. But one of the biggest questions on everyone's mind is: Does going back to school in light of today's economic news make sense?

While a college degree may not guarantee employment, it can definitely help. As employers scale back on their hiring and job competitiveness increases, having a degree could give you an edge over your competition. In addition, having a degree improves the chances of keeping your job. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the national unemployment rate in November 2008 climbed to 6.7 percent, but the unemployment rate among college graduates was slightly less than half that number at 3.1 percent.

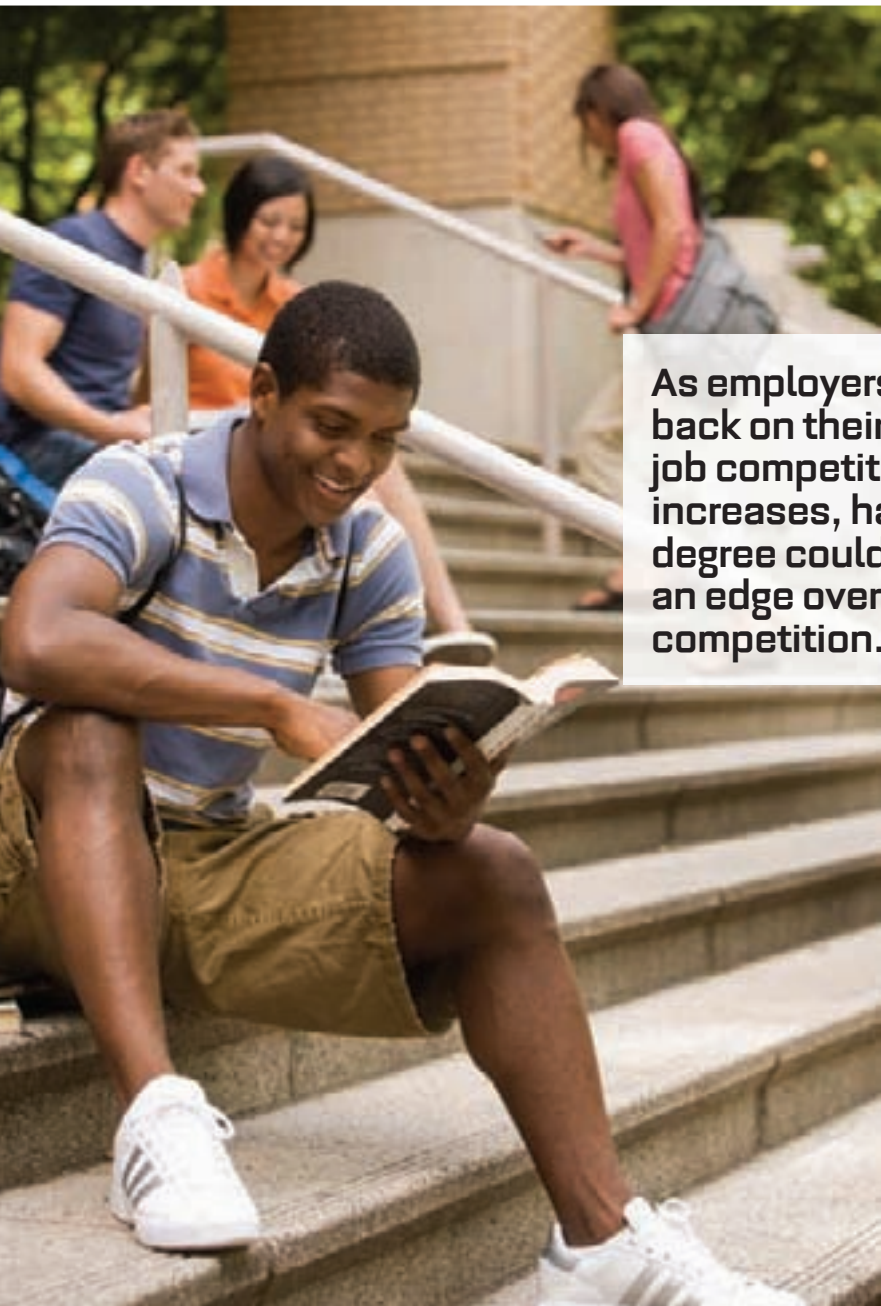
So does the cost of a college education outweigh the benefits? The average student graduates with \$20,000 in college debt. For those who don't have scholarships or some type of funding to offset their costs, the average soars to \$35,000. Despite these high numbers, those with bachelor's degrees earn about \$20,000 more per year, on average, than high school graduates. If you multiply

those additional earnings over a 40-year career, you could potentially make \$800,000 more in your lifetime and that number increases for those with advanced degrees. It certainly seems that the debt you may incur by going back to college would be well worth the additional income you may receive with an undergraduate degree.

In addition to the benefits discussed above, studies show that college graduates are more likely to get jobs with health insurance, have a better work environment, be healthier, vote and engage in volunteer work. According to a study released by the Commission on Access, Admissions and Success in Higher Education, "The economic, democratic and social health of the United States depends largely on an educated citizenry and their productivity." Thus, college graduates have a direct impact on the overall state of our society and economy.

So, yes, going back to school to earn a college degree is worth the expense, even in today's tough economic times. **GX**

+ **Tip:** If you are thinking about earning a college degree to make you more marketable in the workforce, please carefully consider the type of field you'd like to enter. Take a look at some of the fastest growing, highest paying careers before you make your decision because getting a degree in a high-demand field will not only improve your likelihood of being hired, but it may also mean a higher starting salary.



As employers scale back on their hiring and job competitiveness increases, having a degree could give you an edge over your competition.



Put Your College Degree to Work for You

By Johanna Altland, Grantham University

If you've recently earned or are about to earn a degree, don't just let it sit there and collect dust on your resume. Now that you have the credentials to complement your work experience, it may be time to negotiate a raise or promotion from your employer. When you are considering this approach, it is important to keep a few things in mind:

Do find out what you're worth.

There are quite a few salary Web sites like Salary.com and PayScale.com that can tell you what the average salary range is for your qualifications. They use criteria such as the number of years you've been employed in your field, your education level and where you live to calculate compensation.

Do look at your proposal through the eyes of your employer.

When you approach your employer about a raise or promotion, they will consider all of the reasons you deserve it, and whether or not it's

feasible for the department or company to give you what you're asking for. Also, consider the timing of your request. If your employer recently went through layoffs, now is not the time to begin salary negotiations.

Do offer something that is of extensive and solid value.

Before you approach your employer for a pay increase or more responsibility, think about all of the things you've done in the past year that were of a direct benefit to your company. Companies tend to be more receptive to employees who go above and beyond their job descriptions.

Do create a master plan.

Map out the specifics on why you feel you deserve a raise, listing the areas where you've excelled and projects you've completed. This is a good time to mention a degree or any specialized training you have recently completed or are currently working to finish. Creating a master plan will allow you to put your thoughts in order and talk confidently about why you qualify for a raise.

Don't request a raise because you're having trouble getting along with coworkers or authoritative figures.

Personal conflict does not constitute the need for more money. You perform a job, and your main responsibility is to perform that job to the liking and satisfaction of your employer, regardless of your compensation.

The choice to obtain your degree was a good one. An education provides you with the ability to open many doors that would otherwise be closed. Take advantage of the benefits, and further yourself and your career. **GX**

NEVER GIVE UP THE FIELD!

THE GEORGIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



By Jason Hall

THE origins of the state of Georgia began with the militia. From 1730 to 1733, a militia force was raised and trained in England for the specific purpose of emigrating to the American colonies.

In 1733, this militia force, under the command of GEN James Edward Oglethorpe, established the colony of Georgia, making it the last of the original 13 colonies.

The military colony of Georgia was meant to act as a buffer between British Carolina colonies to the North and the Spanish colony of Florida to the south, from where Native American and Spanish attacks posed a constant threat.

The British developed a three-part defense system in Georgia, which included British Regulars, full time colonial rangers, and enrolled militia. The colonial rangers and British Regulars saw intermittent service, while the enrolled militia (consisting of men ages 16–50) was the main defense for the growing number of colonists settling in Georgia from England.

In addition to the government-controlled enrolled militia, a volunteer militia unit called the Georgia Hussars was raised in Savannah in 1736 and remained in service until 1903.

On July 7, 1742, GEN Oglethorpe utilized his combined force to drive the Spanish out of the colony at the battle of Bloody Marsh.



**IN 1903,
THE GEORGIA MILITIA
BECAME THE GEORGIA
NATIONAL GUARD.**

PHOTO BY PHOTOGRAPHER'S MATE THIRD CLASS (SW) GREG PIEROT. INSET FLAG © ISTOCKPHOTO





BIRD'S EYE VIEW
US Army National Guard
Warrant Officers
Charles Woodward
and Lance Brennan,
pilots of a CH-47
Chinook assigned to
the 131st Aviation
Regiment of the
Georgia Army National
Guard, fly over
areas flooded when
Hurricane Katrina
devastated parts of
New Orleans, LA.

