

# GX

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

>> GX HERO

## 9 MILES OF HONOR

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## RIDING THE BULLET TRAIN

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## MA DEUCE

M2 .50 CAL STILL KICKIN' AFTER 90 YEARS

## HOW I CHANGE THE WORLD

SOLDIERS SOUND OFF ON MAKING A DIFFERENCE

# BACK TO ATTACK

DALE JR. READY TO WIN AGAIN



# WE ALL SERVE



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

**ARMY NATIONAL GUARD ★ ARMY RESERVE ★ NAVY RESERVE ★ MARINE RESERVE  
COAST GUARD RESERVE ★ AIR NATIONAL GUARD ★ AIR FORCE RESERVE**

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## A Salute to the Soldiers

Dear Patriots,

**A**

ll Alabamians are proud of you and thankful for your service. I want you to know we stand with you in all that you're doing to keep our country safe, to defend our way of life, and to protect our freedom and extend that freedom to others.

In Alabama, we're trying several different ways to help you and your families and to show our appreciation. A few years ago, we started a program called Operation Grateful Heart. This is a statewide initiative to show public appreciation and support for Alabama troops and their families, and to assist returning military personnel in their transition back to civilian life. If a returning National Guard member needs help connecting with potential employers or has questions about their benefits, Operation Grateful Heart can help. If a spouse wants to form a support group of nearby families who have loved ones overseas, Operation Grateful Heart can work to start such a local organization. If neighborhood volunteers want to plan a special event to honor service members and their families, they can contact Operation Grateful Heart for information and assistance.

Our state, with the help of a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, also recently launched another new initiative to help bring together deployed military personnel and their families. With the Connecting Families program, Alabamians who have loved ones deployed overseas will be able to visit public libraries across our state and visually communicate with them using computers equipped with video web cameras. We're putting the video webcams and computers in more than 100 libraries. Alabamians will be able to make appointments with the libraries, then come in and use the technology to see and talk to their deployed family members.

None of us will ever truly be able to repay the debt we owe to you and to all those who have served our nation in uniform. But we will do everything we can to help you and your families and to show you how much we appreciate and support you.

God bless all of you and your families—and thank you for your service.

Most Sincerely,

*Bob Riley*  
Governor of Alabama

**“None of us will ever truly be able to repay the debt we owe to you and to all those who have served our nation in uniform.”**

# Gratitude. Appreciation. Thanks.

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

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## Share Your Story

I've been in more than a few convoys. Rolling down dusty roads in IBA after kicking out at o-dark-30. Even got nailed with sniper fire and a couple IEDs. One major disclaimer, though—it was all at training sites, and all of those “threats” were just mock exercises. As a writer, I try to absorb the emotion and experience of the Soldier. But, truth be told, you know it best and any colorful adjectives I toss in can never quite touch it, simply because I don't live it.

### That's why I need your help.

Write about your experience as a Guard Soldier and send it to me. Don't worry about word count or even grammar or spelling. I want to capture your Warrior spirit and share it with the nation.

Not good with words? Pick up a camera, and take a few shots depicting your life in the Guard and the people who support you. You don't even need one of those fancy digital cameras with all the crazy dials and buttons. Just a simple disposable can do the job. Heck, send me a Polaroid!

Not good with words or cameras? How about a pencil or paintbrush? Illustrate your experience. I know there's some immensely talented artists out there. Send me your best, and you could be published in GX.

All your photos, stories and artwork can be emailed directly to me at [Keith@GXonline.com](mailto:Keith@GXonline.com).

Every Soldier has an extraordinary story to tell. And each story packs the heart to inspire a nation. Why did you join the Guard? Who makes a difference in your life? What does it mean to be an Army National Guard Soldier?

I look forward to hearing from you!

Thank you!



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



### ON THE COVER

**Back to Attack:** Dale Jr. is ready to win again in his second season with the National Guard.

PHOTO COURTESY OF  
HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS



# Rants & Raves



Dear Sgt. Ken,

We hope all is well in your world. Please tell Christian Anderson that he did a GREAT job with the "Inside the Special Forces" article in the October GX. Outstanding!

Take care buddy, and we look forward to hearing from you!

Regards,

WO1, Special Forces

ODA 9225 COMMANDER

The article on SSG Bill Kinnard (GX 5.7) was awesome! Thanks for doing it for Tech Army ROTC. Can I get another copy of the article? I would like to have it framed and put up in our office here at TTU.

Thanks again! GREAT JOB!

**MAJ Jim Reed**

Tennessee Tech Scholarship and Enrollment Officer

On pg. 60 and 61 of this month's issue (GX 5.8), there is a picture of SPC Therriault and CPT Towell at the All Guard Combatives Championship. I am the team captain for the Illinois Army National Guard's Combatives team and was wondering if I could get a digital copy of this photo.

Also, Clint did a great job with the article!

**MAJ Jeffary Jiannoni**

Illinois National Guard

Keith,

When you covered the Red Bulls, that was great. I would like to see more start to finish coverage of units as you follow them through mobilizations.

Oh yea, and more articles written by Keith!!!!!!

**1LT Dan Murphy**

North Dakota Army National Guard

## \*We want to hear from you!

Send your questions or comments to [feedback@GXonline.com](mailto:feedback@GXonline.com)

### Please describe one thing you love about GX.

I really like the human-interest stories that describe the things that Soldiers are doing on and off duty.

**SFC Robert M. Beagley**, Utah National Guard

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

Photos from the Alaska Army National Guard, and another story on missile defense.

**SGT Jack Carlson**, Alaska National Guard

### Which articles from any past issues stand out as your favorite?

The article on the Rhode Island Parachute Competition, Leapfest.

**SGT John Cervone**, Rhode Island National Guard

Of course any of the articles involving my unit or me! The 19th Special Forces has been featured many times in the past!

**SGM**, Utah National Guard

The thing I love most about GX is the photography. The images of our National Guard Soldiers in action really help show the public and the other military branches how diverse and exciting the National Guard can be.

**Tech Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa**, Florida National Guard

LTC Hunt W. Kerrigan, Alaska Army National Guard, was recently presented the Distinguished Service Cross of the Estonian



Defense Forces at the Estonian Embassy in Washington, DC. LTC Kerrigan received this award for his work with the Estonian military in 1993, 2001 and during his deployment to Iraq. During the ceremony, his wife, Stephanie, Alaska Air National Guard, was presented with a dozen roses.

### Corrections:

In GX 5.6, our article, "Inside the Special Forces: A Glance at the Life of a Green Beret," accidentally left off North Carolina as one of the states that has Special Forces units. North Carolina is home to a company of the 20th Special Forces Group (SFG).

In GX 5.8, p. 30, "Education in Afghanistan," we inadvertently identified the new school as being located in Afghanistan. The *Abaas Iibun Firnaas High School* is located in Baghdad, Iraq.



>>

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## TEAMWORK

[ **Camp Shelby, MS** ]

PFC James Pfau, right, of Philadelphia, PA, takes aim with his M40 Sniper Weapon System, supported by his spotter, SGT Jonathan Prewitt, of Nesbit, MS. Both are members of the Pennsylvania National Guard's Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1-112th Infantry, 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team.

Photo courtesy of First Army Public Affairs





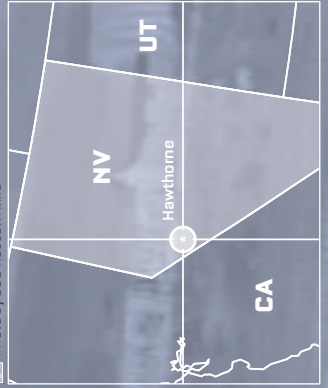


## »» **READY, STEADY, GO!**

[ **Hawthorne, NV** ]

Soldiers with the 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces (Airborne) conduct airlift operations while at the U.S. Army Depot in Hawthorne, NV.

Photo by SSG Russell Klinka







## >> THE AMERICAN SPIRIT

[ Camp Bucca, Iraq ]

The flag of the 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard proudly displays the streamers representing a multitude of military campaigns from 1775 to present.

Photo by Joint Area Support Group-Central





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**"ACCEPT THE CHALLENGES SO THAT YOU CAN FEEL THE EXHILARATION OF VICTORY."**

>> GEN George S. Patton Jr.



## Washington Soldier Awarded Distinguished Flying Cross

Story and photos by MSG Dave Largent / FORT LEWIS, WASHINGTON

**CW4 NOEL C. LARSON**, Black Hawk Pilot, C Company, 1-140th Aviation, received the Distinguished Flying Cross at the 66th Aviation Flight Facility on Fort Lewis, WA, on Dec. 5, 2008.

"You do what you're supposed to do when the situation arises," said Larson, who resides in Tumwater, WA. "It's not one person—it takes the whole aircrew, each one doing their job to make it happen," he added.

On the night of March 25, 2008, Larson was the pilot and mission coordinator onboard a UH60 Black Hawk helicopter tasked to provide

direct support to a raid being conducted by coalition forces. Larson and his crew arrived at the objective and rendered vital support to ground forces despite a brutal sand storm.

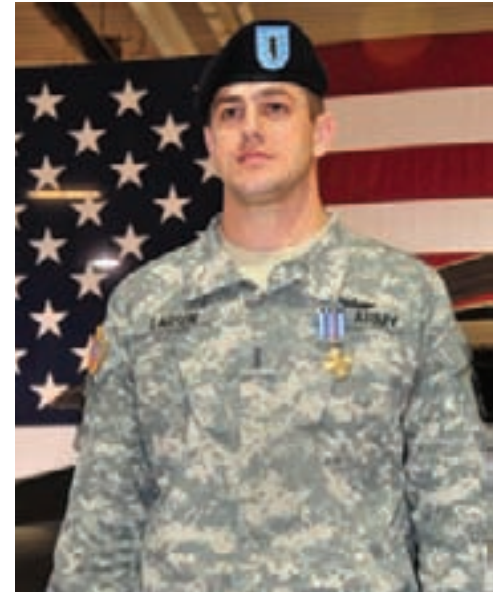
As ground forces began their assault, they encountered enemy fire and sustained casualties. Medevac helicopters were not able to pick up the wounded due to a sand storm, but the Black Hawk crew offered themselves as an emergency medevac platform.

With the firefight continuing to rage below, Larson and his crew accomplished a skillful

landing despite the poor visibility and enemy activity. They went in under enemy fire, during a sandstorm in the middle of the night and landed in an urban area.

After the three wounded Soldiers were loaded onto the chopper, the crew proceeded to the Forward Operating Base (FOB). "We were probably on the ground about five minutes," Larson said. "It's hard to judge the time with so much going on at once. It took 10 to 15 minutes to fly them to the FOB.

"As soon as they start-



**AMERICAN HERO** CW4 Noel C. Larson displays the Distinguished Flying Cross medal he received during a ceremony at the Washington National Guard Aviation Flight Facility on Fort Lewis, WA.

ed taking fire, we were going over our options on how we could help them," he added.

Larson and his crew were then directed to return to their original role of providing reconnaissance and support to the original objective.

Larson's aviation excellence in the face of great danger, and with much at stake, earned him the Distinguished Flying Cross.

About a week after the rescue, Larson met his brother, CW3 Justin N. Larson in Balad, Iraq. Justin is also a pilot with C Company, 1-140th Aviation and deployed to Iraq at the same time. "I didn't know about Noel's flight until we met in Balad about a week later," Justin said. **GX**





# Giving Thanks One Day Early

## Arkansas Families Welcome Home First Wave of 39th

By CPT Chris Heathscott | CAMP SHELBY JOINT FORCES TRAINING CENTER, MS

**S**hedding tears of joy on the eve of Thanksgiving, a number of Arkansas families gave thanks one day early as they welcomed their Soldiers home from Iraq.