“COME AND TAKE IT”

As the 1700s progressed, a growing dissent against British rule began to spread through the colonies, including Georgia.

With the outbreak of open conflict in 1775, measures were taken to defend the vital port of Savannah. An earthen fort was constructed on a bluff overlooking the Medway River at Sunbury. On Nov. 25, 1778, a British force attacked the fort, which was garrisoned by approximately 200 Georgia militiamen. The fort's commander, COL John McIntosh, responded to the British calls for surrender by exclaiming, “We would rather perish in a vigorous defense than accept your proposal ... as to surrendering the fort, receive this reply: ‘Come and take it!’”

The British forces decided not to “come and

take it,” and instead withdrew. During the War of 1812, Georgia militiamen defending Savannah from the British would again occupy the fort.

DEFENDING TEXAS

Just over 20 years after the War of 1812, the Soldiers from Georgia were involved in assisting in the defense of other states and states-to-be.

The men of the “Georgia Battalion” went to Texas to support citizens fighting for their independence from Mexico. That same year, several militia units, including the “Macon Volunteers,” volunteered to serve in the Seminole War to drive the tribe from neighboring Florida.

In 1846, the members of the Georgia militia were again on their way to Texas to fight the Mexican army. At the outbreak of the Mexican War, nine volunteer companies united to form the Georgia Regiment, which was assigned to the Army's First Division. As part of the First Division, the Georgians saw extensive combat in Mexico, and senior officers gained critical experience that would serve them well in the coming war.

NEVER SURRENDER

With the surrender of Fort Sumter in Charleston, SC, in April 1861, the American Civil War began.

The Georgia militia acted quickly and seized Fort Pulaski, located at the mouth of the Savannah River, from federal forces.

During the war, Georgia raised 130 separate units—second only to Virginia in number—which included infantry, cavalry and artillery regiments.

The Georgians fought in both the Eastern and Western Theaters of the war. During the first major engagement, the Battle of First Manassas (Bull Run), on July 21, 1861, the 8th Georgia Infantry suffered the highest loss of any Confederate regiment that fought that day.

The commanding officer of the 8th Georgia was COL Francis Stebbins Bartow, an original member of the Confederate Congress. In the midst of the desperate and vicious fighting on Henry House Hill, he was mortally wounded and uttered his last words to his men, “They have killed me, boys! Never give up the field.”

The “boys” fulfilled his dying order by retaining control of the field and delivering a victory to the fledgling

Confederacy. In 1936, the Georgia Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy placed a memorial in Bartow's honor.

SHERMAN'S “MARCH TO THE SEA”

Georgia militiamen were also involved in actions to protect their own state, which included the bloodiest two days in American history—the Battle of Chickamauga. From Sept. 19–20, 1863, this battle would prove to be the most significant Union defeat in the Western Theater. The true nature of the new tactic of “total war” would scar the state of Georgia in the infamous “March to the Sea,” conducted by the Union forces under the command of MG William Tecumseh Sherman.

Sherman's march began on Nov. 15, 1864, from recently captured Atlanta. Continuing a scorched earth policy, Sherman arrived in Savannah on December 22. During the entire march, units of the Georgia militia put up a valiant, yet hopeless, fight to thwart Sherman's advance.

BECOMING THE GEORGIA NATIONAL GUARD

Following the Civil War, the Georgia militia enjoyed 30 years of relative quiet before war clouds once again gathered.

More than 3,000 members of the Georgia militia responded to the 1898 call for service in the Spanish-American War.

In 1903, the Georgia militia became the Georgia National Guard and integrated the separate Georgia black militia into its ranks.

The first deployment of the new Georgia National Guard came in 1916 when, under the leadership of GEN John “Black Jack” Pershing, President Woodrow Wilson mobilized the Soldiers to respond to the threat posed by Pancho Villa and his forces. The training and experience garnered by the Georgians would prove invaluable in their first European conflict, which was only a year away.

WWI AND THE “DIXIE” DIVISION

In 1917, the United States entered WWI, and the Georgia National Guard was sent “over there.”

Most Georgia units were attached to the 31st “Dixie” Division. However, Georgia's 151st Machine Gun Battalion was part of the 42nd “Rainbow” Division and endured 167 days of continuous combat.

With the end of the war, Georgians returned home believing global warfare was a thing of the past. Unfortunately, they were wrong.

THE 30TH DIVISION AND THE SIEGFRIED LINE

WWII began in Europe in 1939 with the German invasion of Poland.



BROTHERS IN ARMS In response to the civil rights movement of the 1960s, an increasing number of African-Americans joined the Georgia Guard starting in the 1970s. Many, such as Specialist Four Louis Hudson of the 190th Military Police Company in 1975, were soon found serving in all units.

In 1940, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, knowing that American intervention was inevitable, instituted the largest peacetime mobilization of the National Guard.

Georgia Guard Soldiers marched off to training camps believing they would soon return; however, that year of training would be extended with the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941. This time around, the Georgia Guard units became part of the 30th “Old Hickory” Division.

The 30th Division landed in Normandy D-Day-plus-10. During the Battle of Mortain, they blunted a counterattack by the German Wehrmacht that was intended to stop the American “break out” from the hedgerows of Northern France.

In the fall of 1944, the 30th Division was one of the first American divisions to breach the famous Siegfried Line—the Germans’ defense system that stretch 390 miles along the border with France.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the world, members of the Georgia National Guard fought across the Pacific from Guadalcanal to New Guinea, finally reaching the Philippines and liberating them.

CHANGE AND REORGANIZATION

Following the end of the war, the Georgia National Guard saw considerable change and reorganization.

In 1947, the Georgia Air National Guard became an autonomous branch, separate from the Georgia Army National Guard.

Both Georgia’s Army and Air National Guards saw service in the Korean War, but only the Georgia Air Guard fought in the Vietnam War.

THE PERSIAN GULF WAR

It was not until Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm of 1990–1991 that Georgia saw the wholesale deployment of its Army Guard men and women. More than 5,000 Soldiers of the Georgia Guard served in the Persian Gulf.

The 1st Battalion, 108th Armor, Georgia Army National Guard, mobilized for Desert Storm, but didn’t see combat because they deployed too late. However, the experience of deploying overseas would assist the unit when it was deployed in April 2001 to Bosnia and Herzegovina for Stabilization Force Rotation 9 (SFOR9).

This deployment of Guard forces provided support for Task Force Eagle, which the U.S. was



PLAN OF ATTACK 1LT Jonathan Kiel and 2LT Michael Cooper, both from the Georgia Army National Guard, discuss route-clearing plans on Route Canucks in Iraq on Aug. 19, 2008. The service members were clearing the route of obstacles for a convoy consisting of four large generators headed to designated Iraqi communities.

to conclude in October 2001. However, the worst terrorist attack on American soil in history—9/11—would change not only the Guard, but also the world.

POST-9/11

The Georgia National Guard has participated in Operation Noble Eagle (Homeland Security), Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In April 2002, the 265th Regional Support Group (RSG) participated in pre-war planning with the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF) and deployed with them to Kuwait in February 2003. The 265th crossed into Iraq with the 1st MEF on March 24, 2003, and immediately began its mission providing combat engineer support to the Marines and the Iraqi civilian population.

According to MAJ Reginal Cook, “In all, the 265th repaired two major electrical plants, four hospitals, three water facilities and more than 20 schools.” For their efforts supporting the 1st MEF, the 265th RSG made Georgia Army National Guard history in November 2008, when it was awarded the first Navy Presidential Unit Citation.

In 2005, Georgia’s 1/108th Armor was combined with Guard units from other states to create Task Force (TF) Roughrider. In Iraq,

TF Roughrider conducted search and reconnaissance missions as well as convoy protection around Baghdad in the notorious Sunni Triangle. After a year in Iraq, the members of the 1/108th returned home in April 2006.

From its founding as a “militia” colony to the recent mobilization of the 48th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized), the Georgia Army National Guard’s Citizen-Soldiers stand ready to protect America at home and abroad, never giving up the field. **GX**

Fast Facts

» During the Colonial period, Georgia counties were divided into “Militia Districts.”

» The 48th Infantry Brigade (Enhanced) (Mechanized) was originally organized on April 23, 1825.

» 4,500 members of the 48th Infantry Brigade (Mechanized) were mobilized in 1990 to participate in Desert Storm.



SALUTE TO AMERICA

Vikings Celebrate Silver Star Winner

Story and photos by SFC Clint Wood

The last time I
stood on the green
Astroturf

of the Hubert H.
Humphrey Metrodome in Minneapolis, MN, there
was complete silence.