Approximately 160 members of the Arkansas Army National Guard's Crossett- and El Dorado-based Troop A, 1st Squadron, 15 1st Cavalry Regiment, arrived recently—leading the way home for the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. The remainder of the brigade's 3,200 Soldiers returned throughout the month of December.

The 3,200-member brigade had conducted security missions throughout various locations in Iraq since it initially deployed in late March 2008. Based in the International Zone of Baghdad, Troop A alone conducted well over 1,000 personal security detail missions during their eight months on the ground in Iraq.

"My guys executed personal security detail missions for the U.S. Department of State, the United Nations and the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team," Troop A's commander, CPT Jeffery Westbrook of Benton, AR, said. "We



**RELIEF** A Soldier gets a well deserved hug from his wife at the redeployment ceremony.



**HOME AT LAST** Soldiers from the 39th BCT march in formation upon arriving at Camp Shelby, MS.

Although these Soldiers had made it back to the States, their mobilization wasn't over. The troops began the four- to five-day demobilization process at Camp Shelby Friday morning—a process the adjutant general asked them not to take lightly.

"We ask that our Soldiers take the demobilization process seriously and discuss any issues they have as a result of the deployment," MG William Wofford wrote in a letter to the Soldiers and their families.

"We ask that the families of these Soldiers encourage them to be candid during the demobilization process in order to help us help them," Wofford added. "The only thing better than having your loved one home for the holidays is having them home and healthy during the holidays for years to come."

As the general addressed the Soldiers and their families at the welcome home ceremony, he thanked them for their service and their sacrifice. He also asked them to remember the words of former President Ronald Reagan when reflecting on that sacrifice.

"You need to remember that freedom is never more than one generation away from ex-

**"The only thing better than having your loved one home for the holidays is having them home and healthy during the holidays for years to come."**

>> MG William Wofford

were actually tasked with escorting the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, the special representative to the secretary general of the U.N., as well as other representatives from the U.S. Department of Justice."

Although the return home came with multiple delays and timeline shifts, seeing their families in time for the holidays left the Soldiers and their families with a common emotion.

"It feels great. Glad to be home," said SPC Curtis Aiken, of Hamburg, AR, who was holding his daughter, Kirsten, in his arms with wife Stephanie by his side.

Seventy-five family members made the long drive from Arkansas to Camp Shelby in hopes of spending Thanksgiving with their returning Soldier. The Soldiers whose families made the trip were released for the evening and allowed to spend the holiday with their loved ones.

tion," quoted the general. "It's not something that's passed down in the bloodstream. It's a responsibility of each generation to protect that freedom, to preserve it and, sometimes, to have to fight for it—just as you have done. Because if we don't do that, one of these days in our sunset years, we'll be telling our children and our children's children, what it was like to live in a country when men were free."

The 39th Brigade was the first National Guard brigade combat team to deploy for a second tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. About half of the brigade had deployed on the first mobilization from October 2003 to April 2005.

Composed of Soldiers from all four corners of the state, the 39th Brigade was initially called to active duty for training in preparation for this second deployment on Oct. 1, 2007, and was federally mobilized the following January. **GX**



**DISMOUNT** SGT Chris Irvin and SGT Nevin Wilt dismount their infantry carrier vehicle to assault a building while SPC Daniel Waite maintains coverage of the Soldiers.

# Pennsylvania Soldiers Ready to ‘Stryke Fast, Stryke Hard!’

**Pennsylvania** Stryker Brigade Prepares for Iraq

Story and photos by SGT Sheila Holifield | CAMP SHELBY, MS

APPROXIMATELY 4,000 SOLDIERS representing the only Stryker brigade in the National Guard will deploy to Iraq in early 2009.

The Pennsylvania National Guard’s 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT), has been transforming to a Stryker brigade since October 2004.

The SBCT, who started preparing after they were alerted in October 2007, has been conducting their pre- and mobilization training at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (CSJFTC) and will continue on to Fort Polk, LA, for additional training before they make their way to Iraq.

“The training we have done at Camp Shelby has been a good building block, allowing us to expand upon what we were previously doing,” said COL Mike Ferraro, commander of the 56th SBCT.

More than 50 percent of the Soldiers deploying with the SBCT have prior deployment experience. However, Ferraro added that training is still vital to the mission.

“Times have changed and continue to change as we prepare to deploy, so we must train on those current tactics, techniques and procedures [TTPs] in order to be successful,” Ferraro said.

CPT Joseph Ruotolo, commander

of Battery B 1/109th Field Artillery Battalion, agreed with Ferraro, “This war is different from any other, and as a result, a lot of the operations and success of this war are driven by the non-commissioned officers and junior leaders.”

“Because that responsibility is now pushed down to the junior leaders,” he added, “this war is all about being a good basic Soldier.

You need to know how to use your radio, your weapon, know how to land navigate, read a map, perform preventive maintenance checks and services and so on.”

“Being a good, basic Soldier and a good, basic human being with honorable, moral and ethical character are the ingredients to the success of this war we are fighting,” Ruotolo said.

In addition to training at CSJFTC, the SBCT has partnered with 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry

been able to get,” Ferraro said. “The partnership has benefited us immensely.”

Ferraro said the Soldiers and commanders have shared their experiences and advice to our Soldiers, and that really goes a long way.

“They are not looking at the patch and the fact that we are National Guard; we are all Soldiers and all out to do the same thing in the Stryker community,” Ferraro said.

Traditionally, Citizen-Soldiers are able to lend civilian acquired skills to an operational environment. Ferraro agrees this will benefit them in the theater. Being able to use their knowledge and experiences from the civilian side is an extra set of skills that the National Guard brings to the table, he added.

“If we are working with Iraqi police forces, we can pull from all of our police officers. Same thing if we are working with the local community to build schools and

**“BEING A GOOD, BASIC SOLDIER [IS] THE INGREDIENT TO SUCCESS”**

>> CPT Joseph Ruotolo, commander of Battery B 1/109th Field Artillery Battalion

Division out of Fort Lewis, WA, an active-duty Stryker brigade, to also help them prepare for their mission.

“They have taught us current TTPs that are being used in country Stryker-specific training and what they learned from being overseas,” Ferraro said. Because there are only seven Stryker brigades within the Army, Ferraro said those learned experiences shared with the Guard unit don’t reside throughout the Army yet.

“Having them here to work with us at Camp Shelby has been one of the biggest benefits we have

curriculum—we can pull from all the teachers in our brigade,” Ferraro said.

Through all the training completed and the training still ahead, along with the partnerships and the experiences the SBCT has gained, Ferraro said his Soldiers are ready for what lies ahead.

“My Soldiers want to show everyone that they made the right decision by putting the 56th SBCT in the Pennsylvania National Guard,” said Ferraro. “We are making history, and we wouldn’t trade our position for anything in the world.” **GX**



**THANKS FOR YOUR SERVICE** Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates presents an award to outgoing Chief of the National Guard Bureau, LTG H Steven Blum, during a transition ceremony at the Pentagon, Nov. 17, 2008.

# Thank You For Your Service

## BLUM HONORED AT PENTAGON CEREMONY

By SSG Jon Soucy / ARLINGTON, VA

LTG H STEVEN BLUM handed over the reins as chief of the National Guard Bureau to Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley during a ceremony at the Pentagon Nov. 17. He was also handed something in return.

For his more than five years of service as chief, Blum was awarded the Defense Distinguished Service Medal by Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates.

"Thank you for your outstanding service to the men and women of the National Guard and for your contributions to America's security throughout these past five years and your entire career," Gates said prior to presenting Blum the award.

Blum, in his last remarks as chief, focused on other events of the day—McKinley's promotion to the rank of four-star general before his swearing in as the new chief.

He stressed that the award was not his alone: "A lot has been said on this citation and absolutely none of it, not a single one of those great accomplishments, could have been possible without every single one of you assembled here and those you represent," Blum said. "This is your award, and I am proud to accept it on your behalf."

He also looked back on his tenure as chief.

"It has been my honor and privilege to be chief of the NGB for the past five years and six months, each and every day of which while we're at war," Blum said. "(That is) a truly extraordinary opportunity and responsibility for someone who aspires to be a Soldier."

**"It has been my honor to be chief of the NGB."**

>> LTG H Steven Blum

He also commented that the future of the National Guard has been left in capable hands.

"Before I go, I have to tell you, if I were to invent my own successor, it would have to be Gen. Craig McKinley," he said. "What a superb selection, Mr. Secretary."

Blum will take over as deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command, which provides command and control of Department of Defense homeland defense efforts and coordinates security support of civil authorities. **GX**

## VICTORY MAP



### ALABAMA

Alabama Governor Bob Riley signed a Reintegration Action Plan (RAP) during an event at the state capitol on Nov. 20. The RAP is a 63-page book that addresses ideas and action plans to help returning troops successfully transition from war to home. To date, approximately 13,500 Alabama National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan to fight today's Global War on Terror.

### DELAWARE

The Delaware National Guard hosted a signing ceremony on Dec. 2 to announce the construction of a \$42 million Joint Force Headquarters Building. MG Frank Vavala, Delaware's adjutant general, said the new Delaware headquarters will increase the Guard's efficiency. The building will function as an administrative hub for the Delaware National Guard.

### INDIANA

On Nov. 19, four students at the Stout Field Elementary School in Indianapolis received new winter coats, hats and gloves from the Indiana National Guard as part of the Warm Hands, Warm Hearts program. MG R. Martin Umbarger, the adjutant general for Indiana, presented the students with the coats and one of his coins. Over the last three years, Warm Hands has provided about 40 coats and about 120 hats to students attending the school.

### LOUISIANA

Thirty-five Louisiana National Guard children ages five to 14 gathered Nov. 22-23 at 4-H Camp Grant Walker in Pollock, LA, for the 4th annual Operation Military Kids, Camp Lagniappe. During the exciting weekend, children of Guard Soldiers participated in activities like archery, team building exercises, arts and crafts and life skills. In these sessions they learned the importance of teamwork, communication, safety and handling life's obstacles.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

VICTORY  
MAP



**LOUISIANA**

Community Coffee, a Louisiana-based company, donated their famous brew to Soldiers of Louisiana National Guard Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 225th Engineer Brigade. The coffee, nearly \$3,500 worth and enough to make estimated 28,000 eight-ounce cups, was shipped to Iraq shortly after the troops deployed in December.

**MISSOURI**

Less than six minutes stood in the way of a three-peat win for the Missouri National Guard "Missouri Militia" running team in the 24th Annual Army Ten-Miler. The team has taken first place in the national 10-mile race across the capitol for the past two years. In its attempt at a third straight win, the team earned a second place finish behind the Pennsylvania National Guard. The Missouri Militia's top four runners completed the race in a combined 4 hours, 46 minutes and 20 seconds.

**KENTUCKY**

On Dec. 3, MG Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general of Kentucky, took part in a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Kentucky National Guard's new Joint Readiness Center at the London/Corbin Airport. Primarily designed to provide the Kentucky National Guard a regional base of operations, the \$1.9 million center marks the first of three planned phases that will consist of administrative offices and supply facilities, as well as helicopter maintenance and parking areas.

**NORTH DAKOTA**

The North Dakota National Guard's 188th Army Band in Fargo recently announced its schedule for the "Music in Schools" tour January 5-8, 2009. The 188th Army Band's performances provide musical enrichment for students while demonstrating how the unit supports the state and nation.