The Minnesota Vikings had just lost 30–27 to the Atlanta Falcons in overtime in the 1998 NFC Championship football game becoming the first team with a 15–1 record that failed to reach the Super Bowl. I was there photographing the game for the *Brainerd Dispatch*, Brainerd, MN—hence, my sideline privileges.

Ten years later, I returned to the Metrodome on a blustery winter day for the Minnesota Vikings versus Green Bay Packers game.



FEELING THE LOVE

SSG Chad Malmberg, the first Minnesota Soldier since WWII to earn the Silver Star, waves to more than 63,000 fans before the game.



**I ALWAYS SAY
THAT WHAT MAKES
US SUCCESSFUL
IN COMBAT IS
WHAT MAKES YOU
SUCCESSFUL
ANYWHERE ELSE.
IT'S THAT SIMPLE."**

>> SSG Chad Malmberg



JERSEY BOY
SSG Chad Malmberg shows off his new jersey—a gift from the Vikings and U.S. Bank. Also shown: sister Jessica Kimpton, left; stepmother, Carol Malmberg; brother-in-law Jason Kimpton; and father Charlie. The number 56 was his CET's call sign in Iraq.

But this time, instead of silence, there was an earsplitting roar as I left the dome. The Vikings had won the game, 28–27.

The roar had actually started before the teams hit the field, though. It began with the Vikings' spectacular pre-game "Salute to America" ceremony, which included the acknowledgment of an American hero—SSG Chad Malmberg of the Minnesota Army National Guard (MNARNG). Malmberg is the first Minnesota Soldier to earn a Silver Star—the third highest award for bravery—since WWII.

He joins famous Soldiers like Audie Murphy, America's most decorated war Veteran, in earning this award. Murphy's decorations include the Medal of Honor, the nation's highest award for bravery, which he earned Feb. 26, 1945, for remaining at his command post to call in

artillery strikes in a hail of gunfire.

On a memorable night in Iraq, Jan. 27, 2007, Malmberg, like 2LT Murphy in WWII, led from the front.

Unlike most Convoy Escort Team (CET) commanders who ride in the second Humvee of a minimum three-Humvee team, Malmberg rode in the first vehicle—aka the scout vehicle. A scout vehicle travels about a half-mile ahead of the convoy of trucks.

"That's where I preferred to ride because I [could see] everything first and had the freedom to maneuver on the threats to protect the convoy," Malmberg said.

As Minnesota's former Public Affairs Office Noncommissioned Officer in Charge, I've done a few stories about other heroes of MNARNG's 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT) of the 34th Infantry Division.

[Fast Facts]

★ 1,052 Silver Stars were awarded to the Red Bulls during WWII. ★ The Silver Star is awarded to a person who, while serving in any capacity with the U.S. Army, is cited for gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party.

Malmberg and I were both members of the 1/34th BCT when it served in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) for 16 months. This deployment became the longest continuous deployment of any U.S. ground combat military unit during OIF.

MALMBERG EARNS HIS MEDAL

Malmberg's historic night began when his CET of five Humvee gun trucks and 20 semi-trailer

convoy. He put his gun trucks in optimum positions to observe the enemy and obtain the best sectors of fire.

As the award narrative stated, "Unbeknownst to Malmberg, an Anti-Iraqi force of 30-40 fighters had established an ambush southwest of where the bomb was detonated."

The convoy was halted in a prime location for an ambush. There were dirt berms running parallel to the highway at 100- to 200-meter

rear for support and safeguarding because the enemy had started attacking his convoy.

Unable to squash the enemy, Malmberg exited his vehicle under direct enemy fire. Using an AT-4 portable anti-tank weapon (an anti-armor weapon), he was able to destroy the largest concentration of enemy fire.

Malmberg directed his team to mark enemy positions with infrared lasers in order for nearby Apache AH-64 helicopters to destroy the positions. Unfortunately, the enemy fire was so fierce, the helicopters didn't have enough time to fire their weapons.

Over the next 35 minutes, Malmberg directed his five gun trucks while continually moving his truck to the area of heaviest fighting. During this time, he dismounted his vehicle on three more occasions, all under heavy small-arms and RPG fire.

"Over the course of the fight, I moved back and forth, as did my other gun trucks, in order to provide maximum firepower on enemy concentrations," he described.

Malmberg's last heroic feat of the ambush occurred several minutes after leaving his truck. As the enemy closed within 20 meters of the rear gun truck, his trucks ran low on ammunition, and the gunner's M2 50 caliber machine gun malfunctioned. Malmberg immediately went into action. Still under fire, he selflessly put himself in harm's way in order to deploy a hand grenade at the enemy, who was hiding in a ditch with intentions of attacking the

WAVING THE FLAG Minnesota Vikings right guard Anthony Herrera (left) and wide receiver Bobby Wade waved American flags as they were the first to run onto the field.



HUMAN MASCOT SSG Chad Malmberg poses with Vikings mascot Ragnar.

"I HAD A LOT OF CONFIDENCE IN THAT COMPANY, AND I KNEW THAT WE WOULD DO GOOD THINGS OVER THERE. AND IN FACT, WE DID."

>> SSG Chad Malmberg

intervals, canals ran perpendicular to the road and median rails prevented any vehicles from crossing the road.

For those of you who haven't been over there, American convoys own these Main Supply Routes (MSR) at night because of a curfew. There is no civilian traffic on them usually.

The ambush began with the enemy firing rifles and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) at the rear of the convoy in front of Malmberg's. Malmberg ordered his truck's driver to move forward to support the other convoy's Soldiers. They engaged four to five enemy support-by-fire positions.

In what was the first of five occasions, Malmberg exited his truck under enemy small-arms fire. Minutes after the battle started, Malmberg directed his truck and another truck to the

convoy. Thanks to Malmberg's actions, an estimated seven to nine insurgents were eliminated, destroying the threat of his convoy being overrun.

In the end, not one member of Malmberg's convoy was wounded or killed, and no vehicle was lost.

For his selfless actions, Malmberg was presented with the Silver Star by Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty on Sept. 22, 2007. During the award presentation, Malmberg recognized his fellow Soldiers by asking them to stand up.

When I asked Malmberg what the key to his success was, he replied, "In my opinion, the keys were discipline, communication and violence of action. Our escort team was very methodical in our duties—we always looked for ways to improve. We communicated

trucks left Baghdad International Airport en route to Tallil Air Base.

His decision to lead from the front would play a major role. He and the Soldiers in his truck were the first to witness the convoy ahead of them being struck by a roadside bomb. Malmberg's immediate reaction was to halt his

efficiently on and off of the battlefield. I always say that what makes us successful in combat is what makes you successful anywhere else. It's that simple."

He also pointed out that the Combatives training he and his team underwent assisted in their success.

"Fighting is the same whether you use your hands or machine guns, grenades and rockets," Malmberg noted. "It is about understanding your strengths and weaknesses, as well as your opponent's."

"We welcomed a good fight because we had the confidence in each other to perform," he continued. "I can honestly say that each of us were performing as if that fight was another day in the office. That's because our training and mind-set had us prepared for the worst possible scenarios. When it's time to fight, you've got to go 100 percent or go the other way."

MALMBERG SETS THE EXAMPLE

Honored as the Minnesota Vikings and U.S. Bank Hometown Hero before the game, Malmberg made all Soldiers proud. He stood on the sidelines near the end zone as his name and accomplishments were announced, then



A PROUD FAN
SSG Chad Malmberg watches the Vikings steam on to a victory.

shown on the Jumbotron screen to the more than 63,800 football fans.

Wearing his Class A uniform featuring ribbons and awards, including the Combat Infantryman Badge, Airborne and Air Assault wings, silver German Armed Forces Badge for Weapons Proficiency in Gold lanyard, Malmberg waved to the crowd for several seconds as media personnel swarmed around him.

This wasn't Malmberg's first Vikings game—the team had honored him at a previous game as well after he returned home in July 2007, with most of the 5,000 strong 1/34th BCT.

"I love it," he said of being recognized at the games. "I just get a feeling of exhilaration. I get a rush because I feel like I'm a part of something that is a lot bigger than myself. Hopefully I'm representing well for all the

Soldiers who are deployed and all the Soldiers serving stateside in the Armed Forces today.

"It is a huge honor," he continued. "It's a pleasure for me to be able to come to a game like this and show support, and to have my family and friends with me. And [to be with] all these Service members—it is just an excellent feeling."

Malmberg's father, Charlie, was there that day. When I asked this former St. Paul police-

The game was broadcast to a worldwide television audience of military personnel on the American Forces Network.

SGT Brian Hitchcock sang, "God Bless America," and then the 34th Red Bull Infantry Division band, led by CWO Trygve Skaar, played each song from the different military branches. Several Army and Air Guard members carried a large American flag onto the field.



TOUCHDOWN LEAP
Green Bay Packers fans congratulate cornerback Will Blackmon after he scores on a 65-yard punt return in the third quarter.

WHEN I'M OUT ON THE FIELD ... I GET A RUSH BECAUSE I FEEL LIKE I'M A PART OF SOMETHING THAT IS A LOT BIGGER THAN MYSELF."

>> SSG Chad Malmberg

man how it felt to have a son who was a Silver Star recipient, he replied, "How can you even put that into words? It is something. At his age, he has accomplished things that I'll never do and, thankfully, probably never have the opportunity to do. He made the most of his [time in that] firefight."

SALUTE TO AMERICA

Several Guard Soldiers, including band members, made the most of watching the game, too, courtesy of the Vikings. They had the best seats in the house—folding chairs on the field near the corner of the end zone.

Following Malmberg's recognition, the Vikings cheerleaders dashed out of the huge inflatable Vikings ship on the corner of the end zone amidst billowing smoke, waving their pom-poms. They were celebrating their 25th anniversary. They cheered and high-kicked as the Vikings players rushed out of the ship one by one. Right guard Anthony Herrera and wide receiver Bobby Wade were among the first onto the field, and they carried American flags in their right hands like Soldiers going into battle.

After the Vikings team was on the playing field, the Red Bull Band returned to the middle



ENJOYING THE GAME SSG Chad Malmberg's mother, Teri Walen, and his father, Charlie, were among his family members attending the game.

of the field and played the National Anthem.

At halftime, several members of the MNARNG's 2nd Assault Helicopter Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment, marched onto the field. This battalion, based in St. Paul, returned in July 2008 from a 16-month deployment in support of OIF.

Part of the halftime show included a slide show featuring Viktor, the Vikings' official mascot. While the Soldiers were stationed in Iraq, the team had sent over a replica costume of Viktor. For fun, the Soldiers shot videos and photographs of "Viktor" eating at the Dining Facility (DFAC) in Iraq. As the Soldiers' slide show was broadcast on the Jumbotron, the real Viktor, holding an American flag in his right hand, patted several Soldiers on their shoulders as they stood at attention and in formation.

Later in the game, several of the Soldiers posed with cheerleaders, while Malmberg posed with the Vikings' other mascot, Ragnar.

Ragnar is an interesting mascot. The only "human" mascot in professional sports, he wears his straggly hair down to the middle of his back and has a full beard that stretches to the middle of his chest. Ragnar's costume includes a thick fur vest and thigh-high boots topped with several inches of fur. He's always

the first to hit the turf, straddling a rumbling Harley-Davidson motorcycle.

VOLUNTEERING FOR DEPLOYMENT

Malmberg, who spent three years with the active duty Army's 82nd Airborne Division, could have stayed in college and finished his senior year, but he chose to volunteer for the deployment—the largest for an MNARNG unit since WWII. The unit he was assigned to at the time, the 84th Troop Command in Roseville, MN, was non-deployable.

Back in July 2007, I knew he had volunteered because I was at the unit picnic where he was recognized. But I wanted to find out more about his decision, so I asked him.

He told me he volunteered to join Company A, 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, because he had served several years with that battalion.

"If I was going to go [overseas], I wanted to go with those guys," he said. "I had a lot of confidence in that company, and I knew that we would do good things over there. And in fact, we did."

Malmberg's father told me he had "second thoughts" about Malmberg's decision, because he was so close to finishing school. "But I knew it was something he wanted to do, and he has a good head on his shoulders," Charlie explained.

"I knew things would work out. He's always made the right decisions—or at least they've always come out that way."

Malmberg graduated from Minnesota State University in Mankato, MN, and is employed as a parking enforcement officer for St. Paul. He told me he would soon attend the St. Paul Police Academy. Malmberg has returned to the 84th Troop Command as a Guard Soldier. The Guard has placed him on Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) orders, teaching Combatives and various training skills. In August 2008, he competed in the Army National Guard Warrior Training Center Combatives Championship held at Fort Benning, GA. He won his first two bouts, but lost the next two.

THE SILVER STAR OPENS DOORS

Being a Silver Star recipient has created a lot of opportunities for me," Malmberg said. "It's really done my family and my organization proud. It's a source of honor and self-confidence for me.

"It is something I will be proud of my entire life," he continued. "I'll look back on my deployment and all my experiences in the military and really have a positive light on all of that."

And he, in turn, shines a bright light on the MNARNG and its Soldiers. **GX**

Fighting Spirit

▶ SHARP AND STRONG





Racing for the Soldiers

Dale Jr. will be fighting for every spot on the track in 2009 driving the No. 88 National Guard/AMP Energy Chevrolet.

SPORTS

GX hangs with Dale Jr. at Sound and Speed in Nashville.

64

FITNESS

Strengthen your legs and core even more in Operation Leaps and Bounds Part 2.

70

GEAR

The Guard's HEMTT truck rolls through and over anything.

74

STAR POWER

FANS TRAVEL FOR DALE JR.'S AUTOGRAPH

Story and photos by SFC Clint Wood



HAVING A GOOD LAUGH Dale Jr. shares a laugh with country music stars and fellow NASCAR racers, including Kyle Petty, left, and Aaron Tippin, right.

NASHVILLE, TN—In case I had any questions regarding NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt Jr.'s popularity, the answers became crystal clear recently at the fourth annual Sprint Sound and Speed event at Nashville's Municipal Auditorium.

Prior to a packed-house question-and-answer session featuring Dale Jr., fellow racer Kyle Petty, and country entertainers Aaron Tippin and Danielle Peck, Dale Jr.—who is driver of the No. 88 National Guard/Amp Energy Chevrolet—took part in a 35-minute autograph session, signing items for 200 lucky fans who had won tickets to the exclusive backstage event.

I had just finished photographing the session when a security guard handed me a piece of paper. The guard pointed to two women several feet away who asked me what publication I worked for, and

“It’s always fun working with the military because they’re not like anything else.”

>> Dale Earnhardt Jr.

wondered if there was a possibility of obtaining a photograph I had taken of her daughter.

The daughter—Ashley Mills, from Cincinnati, OH—was wearing a distinctive purple T-shirt, making it easy to find her photo and arrange to email it. And in the process, I learned just how popular Dale Jr. truly is.

THAT'S DEVOTION!

Ashley explained she and her mother had driven from Cincinnati—more than four hours away—so she could get Dale Jr.'s autograph. They had arrived in Music City the previous evening

Dale Earnhardt Jr. received the 2008 NASCAR National Motorsports Press Association's Chex Most Popular Driver Award for a record sixth time last December.

to see country stars Montgomery Gentry, Rodney Atkins and Julianne Hough in a related Sound and Speed concert at Nashville's Sommet Center. She hoped this would put her in town in plenty of time to wait in line for a ticket to the autograph event.

"When I arrived early Saturday morning, the rain was pouring and the line was already very long," Ashley noted. "I waited in the rain for

racing helmets to small die cast cars—before they exited the arena. Ashley, who had her ticket autographed, said that during the wait, she was able to talk to Dale Jr. fans from as far away as Michigan and Texas. Several had been fans for many years, and some had traveled to a number of tracks to see him race.

sitting at the table for this interview session.

He fielded questions, ranging from what he had been doing in his off time to how he gets in the racing mind-set. When asked to reflect on the past year with the Guard, Dale Jr. replied, "Well, It's always fun working with the military because they're not like anything else. They're not pushing

what you learn about what kind of job they're doing."

Dale Jr. noted that the Army National Guard is different from the active-duty Army because Guard Soldiers are Citizen-Soldiers and are often required to leave their civilian jobs to serve their Guard roles.

"A lot of times [Guard Soldiers] go to different places to do different types of work. [Wherever the chal-



MEET DALE JR. Dale Jr. shares a moment with one of his fans at the autograph session.

what seemed like forever, and I was nervous that I might not receive a ticket to meet Dale Jr.

"However, as fate would have it, I was one of the last people to receive a ticket to meet him," she continued. "I was thrilled!"

Ashley and the other 199 fans waited for their autographs in an area just off the main floor of the auditorium. They then walked down a flight of stairs to a hall where they handed Dale Jr. items for his signature—everything from

"It was fantastic," said Ashley of meeting her idol. "He was as nice, handsome and down-to-earth as he seems in the media interviews. It was living a dream."

TALKING UP THE GUARD

After the autograph session, Dale Jr. was quickly ushered into a room where both print and broadcast media reporters waited. Unlike the earlier Q&A with entertainers and other NASCAR drivers, Dale Jr. was the only one

"I waited in the rain for what seemed like forever, and I was nervous that I might not receive a ticket to meet Dale Jr."