# Breaching the Language Barrier

URBAN TRAINING TAKES 256TH TO GERMANY

By 2LT Angela K. Fry / MONROE, LA

**TO LOUISIANA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD** CPT Joshua T. Reich, realistic training is one of the most important elements in preparing Soldiers to deploy in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

Approximately 150 Soldiers from the LAARNG's 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, headquartered in Lafayette, LA, had the opportunity to assist in the training of deploying Soldiers during a three-week mission to Germany in August 2008.

"Our Soldiers traveled to Hohenfels, Germany, in support of the Joint Multinational Readiness Center," said Reich, commander of A Company, 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment in Lafayette. "We assisted in training active duty American Soldiers, but also worked with troops from Poland, Great Britain, Romania and the Czech Republic."

The Prairieville, LA, resident explained that once the Soldiers from the 256th arrived in Germany, they were given four days to train



**ON THREE!** Soldiers from the 256th IBCT prepare to clear a house during a training event in Germany.

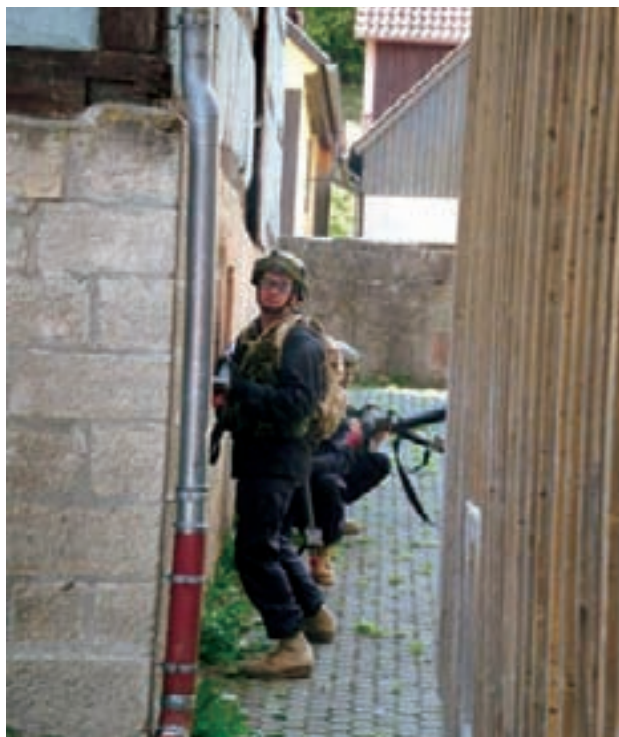
at Hohenfels. They were later reassigned to Hammelberg, Germany, for the field exercises.

"We were assigned to Task Force 3-66th, 172nd Infantry Brigade in Germany, in an opposing forces, or OPFOR role," the Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran said. "Our mission was to simulate an Iraqi Army battalion."

Reich described how each platoon-sized element was rolled into a company of the 3-66th to train in Military Operations in Urban Terrain (MOUT) tactics. This training is designed to help deploying units prepare for battles in close-quarter, urban environments such as Baghdad.

"The deploying units were given training scenarios similar to those they may face with the Iraqi military," the certified military Combatives instructor said. "These scenarios include language barriers and training barriers of an undisciplined and untrained Iraqi unit."

Reich explained that communication between the U.S. Soldiers and their Iraqi counterparts during combined missions can be hindered by the insufficient amount of formal military training received by the Iraqi Soldiers.



**WATCHING THE CORNER** A Soldier guards a small alley during the 256th IBCT's training in Germany.

CPT JOSHUA T. REICH

# Bill Murray Brings *Stripes* to Life at Chicago USO Event

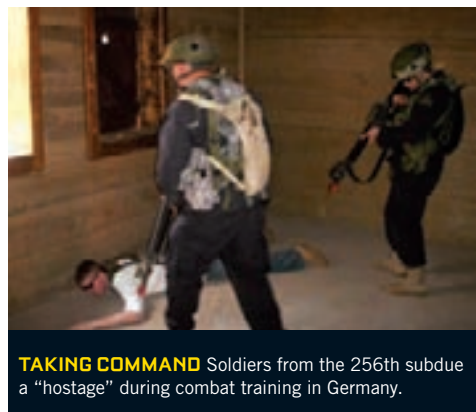
Story and photos by SGT April Hawes / CHICAGO, IL

SFC Richard A. Cassell, a platoon leader with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment in Houma, LA, described the importance of American forces working with Arabic interpreters assigned to their units while training Iraqi Soldiers.

"Many times, mistakes are made when we attempt to communicate with the Iraqi Soldiers on our own," he said. "The Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) used Arabic interpreters in the training to focus on getting the American troops accustomed to communicating through them."

Cassell added that the MO UT training was beneficial not only to the deploying troops, but also to the Soldiers from the 256th.

"Hammelberg has an awesome MO UT site," the Bridge City, LA, resident said. "This training is a huge refresher for a lot of our guys who have been to Iraq. It also gives the newer Soldiers an opportunity to experience the active component of our military."



**TAKING COMMAND** Soldiers from the 256th subdue a "hostage" during combat training in Germany.

Cassell explained how simply watching mistakes being made during the training was a valuable lesson for his troops. "Potential deployment is always in the back of your mind," he stressed. "Seeing mistakes and learning from them as they went through the training scenarios helped even the troops sitting on the sidelines."

Even though Soldiers from the 256th spent 17 days in the field during the Germany rotation, Reich pointed out that the training was not all work and no play.

"The troops had an opportunity to visit the city of Nürnberg during these three weeks," Reich added. "Not only did they receive valuable military training, they visited another country simply because of their service to the Guard." **GX**

"**T**here she was, just a-walkin' down the street singing, 'Do wah diddy diddy dum diddy do.' Snappin' her fingers and shufflin' her feet singing, 'Do wah diddy diddy dum diddy do.'"

Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers echoed the familiar tune chanted by actor Bill Murray as they entered Navy Pier's Grand Ballroom in Chicago, filled with more than 1,000 USO (United Service Organizations) of Illinois supporters.

The 2008 Salute to our Troops USO of Illinois Gala was held Nov. 15 in honor and support of service members. The proceeds from the gala directly benefit and improve the quality of life of members and families of the U.S. Armed Forces.

"The USO has opened my eyes [to the military]," said Murray, who, along with several Illinois Guard Soldiers, surprised guests of the gala with a skit re-enactment from the 1981 movie *Stripes*.

"Working with Bill Murray was absolutely incredible for me since I have been a fan of his for years," said SSG Scott Snyder, a member of 2nd Battalion, 123rd Forward Support Company based in Milan. "He is just as personable and quick-witted in person as he is on screen. It was an experience I will share with others for years."

Earlier in the day, Soldiers had one-on-one time with Murray, when they rehearsed the skit. Before the rehearsal, Murray shook hands and thanked the Illinois Soldiers for their military service.



**MAKING A SCENE** Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers rehearse a skit from the movie *Stripes* with Bill Murray before the 2008 Salute to our Troops USO of Illinois Gala Nov. 15 in Chicago.



**GOOFIN' AROUND** Bill Murray does an impersonation for a Soldier from Illinois during a USO tour.

"I thought it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity," said CPT Timothy J. Newman of Plainfield, and a member of the 631st Engineer Support Company in Lawrenceville. "He is an extremely nice, creative and wonderful guy to work with. He also cared about us as troops and was very interested in what we had to say."

Throughout the evening, Murray made his way through the crowd, talking to local supporters and members from all the U.S. military branches. Among the crowd was Annette Chapman of Atlanta, whose husband, SPC Harold Chapman, is deployed with the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

When Annette found out she would attend the gala and could meet Murray, she immediately phoned her husband, a lifelong Murray fan. He told her if she had the opportunity to speak with Murray, he wanted her to pass on a message to him.

So when Murray made his way to her table, Annette told him who she was and that she had a message from her deployed husband. Murray grabbed her hand and listened as she relayed Harold's message of how Murray's 1984 movie *The Razor's Edge* positively impacted his life, and how Harold always wanted to thank Murray for that movie.

"He hugged me so tight, and he did have a little tear in his eye," Annette said about Murray's reaction.

In addition to Murray's appearance, the gala also featured Miss USA 2008 Crystle Stewart, Gary Sinise and the Lt. Dan Band with Kimo Williams and Leeanne Tweeden, a Fox Sports Network reporter, who was presented with the 2008 Angel Harvey Heart of a Patriot Award. **GX**



**LOAD 'EM UP!**

Infantrymen assigned to Company A, 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment, Colorado Army National Guard, conduct static load training with Colorado's 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, Nov. 14, 2008, at Fort Carson, CO.

what gear at that moment, just get out.”

Belo also gave the infantrymen a thorough safety brief about air assault training in a Black Hawk.

The infantrymen were instructed to move a few feet out of the doors on either side of the Black Hawk without moving too far toward the front or rear of the aircraft. Belo explained why it was important for Soldiers

not to block the front sides of the aircraft

“During an air assault, for those few seconds while the aircraft is on the ground, [the Black Hawk gunner maintains] the biggest guns out here,” said Belo.

As with all Army training, the air assault training was done in phases—crawl, walk, run. The phases, starting at the slowest and moving to “combat” speed, help Soldiers train safely while learning a new task.

The battalion was converted earlier this year from field artillery.

“We don’t have the experience in infantry, so we are establishing the building blocks,” Girard said. With relief, Girard added that the company is starting to do its job as infantry, employing light infantry tactics to be versatile, mobile and disciplined.

Combining many training elements into one weekend, after the air assault training, the company rucked approximately four miles to their next objective.

Despite Colorado’s winter weather and intermittent snow showers, the Soldiers continue to train, introducing infantry tactics to their newest members and reinforcing basic Soldier skills to veteran members. **GX**

# Hit the Ground Running

## Colorado Infantrymen Conduct Air Assault Training

Story and photos by SSG Liesl Marelli / COLORADO SPRINGS, CO

**▶ COLORADO ARMY NATIONAL GUARD’S** newest infantry battalion conducted air assault training Nov. 14, 2008, at Fort Carson, CO, with the help of 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment.

Colorado National Guard’s Company A, 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry Regiment was at Fort Carson for a three-day training event. Known as a “MUTA 6,” the Soldiers arrived for duty Friday morning to begin training.

“The focus of our training this weekend is to occupy an assembly area and [conduct] squad patrols,” said Infantry Squad Leader, SSG Robert Girard of Company A, 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry, who recently transferred to the Colorado Army National Guard from the active duty Army.

Arriving with three UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters on a Friday morning, the infantry Soldiers prepared themselves for air assault training with 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment.

“We started off in first phase, which was static load training. Then we conducted an air assault into a landing zone on the south side of Fort Carson,” said MAJ Brey Hopkins of 1st Battalion, 157th Infantry. Once off the Black Hawk at the

landing zone, the Soldiers conducted squad patrol operations, he said.

SSG Marc Belo, a Black Hawk crew chief assigned to 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment, briefed the infantrymen about getting on and off a Black Hawk helicopter with their weapons and gear in hand.

“Put [the ruck sack] on your knees,” Belo said. “Then when we land and the doors open, throw the rucks right out. It doesn’t matter who has



**THE MAN WITH THE PLAN:** Infantry Squad Leader SSG Robert Girard instructs his Soldiers to move into tactical formation and make their way to the nearest wood line, Nov. 14, 2008, at Fort Carson, CO.