>>Ashley Mills



LEAVE'EM WITH A SMILE Dale Jr. cracks a smile during the question-and-answer session.

corporate products or anything like that. It's just different.

"Also, with the situation we have over in the Middle East, the military has really been pushed to the forefront of everybody's minds," he continued. "It's a really important time to be supportive. That makes it interesting right now to be working with them, to see a lot of the things that you see and to learn

lenge is,] those guys go in there and work," he said. "They do all kinds of different stuff. It's interesting to hear the stories.

"I like it," he continued. "I like working with the military." **GX**

FOR MORE ON DALE JR. AND THE GUARD RACING TEAM GO TO www.DaleJrGuardGarage.com.

THE ALASKAN JOURNEY



SOLDIER PREPARES FOR 2009 IDITAROD

By SPC Paizley Ramsey

SSG Harry Alexie of the Alaska National Guard's (AKARNG) 38th Troop Command, Recruiting and Retention in the city of Kwethluk, is training for the toughest dogsled race in the world—the 1,150-mile Iditarod Trail Sled Dog Race. The trail runs between Anchorage and Nome, and begins on March 7.

Alexie, a 30-year-old Yupik (indigenous Alaskan) from Bethel, has begun training with champion dogsled racer Lance Mackey. Mackey is one of the sport's premier champions and winner of several elite dogsled races. His titles include back-to-back wins in the 2007 and 2008 Iditarod and Yukon Quest sled-dog races.

Alexie is training at Mackey's Comeback Kennel training facility in Fairbanks. The two train daily with Mackey's dogs, six of which will be on Alexie's team in the 2009 Iditarod.

Alexie has adopted Mackey's style of training, which consists of running two teams of 11 dogs on a 22-mile track with a four-wheeler. Gradually, Alexie will begin to run the dogs, increasing daily increments from approximately 10 miles to more than 60.

"The training's been great," Mackey said. "I first met Harry up in Bethel when he assisted me with one of my races. I really didn't know him too well when we started training, but to find out that he had a little race experience and his own kennel was comforting."

Check future issues of GX for continuing coverage of SSG Harry Alexie!

DAILY TRAINING Alaska Army National Guard SSG Harry Alexie runs 10 dogs on an 18-mile course near Comeback Kennel, Iditarod winner Lance Mackey's training facility, on Oct. 28.

SPC PAIZLEY RAMSEY

“The National Guard helped get us where we are today.”

>> Lance Mackey, two-time Iditarod winner

A WINNING TEAM

Iditarod winner Lance Mackey has been training SSG Harry Alexie for perhaps the world’s toughest race: the Iditarod.



GATHER UP!

Alaska Army National Guard SSG Harry Alexie brings a training dog to his all-terrain vehicle to attach to the team’s tug lines. Alexie and trainer Lance Mackey use ATVs to condition the dogs.



SPC NICOLAS NU'UVALU

graduated from high school, I got my own team of dogs, which were sprinters I bought at Fur Rondy.”

Others have requested to train with Mackey, but according to Mackey, none of the other would-be trainees were the right choice.

“Harry is a good combination of all the things I’m looking for in a trainee,” Mackey said.

the historical significance of the Guard’s involvement with the establishment of the Iditarod,” Mackey said, referring to the AKARNG’s role in clearing the historic trail for the first 1,000-plus-mile race in 1973.

“The National Guard helped get us where we are today,” Mackey acknowledged. “That in itself is reason enough to help with the training of an Alaska Guard Soldier.”

Mackey is a local celebrity, a cancer survivor and has innumerable accolades. He’s an inspiration and leader in his community.

“It’s weird to think that I’m a mentor,” he admitted. “I’m a normal person who’s had some hardships and setbacks that I’ve overcome. That’s 99 percent of the world’s population, so a lot of people can relate to that.”

While Alexie still faces months of difficult training that will test the limits of his patience and physical resilience, he’s got the Alaska National Guard’s “Always Ready, Always There” spirit—not to mention that he’s set up for success thanks to the help of a champion dogsled pioneer.

“It’s a very rare and exciting opportunity to work with Lance Mackey,” Alexie said. “He’s one of the greats.” **GX**

“These dogs are my kids that I’m turning loose to someone I don’t really know, so it’s important for me to trust his judgment,” Mackey continued. “Now that I’ve worked with him, I think training is going well, and I have the utmost confidence in his abilities,” he added, “But in the end, it’s up to him to get to Nome.”

Although he’s a novice to such high profile races as the Iditarod and Yukon Quest, Alexie has participated in the Fur Rondy World Championship Sled Dog Race.

“When I first started mushing, it was just for fun,” he explained. “I would go around to local villages and get dogs just to run them. After I

IDITAROD’S ORIGINS

“This sport evolved from Alaska Natives using sled dogs as a means for transportation, but unfortunately the natives of the villages have been squeezed out of the competition—mainly due to lack of resources and the cost. So with Harry, it’s a good opportunity to get the competition back to its roots,” Mackey said.

Certain parts of the Iditarod trail were used by Inupiaq and Athabaskan natives hundreds of years before the Russian fur traders of the 1800s and miners of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

“Additionally, many people aren’t aware of

[Fast Facts]

- * Each Iditarod team must have equipment that includes an arctic parka, an ax and boots for each dog’s feet to protect against cutting ice and hard-packed snow injuries.
- * Men and women mushers come from all walks of life—they are fishermen, lawyers, doctors, miners and artists, and they come from around the world to participate.



PANTHER POWER
Dan Wheldon in the No. 4 National Guard Car tears through the road course at Surfer's Paradise, Australia.

COURTESY OF PANTHER RACING

Aero DYNAMIC

GX TALKS WITH TEAM PANTHER INDYCAR ENGINEER

By Ben Warden

As football fans appreciate both the chaos of a running back bouncing through a hole and the perfection of a quarterback throwing a deep pass to an ill-covered receiver, true racing fans enjoy both the “bump and run” style of NASCAR and the overwhelming precision it takes to drive an IndyCar.

Fans debate endlessly the merits of both, but one fact remains: While it's common for cars to bump, touch and rub each other on every lap of a NASCAR race, the slightest wheel touch of two IndyCar cars can be devastating at best and lethal at worst.

Obviously car design and aerodynamics play a huge role in those differences, and with Panther Racing teaming up with former IndyCar Series Champion and 2005 Indianapolis 500 winner Dan Wheldon, now is a great time to brush up on your open-wheelology!

GX recently talked with Panther Racing engineer David Cripps about the 2009 season and the IndyCar itself.

One unique thing about IndyCar is the variety of tracks the series races on, from the 2.5-mile superspeedway of Indianapolis to the streets of St. Petersburg, FL, and all the short tracks and road courses in between.

IndyCar drivers are nothing if not versatile due to the variety of circuits they have to compete on. So do the aerodynamics of the car have to be that versatile too?

“There’s a fairly significant difference [between the courses] because we almost double the amount of downforce we use between the superspeedway and a road course,” Cripps said. “The primary difference between them is drag on the superspeedway. One of our primary areas of detail at Panther is minimizing that drag on the superspeedways.”

For those who need a refresher, downforce describes the downward pressure caused by characteristics of the car (i.e. front and back wings) that allows it to travel faster through corners. If an IndyCar is racing on a track like Watkins Glen, which has 12 turns, the car needs plenty of downforce. But on a track like Indianapolis, with only four turns and mile-long straightaways, the less downforce the better. We asked Cripps the exact relationship between drag and horsepower.

“It’s very simple: If you said that drag was equal to having a parachute hanging on the back of your racecar, then the larger the drag, the larger the parachute,” Cripps said. “If you had a bigger parachute, you’d need even more horsepower to achieve the same speed. Especially

in this series, everybody has the same Honda engines, which puts even more emphasis on your aerodynamic package.”

If you’re a racing fan more inclined toward NASCAR, having one engine manufacturer instead of multiple in a series can seem one-dimensional and stale. But it’s all part of the long history of American Open-Wheel racing.

Explaining that history would be an article in itself, but the short version is there were major differences of opinion over the number of American drivers, the number of road courses versus the number of ovals and the cost. The differences caused Open-Wheel racing to split into two series: the Indy Racing League (IRL) and ChampCar (formerly CART).

After 10 years apart, the financial woes of ChampCar put the IRL in a position to purchase it, and as a result there is once again only one major American open-wheel series. Since ChampCar teams were used to driving road and street courses and not ovals, GX asked Cripps what challenges those teams faced.

“They were at a disadvantage on the superspeedways, because we have had the advantage of running the same car for four years prior to them having the opportunity to join the series,” Cripps said. “That has given us the opportunity to get down to very small details on our aero package, whereas the Champ Car teams had to learn the entire car and many of the tracks as well.”

But with a year under their belts in the series, 2009 is poised to be the most competitive in open-wheel racing since the early days of the Clinton administration.

Unlike other sports, there isn’t a salary cap in autoracing. Whether it’s on a driver or equipment, the “if you have it, you can spend it” model has created an environment where we see most of the same faces in victory lane, but that trend bucked in 2008 as there were multiple first-time winners from a wide range of teams. 2009 is sure to be more of the same. Finally, GX asked Cripps what goes into a successful team, other than those elusive greenbacks. The factors he listed would fit in just as well in a Guard unit as a race team.

“I would point out three determining factors in order of importance: Talent, intellectual depth on each team and experience.” **GX**

“Talent, intellectual depth on each team and experience is what determines our success.”

>> Panther Racing engineer David Cripps

For more go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GuardRacing



CLOSE-QUARTERS COMBAT

Hold on to Your Weapon!

Story and photos by SGT Michael Kerkhoff, Combat Arms Training Center (CATC)

When developing training and standard operating procedures at Combat Arms Training Center (CATC), we try our best to come up with realistic and relevant tactics. I've received a lot of questions about how our Combatives training relates to combat in the "real world."

Recently, we were conducting military operations on urban terrain (MOUT) training, and some of the Soldiers were in a discussion about what to do in a close-quarters fight if the enemy grabs your weapon on the battlefield—a very real possibility.

If you and the enemy are engaged in hand-to-hand combat, attempting a "flying arm bar" isn't the best move to use, no matter your skill level. The weight from your weapons and equipment isn't the only thing that might hold you back from doing high-flying maneuvers.

Another factor is how you wear your kit. When training in Combatives, change up the routine by wearing your battle rattle. Start off slowly by first training with just IBA (individual body armor) and ACH (advanced combat helmet). As you progress, add magazine pouches and assault packs. It won't take long to realize that you need to make adjustments on how you wear your kit. Figure out what works best for you.

Let's roll! **GX**

*** Caution:** When training weapons retention, never use a loaded weapon—always use a training weapon!

Lately, I've received questions about weapons retention during a close-quarters fight. This month, we'll take a look at techniques to defend until you can get into a position to draw your weapon.

GET IN TOUCH WITH
SGT KERKHOFF AT
[COMBATIVES@
GXONLINE.COM](mailto:COMBATIVES@GXONLINE.COM)

1. When armed and in a confrontation, first try to create space between you and the aggressor. Here, "ACU" is unable to create space, and the aggressor makes an attempt to take ACU's weapon. Immediately, ACU takes positive control of his weapon by putting downward pressure on the aggressor's hand. This prevents the aggressor from taking the weapon and helps ACU to control the aggressor.



2. ACU takes the fight to the ground by pulling the aggressor into his guard. He continues to control the aggressor while keeping positive control of his weapon.



3. Still not in a position to draw his weapon on his attacker, ACU attempts a submission—bent arm bar from the guard.



4. The bent arm bar is not a difficult maneuver, but there are very key points to what ACU is doing. Note that ACU turns on his holster's side to prevent the aggressor from being able to take it. Now the aggressor's hand is in perfect position to be locked into the bent arm bar.



5. There are other techniques to use, but the most important thing to remember is to take positive control of your weapon. Give yourself enough distance from your enemy before you draw to engage him. Here, ACU is still in danger of having to fight for control of his weapon with his aggressor, even while in the mount.



OPERATION LEAPS AND BOUNDS

Strength and Flexibility Training, Part 2 of 2

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



JUMP TO NEW HEIGHTS! SGT Ken and Stephanie get ready for Operation Leaps and Bounds in Nashville, TN.

[SENT]

SGT James,
We are happy to hear that you are using our health and exercise programs from GX magazine and www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness! How is your training going so far?

SGT Ken and Stephanie

[RECEIVED]

SGT Ken,
My training is going well! I firmly believe that the 30-day workout calendar from Operation Pushing for Points in GX 5.6 will help me! While I realize this is an uphill battle, I am refusing to give in and allow myself to take the easy route. I have goals set for myself, and I realize that I must remain focused on those goals. I am finding out that the harder I work at this, the easier and more enjoyable it becomes. I never thought I would say this, but I am enjoying my workouts now! I appreciate your follow-through and would greatly appreciate any more advice or programs you can provide me. Thanks for your help!

SGT James P.
North Carolina Army National Guard

[SENT]

SGT James,
Here is your challenge: Add "Operation Leaps and Bounds," Part 2, to the 30-day workout calendar for every Wednesday workout. Follow our diet plan, Operation Diet Dissection, posted on www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness in the "Get Healthy" section. Get plenty of rest at night, and take two days off from training every week so that your muscles and joint tissue can rest and recover. Keep us informed of your progress, and continue to have fun with your workouts!

HOOAH!
SGT Ken and Stephanie



“You must begin to think of yourself as becoming the person you want to be.”

—David Viscott

WARM-UP PHASE

Aerobics: *Examples:* Running in place; side-straddle-hops; jumping jacks; high steps/knees (5–7 minutes)

Stretching (5 minutes)

“Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm.”
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

MUSCLE TARGET PHASE

SHOULDER BRIDGE



SHOULDER BRIDGE (WITH KNEE LIFT)



SHOULDER BRIDGE (ALTERNATE FOREARM POSITION)



Shoulder Bridge

START: Lie flat on your back, arms at your sides.

ACTIONS: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight. Tighten your abdominal and lower back muscles and hold this position.
Alternate Position [Basic]: Balance

your body on your forearms and feet.

Additional Movements

[Advanced]: Slowly lift your right knee until you reach 90 degrees at the hips and knees. Switch legs. Performing the actions once with both legs is one repetition.

Basic: 1–20 seconds

Intermediate: 21–30 seconds

Advanced: 21–30 seconds (with knee lifts)

DIVE BOMBER PUSH-UPS



Dive Bomber Push-ups

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back forming a straight line. Position your feet several inches outside the width of your hips, hands slightly more than shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight. Next, raise your hips upward until you reach 90 degrees at your hips, head aligned with your arms.

ACTIONS: Lower your body to the ground slowly by bending at the elbows until your face reaches the ground. Continue moving downward to forward to upward by slightly dragging your upper body across the

ground until your abdominals are over your hands, pressing your body upward until your arms are straight and your lower back is arched. Return to the start position by reversing the steps.

Female standards:

Basic: 1–3 repetitions

Intermediate: 4–8 repetitions

Advanced: 9–16 repetitions

Male standards:

Basic: 1–6 repetitions

Intermediate: 7–15 repetitions

Advanced: 16–30 repetitions

PRONE KNEE THRUSTS



Prone Knee Thrusts

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, bend your right knee and raise it up and across to

the left side of your body, balancing on your hands and left foot. Return to the start position and perform the actions with your left leg. Performing the actions in both directions once is one repetition.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

PLYOMETRIC PUSH-UPS



A



B

Plyometric Push-ups

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, drop your body straight down by bending both elbows until the upper part of your arms become parallel to the ground and pause for a few seconds. Push upward as fast as possible by extending your arms, upper body coming off of the ground. As you land, collapse your elbows, slowing down the speed of your descent gradu-

ally until you reach the lower position. Repeat until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you push up and inhale through your nose as you lower your body.

Female standards:

Basic: 1–12 repetitions (without leaving the ground)

Intermediate: 13–26 repetitions (without leaving the ground)

Advanced: 1–6 repetitions

Male standards:

Basic: 1–22 repetitions (without leaving the ground)

Intermediate: 1–8 repetitions

Advanced: 9–18 repetitions

RUSSIAN TWIST



A



B

Russian Twist

START: Sit on the floor, knees bent at a 90-degree angle and heels on the ground. Position your arms at chest level, elbows out and hands together. Relax your shoulders, maintain a neutral spine and lean back until your torso is at a 45-degree angle with the ground.

ACTIONS: Twist your torso at the trunk of your body to the left until your elbow reaches the ground, and twist your torso to the right until your elbow

reaches the ground. Twist slow and continuously. Performing the actions on both sides once is one repetition. Continue until goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you twist, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

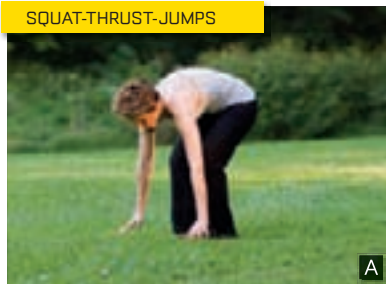
Note: If you experience discomfort in the lower back, stop and readjust the position.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

SQUAT-THRUST-JUMPS



A



B



C



D

Squat-Thrust-Jumps

START: Stand upright and ready.

ACTIONS: Lower your body, both knees bending until your hands reach the ground. Straighten your body until you are in the push-up position. Quickly bring your knees into your

chest, switch your balance to your feet, extend your legs and jump in the air. Repeat.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

“The time for action is now. It’s never too late to do something.”