**“ DURING AN AIR ASSAULT, FOR THOSE FEW SECONDS WHILE THE AIRCRAFT IS ON THE GROUND, [THE BLACK HAWK GUNNER MAINTAINS] THE BIGGEST GUNS OUT HERE.”**

>> SSG Marc Belo



# Becoming the Best

ENLISTEES BATTLE TO EARN EXPERT WARRIOR CERTIFICATION

Story by Regina Bell | MIAMI, FL

► **EXPERT INFANTRYMAN BADGE**, Expert Field Medical Badge, RANGER Tab—these are a few of the great accomplishments that Soldiers can earn in their military career. But now there's a new criteria for Florida Army National Guard's newest warriors—Expert Warrior Certification (EWC).

Florida's Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) brought together five detachments from the southern half of Florida to compete in their EWC, a three-day event designed to test the RSP Warriors' expertise to be called an Expert Warrior. About 300 of Florida's newest Warriors participated in this first-of-its-kind event, held in Miami, FL.

The mission was simple: Dominate in every competition, including the rappel tower, the obstacle course and close-quarter combat training, and become an Expert Warrior. The detachment with the most Expert Warriors won the overall competition.

SFC John McCammon, the RSP NCO West Palm Beach Detachment explained, "To accomplish all this training in a matter of three days, that sets the measuring bar where they're going to be at in Basic Combat Training (BCT), and they'll be above their peers."

These Soldiers were literally above their peers—50 feet above the ground in the morning's rappel tower climb. For one Soldier, this Warrior task took his mental strength to new heights.

Adam Barnes was now face-to-face with his

profound fear of heights. A pproximately every 15 steps up the ladder, Barnes—unprotected and without a harness—paused in fear. The tower master reminded him, "The only way down is off this wall."

Barnes finally made it down. He ended up with rope burns on his hand, but it was a huge step for a recruit who didn't think he could pull it off.

"It was exhilarating, exciting and frightening at the same time," Barnes said. "Everyone [was] chanting my name—that gave me the motivation to get up and down."



## HANG TOUGH!

A Soldier struggles to keep her grip on the high-bars so she can earn her Expert Warrior Certification.

Warriors competed in the following tasks:

- > Weapons training
- > First aid
- > Map reading
- > NBC (Nuclear, Biological and Chemical)
- > IMT (Initial Military Training)
- > Communications
- > Combatives
- > Camouflage
- > APFT 60-60-60
- > Rappel tower
- > CQB
- > 15-event obstacle course
- > Written exam, including items from the SEAR modules
- > Timed 6-mile foot march

For more information about RSP, go to [1-800-GO-GUARD.com/rsp](http://1-800-GO-GUARD.com/rsp)

While many of the younger enlistees are still trying to figure out what to do with their lives, Tim Carmichael, a 41-year-old enlistee—is on a mission.

"I'm tired of being in that armchair yelling at the TV," he said. "I want to support the troops, and the best way to do it is to be out there."

Carmichael admits it was not the ideal time to drop everything to join the National Guard, but he was a year away from the age limit. He didn't want to regret missing out on a chance to serve.

Fifty-one Warriors earned Expert Warrior honors. The EWC event was manned by members of the 11th Recruiting and Retention Battalion, with additional support of local units. Every Warrior who participated in the training event left extremely confident in one thing: They would be the most mentally and physically prepared Warriors when they arrived at BCT.

"I went to BCT last year, and I was a little nervous about returning to AIT [Advanced Individual Training], but after this weekend, I am confident that I will have no problems going back to training and will greatly miss RSP," Angela Gomez said.

The cadre saw the reward of watching some of their new enlistments go from civilians to future Army Soldiers even before BCT. Events like the EWC are what have given the Florida Recruit Sustainment Program a place among the top RSP programs in the country. **GX**



**GET DOWN!**  
Soldiers with the 175th take cover behind a Humvee.

# Guard “Law Dogs” Compete in Commander’s Cup

Story and photos by Michelle Queiser | FORT LEONARD WOOD, MO

**MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD** Soldiers from the 175th Military Police Battalion recently competed against their peers in the Commander’s Cup Competition.

The competition began three years ago as a way for the battalion’s companies to come together and put their training to use. The brainchild of LTC James Tate, of St. Louis, the competition is designed to test the Soldiers’ technical and tactical proficiency, leadership and teamwork skills, physical toughness and mental dexterity.

“We really come together as a company during the competition,” said 2LT Erin Sallee, a platoon leader in the 1140th Military Police Company. “The Soldiers are motivated, and the scenarios help build teamwork. It’s important to build trust now before we have to deploy next year.”

Units competed in four categories: marksmanship, unit strength, training and special reaction team operations. The special reaction team portion was especially vital to a unit’s overall performance. Each company has a designated team that specializes in fighting in urban areas. How well a unit’s commander places his team

in each scenario and the team’s proficiency and time to complete their mission affect the company’s overall scoring.

The three-day competition culminated in a ceremony to present the awards to the winning

units. The Soldiers sat anxiously in their seats and gazed at the four gleaming trophies lined up on stage.

The room exploded in a roar of shouts and applause as the 2175th was announced the winner for every category.

“We came into this weekend with high morale and expectations,” said 1SG Edward Stratton. “The Soldiers wanted it all, but never in our wildest dream did we expect to take it all. The Soldiers came away with a sense of pride like never before. They proved to themselves that a drive to excel and not being afraid to push themselves to their limits and beyond are worth the rewards.”

For every Soldier in the battalion, the competition’s rewards go beyond just trophies.

“We had a lot of new Soldiers who just completed their Advanced Individual Training but because of this training, they are motivated to be better Warriors,” said SSG Ron Kuester, acting company commander of the 3175th Military Police Company.