—Carl Sandburg

COOL-DOWN PHASE



Standing Hamstring Stretch

START: Stand upright.

ACTIONS: Place your left leg 12 inches in front of you. Point your toes upward. Bend forward from your hips and reach toward your left foot with your hands. If possible, grasp the outside of your foot with your hands and hold this position. Switch legs and repeat.

Prone Calf Stretch

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back forming a straight line. Position your feet several inches outside the width of your hips, hands slightly more than shoulder-width apart, and legs and arms straight. Raise your hips until slightly higher than your shoulders.

ACTIONS: Push your heels down toward the ground and hold this position.



Modified Side Stretch

START: Stand with your feet 3–4 feet apart, toes forward and arms at your sides.

ACTIONS: Slightly bend your right knee and reach toward the inside of your right foot with your right hand, placing your hand on the ground. Maintain balance and reach upward with your left arm. Hold this position. Switch directions and repeat.

Modified Straddle Stretch

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back forming a straight line. Position your feet several inches outside the width of your hips, hands slightly more than shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight.

ACTIONS: Keeping your right foot in place, slightly bend your right knee and walk your body backwards with your hands in short movements until you begin to feel the stretch in your right leg. Only go back as far as it is comfortable. Attempt to straighten your legs, beginning with your front leg. Balance your body on your hands in the center and hold this position. Return to the start position by reversing the steps. Switch positions and repeat.



Stretching Techniques:

Hold each stretch approximately 30 seconds. Do not bounce or overstretch.

Equipment Needed:

None

Breathing Techniques Applied to “Operation Leaps and Bounds”: Exhale through the mouth and inhale through the nose for each exercise.

STAMINA STOPWATCH

Muscle Target Phase:

Rapid Response: 1 full set = approximately 30 minutes

Double-Time: 2 full sets = approximately 45 minutes

Max Load: 3 full sets = approximately 60 minutes

Note: The warm-up and cool-down phases are performed only once.

“It is time for us all to stand and cheer for the doer, the achiever—the one who recognizes challenge and does something about it.”

—Vincent Lombardi

Watch fitness videos and download workouts at

www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness or email sgtken@GXonline.com.

SSG KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT



EVAN BAINES

A six-time Soldier of the year and Veteran of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, SSG Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie, a certified personal trainer, founded the START Fitness® program, a San Francisco-based group exercise and hiking business that delivers military-inspired, boot-camp style workouts to Soldiers and civilians. The program now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors.

Warning: Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or shortness of breath.

LIKE A ROCK

THE HEAVY EXPANDED MOBILITY TACTICAL TRUCK

By Ben Warden

Ever know people who say: “I can’t live without my truck,” and you can tell they really mean it? That’s how the Guard feels about the HEMTT.

The **Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT)**, known as the “ship of the desert” for its extreme mobility, is the transportation of choice to resupply combat vehicles and weapons systems.

Developed and first utilized in 1982 as a replacement for the M520 Goer, the HEMTT is actually a whole family of rapidly deployable vehicles with different functions (see sidebar) and is designed to function efficiently in any climatic condition where military operations occur.

The HEMTT is distinguished by mobility compared to standard trucks, thanks to its all-wheel drive and eight large, low-pressure tires. Though less publicized than the Humvee, it has been important in transporting logistics behind quick-moving forces based on the M1 Abrams tank. Having proven itself as a key workhorse of the U.S. heavy tactical wheeled vehicle fleet, about 13,000 HEMTT vehicles are in service today.

THE DRAGON WAGON

Nicknamed the “Dragon Wagon” for its long and lethal shape, the HEMTT truck has continuously found new cargo or weapons upon its back over the past 26 years. More recently, the HEMTT fleet has been upgraded by being equipped with a diesel-electric hybrid engine, which allows the HEMTT to be mounted with the Mobile Centurion anti-artillery gun. Made for \$15 million and first sent to Iraq in 2006, the Mobile Centurion protects Army bases all over the world from artillery and mortar fire.

THE NEXT GENERATION

Recently, the Guard renewed a contract with HEMTT-manufacturer Oshkosh to produce vehicles for military use. The contract includes the production of the latest HEMTT model, the A4. According to Oshkosh, the A4 will “be a significant advancement in Soldier safety with increased power and maintenance capabilities.” **GX**

HEMTT SPECS

Weight:
38,000 lbs

Max Speed:
57 mph

Cruising Range:
300 miles

Crew:
2-man seating

Engine:
8 cylinders, 2-stroke
Allison Diesel

Wheels:
8

Manufacturer:
Oshkosh



OSHKOSH; INSET: CPT RICHARD VIBARRA, 115TH INFANTRY



KEEP ON ROLLIN' A HEMTT Refueling Truck from the Regimental Support Squadron of 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment arrives at COP Inman to keep rebuilding operations moving around-the-clock.



**The Tough
Faces of
HEMTT
Trucks**

M977 and M985 cargo trucks with Material Handling Crane (MHC): The standard HEMTT cargo truck that can lift up to 5,400 lbs of equipment onto itself with the MHC. • **M978 2500-gallon fuel tanker:** Often a sight for sore eyes for over-extended Humvees in Iraq and Afghanistan. • **M984 wrecker:** Not your average tow service. This HEMTT provides heavy-wheeled towing of up to 10-ton vehicles. Its lift-and-tow system can recover disabled vehicles in two to three minutes. • **M983 tractor:** No, not your Dad's John Deere. Used to transport the trailer-mounted Pershing II or Patriot missile systems.

Beating the Odds

SOLDIER
BATTLES
CANCER

.....
Story and photos by 1LT JAY OSTRICH





“I’m going to beat this, and I am going to fight until I can’t fight anymore.”

>> Lara Phillips

**EMBARKING ON A
NEW JOURNEY**

Lara speaks at her graduation, providing incredible inspiration for all those in attendance.

Don't be fooled by her sweet, welcoming smile and calm, easygoing demeanor. There's a war raging around this Soldier. The enemy is at the gate, and it's trying to get her every second of the day.



WARRIOR ETHOS

Flipping through well-worn and annotated pages of her *Soldier's Handbook*, Lara constantly uses the information she learned in the Recruit Sustainment Program during her battle with cancer.

But unlike her comrades who are readying for deployment to Iraq with the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, this Soldier's enemy is inside her. It's called rhabdomyosarcoma, a rare form of juvenile cancer, and this former Pennsylvania National Guard member is waging a war against it to save her life.

Meet 18-year-old Lara Phillips of East Pikeland Township, PA, who, up until last January, was looking forward to typical teenage rights of passage like graduating high school and prom. But unlike some of her peers, she also had a strong sense of patriotism and a military family background. This led her to enlist, and she was excited about doing computer encryption for Stryker and helping fight the Global War on Terror.

"I just wanted to be a part of something much bigger than myself," said Lara, who described herself as rebellious to authority and an unlikely Soldier. "People told me I'd never make it in the Guard, but I knew that's what I wanted, and I was going to fight for it."

During her weekend drills with the Recruit Sustainment Program, Lara took a shine to her new-found profession by finding comfort in camaraderie and strength in her *Soldier's Handbook*. She embraced core values like personal courage and duty, and took a particular liking to the *Soldier's Creed*, especially the words, "I

will never accept defeat. I will never quit."

"I loved being in uniform and the sense of pride and team [work] that went along with it," Lara said. "Rules started to all make sense, and I was looking forward to boot camp and deploying with Stryker [brigade]."

Little did she know her deployment to war was well at hand.

RECEIVING A MISSION

After a particularly challenging drill shortly before her 18th birthday, Lara returned home to rest.

"The drills were always challenging, but this one really knocked me off my feet," Lara said. "Something just wasn't right."

In the process of recovery, she discovered a subcutaneous cyst on her pelvis that suddenly grew to the size of a softball. Alarmed by



BEADS OF COURAGE

Smiling ear to ear, Lara proudly displays her “beads of courage” necklace. Beads of Courage mark milestones in a young cancer patient’s treatment plan.

teetering on the edge of defeat, like any good Soldier, she kept faith in herself. She also knew that to win the war, she needed a good battle buddy.

Enter her mother, Amy, whose father rose to the ranks of lieutenant colonel in the Air Force and worked under the legendary hero BG W.W. “Bill” Spruance, who taught thousands of Airmen from personal experience how to save lives in perilous situations.

Amy knew it wouldn’t be easy, but with the dogma of a drill sergeant and the love of a doting mother, she and Lara set out to kill the cancer and beat the odds.

The “Phillips Army” developed a hardcore daily regimen that would put any basic training plan to shame. Every aspect of her day, from what to eat to when to rest was mapped out and followed precisely. They even plotted on spreadsheets and charts her variations in strength or when the therapy would make her weak—that way Lara never got discouraged when the pain and bad times came.

In late July, the experimental 54-week study and treatment intensified. With seven high-dose chemicals and constant radiation, this new and

unproven treatment was designed to take her white blood cell count to zero, thereby killing the cancer, but leaving her vulnerable to virtually any disease present.

the growth and unusual sense of fatigue, Lara went to the doctors to have tests done.

Only a week after her birthday, the biopsy returned. It was cancer.

Subsequent tests would reveal tumors throughout her entire body. Her doctors confirmed the diagnosis as a cancer commonly referred to as “rhabdo,” which according to the National Cancer Institute is a fast-growing, highly malignant attack on the body’s connective tissue. It often attaches to muscle or wraps around intestines, but can prey practically anywhere in the body.

Her initial prognosis was poor, if not defeating—a 5 percent chance of survival. In an instant, Lara went from battling the trials of boot camp to battling for her life.

SO OTHERS CAN LIVE

Defeating a foe when you are given such a small chance of prevailing is daunting enough to make most people surrender. Not Lara.

Her unit let her keep her uniform throughout her new battle, and Lara thanked her fellow Soldiers before turning to greater concerns.

She jumped headlong into chemotherapy during her senior year of high school. When others urged her to quit and concentrate on health, she redoubled her academic focus and graduated with her class on time, even delivering an inspiring commencement speech to urge her peers to never give up on their goals and dreams.

Though at times throughout her struggle Lara got weak and was

“I have to be disciplined with this, so it’s just like boot camp,” said a hopeful and smiling Lara. “They are going to tear me down to build me back up. But attitude is everything—you can still have fun with something that’s awful. I know if I let the little things get to me, I’m going to lose.”

Just hours before entering into treatment at A.I. DuPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, DE, Lara reflected on her days in uniform, the *Soldier’s Creed* and the strength both would give her in battle.

“I’m going to beat this, and I am going to fight until I can’t fight anymore,” Lara asserted. “Failure just isn’t an option. I will not fail. I must win this fight so others can live.”

TO HELL AND BACK

And fight she did. Through an intense battle, Lara pressed on as six of her fellow juvenile cancer warriors would pass away beside her.

“It hit home what cancer was all about,” said Lara, who knows her success in this experimental study can bring hope and life to many others. “But I was determined to finish what I started.”

For her mother, it was during these darker moments that she became thankful that Lara had experienced the military lifestyle.

“Every time she gets down, she sits and writes the *Soldier’s Creed*,” said Amy, who admitted that she was reluctant at first for Lara to join the military. “We put it up on her hospital wall to keep her going. It’s been her mantra—it’s the only way to survive the battle she’s in now.”

For Lara, the *Handbook* and *Creed* will never be just words on paper or something to blindly memorize. “I know it sounds strange, but the Warrior Ethos keeps me going,” she said. “There are good lessons in there for everyday life. They drill those into your head when you train so you don’t forget. There’s no way I’ll ever forget them.”

Her dedication to military values and sheer determination would result in bittersweet news received shortly after Veterans Day. Just Hours after her friend and admirer Lt. Gov. Catherine Baker Knoll lost her battle against cancer, her latest tests would reveal a tumor-free body for Lara—it was a tactical victory as planned and a road to victory. Like Knoll, MG Jessica L. Wright, Pennsylvania Adjutant General, met Lara at the state capitol this past summer and was moved by her grit and perseverance. The news could not have come at a better time.

“She is a Soldier we can all learn from, and a person we can all admire.”

>> MG Jessica L. Wright

“I marvel at the bravery and courage shown by the Soldiers and Airmen of the Pennsylvania National Guard, and Lara has shown these same attributes in this very intense battle with this life-threatening cancer,” Wright said. “Her indomitable spirit and determination are truly inspirational to me.”

LEAVING A LEGACY

Lara can’t tell you many details about her particular cancer—to her they aren’t important. She just concentrates every day on what she needs to do to survive and return home. At only 18, she cannot tell you the meaning of life, but ask her a question about survival or reaching goals, and she’s quick to reveal the meaning in life. “People will tell you, ‘You can’t

do it,’” Lara said. “Heck, people told me I wouldn’t make it in the Guard. They told me I wouldn’t beat cancer. You just need to fight for what you want in life, never take it for granted and never give up.”

Rhabdomyosarcoma is a fast-growing, highly malignant tumor, which accounts for more than half of the soft tissue sarcomas in children.



HONORING A HERO Pennsylvania Lt. Gov. Catherine Baker Knoll hosted a lunch for Lara Phillips on the capitol’s portico June 30. Also in attendance were MG Jessica L. Wright, the Adjutant General of the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veterans Affairs, and Senator Andy Dinniman. Knoll lost her battle with cancer on Nov. 12.

Like many returning Warriors, Lara wants desperately to leave behind a legacy, knowing that the pain and sacrifices she made were not made in vain. Reminded by continuing therapy and her loving mother that she isn’t home-free yet, she permits herself moments to think beyond the cancer battlefield.

Her dreams include returning to the Guard and earning a bachelor’s degree in management or accounting—preferably somewhere down South where it is warmer, Lara muses. But if you really want to see the twinkle in her bright blue eyes, ask her about her fellow Soldiers in the Pennsylvania National Guard or the young children who share her war on cancer.

“If there’s anything I do with my life, it is going to be helping others who suffer from this,” Lara said. “I want to use what happened to me to bring child cancer awareness and motivate others along the way.”

Ask anyone about Lara, and you’ll find she is well on the way to reaching her goals. “I look forward to the day when she can return to the Guard and share the tremendous gifts she has to offer,” Wright said. “She is a Soldier we can all learn from, and a person we can all admire.”

But for today, Lara simply reaches into her beloved Army Combat Uniform and pulls out the now tattered *Soldier’s Handbook*, thumbing through the well-annotated and worn pages for another nugget of inspiration. Like any Warrior, she is now ready to turn the page, come back from her war and start writing a new chapter in life.

As of this publication date, Lara is still undergoing the rigors of her 54-week experimental treatment at Alfred I. DuPont Hospital for Children. **GX**

TO FOLLOW HER PROGRESS AND SUPPORT HER FIGHT, MORE INFORMATION CAN BE FOUND AT

www.caringbridge.org/visit/laraphillips

The Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.
I am a Warrior and member of a team.
I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.
I will always place the mission first.
I will never accept defeat.
I will never quit.
I will never leave a fallen comrade.
I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my warrior tasks and drills. I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.
I am an expert and I am a professional.
I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.
I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
I am an American Soldier.



ISTOCK



REMEMBERING
Gazing at her senior photo, Lara reflects on her new life battling cancer.

THE FLAG OF FORT WAGNER

FORT WAGNER, SC, 1863—THE 54TH MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY LAY IN WAIT LESS THAN 1000 YARDS FROM FORT WAGNER AS IT WAS BEING BOMBARDED BY A UNION NAVAL FLEET. THE MEN OF THE 54TH WERE WAITING TO ATTACK THE HEAVILY DEFENDED FORTIFICATION JUST OUTSIDE OF CHARLESTON.



CARNEY WAS SHOT IN THE LEG, BUT CONTINUED TO LEAD THE CHARGE. AFTER THE ATTACK FAILED, CARNEY RETREATED WITH SOLDIERS FROM OTHER UNITS. RUNNING DOWN AN EMBANKMENT AND THROUGH A PITCH, HE WAS SHOT IN THE CHEST, RIGHT ARM, AGAIN IN HIS RIGHT LEG AND SUFFERED A GRAZE WOUND TO THE HEAD.

AS THE ORDER CAME, THE 54TH GOT UP AND SPURTED ACROSS THE FIELD INTO A LETHAL CONFEDERATE BARRAGE OF RIFLE AND ARTILLERY FIRE. NEARING THE RAMPARTS, A BULLET FELLE THE COLOR BEARER, SO SGT WILLIAM H. CARNEY THREW DOWN HIS RIFLE AND GRABBED THE COLORS BEFORE THEY TOUCHED THE GROUND.



FOLLOWING THE WAR, CARNEY WAS DISCHARGED FROM THE ARMY AND WENT ON TO LIVE A LONG, HAPPY LIFE. AND ON MAY 23, 1900, SGT WILLIAM H. CARNEY BECAME THE FIRST AFRICAN-AMERICAN TO EARN THE MEDAL OF HONOR, THE NATION'S HIGHEST MILITARY AWARD.

FINALLY, REACHING THE SAFETY OF HIS MEN HE UTTERED, "BOYS, I ONLY DID MY DUTY. THE FLAG NEVER TOUCHED THE GROUND." CARNEY'S MEN WERE SHOCKED TO SEE HIM ALIVE AND THEY CHEERED HIS BRAVERY AND DETERMINATION.



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