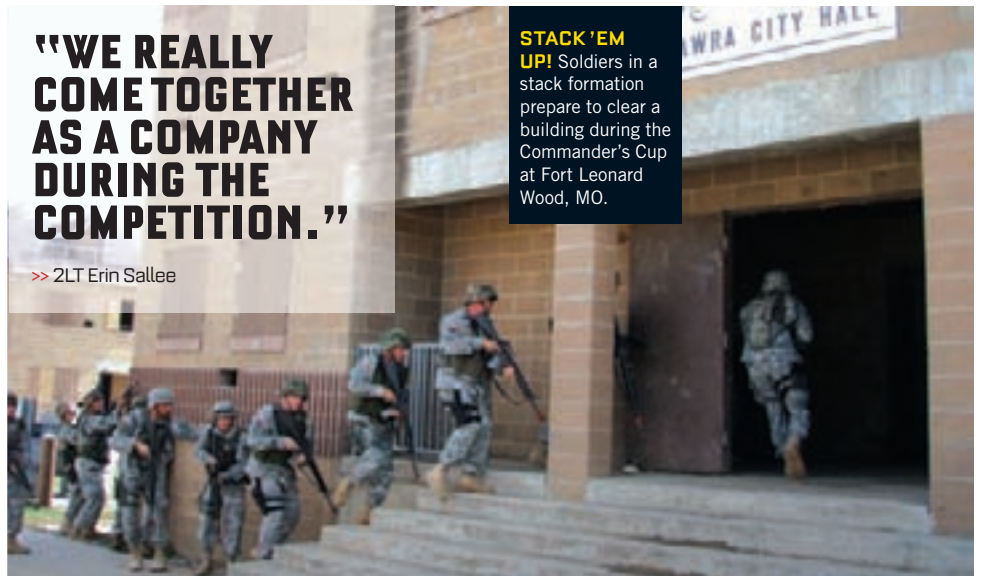
More than just a friendly competition, the Soldiers take its lessons and rewards very seriously and use that motivation and teamwork for real-life situations.

“The Soldiers are constantly evaluating themselves and each other throughout the competition because they know what they learn or improve is valuable for their future,” said 1LT Jakin Waldock, a platoon leader in the 1139th Military Police Company. “This is the type of training that saves lives on the battlefield.” **GX**

**“WE REALLY COME TOGETHER AS A COMPANY DURING THE COMPETITION.”**

>> 2LT Erin Sallee

**STACK ‘EM UP!** Soldiers in a stack formation prepare to clear a building during the Commander’s Cup at Fort Leonard Wood, MO.





# Inspire America

## GUARD SPEAKERS' PROGRAM REACHES OUT TO YOUTH

By Keith Kawasaki

**IF YOU'RE LOOKING** for an opportunity to motivate America's youth, the National Guard invites you to participate in the Guard Speakers' Program.

The Guard realizes that our Soldiers, military retirees, teachers, professionals and community members have unique personal stories of success and determination that can lead a young person to the right path—a path centered on good career choices and sound values. This is why the Guard is bringing motivational speakers to high schools, community centers and other venues to enlighten young people.



"The National Guard Speakers' Program is another way that the National Guard will contribute to America's communities by providing positive messages such as anti-drug/anti-drinking and driving presentations to high school students," MAJ Bart Wagner told GX. MAJ Wagner is the Acting Branch Chief of Enlisted Strength Maintenance, Army National Guard. "Coaches, community groups and students are just a few of the groups that will benefit from motivational and educational events through this program," he said.

The Guard Speakers' Program is a functional program that offers variety and flexibility on the presentation topic and venue. The program can also work in conjunction with existing educational programs such as the Heritage Outreach Program and Partners in Education.

Recommended speakers will receive certification from the National Guard Speakers' Program, in addition to monetary compensation for each presentation.

So how do you get involved?

Contact a local National Guard recruiter, and ask for a recommendation to the program. To find a recruiter near you, go to 1-800-GO-GUARD.com.

After that, there are just a few more steps to complete your training and certification.

**Start making a difference today. Visit [GuardSpeakersProgram.com](http://GuardSpeakersProgram.com) for more information. GX**

# Medical Safari

## MARYLAND MEDICAL UNIT TAKES PART IN AFRICAN MISSION

By CPT Rick Breitenfeldt / BALTIMORE, MD

**FOR THE FIRST TIME** since U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM) became autonomous on Oct. 1, the National Guard has deployed Citizen-Soldiers to an African nation—Senegal—to provide desperately needed medical care.

The two-week deployment of 18 Maryland National Guard doctors, dentists and other medical professionals was in support of a 14-nation exercise known as Flintlock '09, which concluded Nov. 20.

The Maryland Guard medical team based at Camp Fretterd in Reisterstown was led by COL John V. Gladden, the state surgeon, who said this type of training mission is exactly what the Guard needs to be doing.

"It teaches us how to do things outside our specialty, how to work together," said Gladden about his team, which treated nearly 1,600 Senegalese who visited the makeshift clinic with a variety of medical and dental issues.

Gladden, who has worked in eight previous medical exercises in his career, said the working and living conditions in Africa were the most austere he had ever seen, but his fellow Citizen-Soldiers were professionals under the toughest of circumstances.

"Nobody got flustered," Gladden said. "We knew there were limitations on what we could do to treat some of these patients, but nobody dwelled on this being a less-than-perfect outcome."

The two-week exercise was developed as a joint multi-national exercise to improve information sharing at the operational and tactical levels across the Saharan region while fostering increased collaboration and coordination.

"This was a perfect fit," said SFC Kenneth McGill, the operations sergeant for the Maryland Guard medical detachment who organized the training mission.

"We had the professional talent, and they had everything we needed to do the job," McGill said. "This was the opportunity to take a portion of our staff, send them to a far away land to do wonderful things and get more medical experience.

"Having an opportunity like this, even in the civilian world, is rare."

More than 200 people participated in Flintlock, a part of AFRICOM's Operation Enduring Freedom-Trans Sahara, which provides military support to State Department programs that collec-

tively aim to enhance regional security in Africa by also addressing economic and social development, as well as things like disaster preparedness and medical emergencies.

Although this was a first-ever mission for the National Guard to an African country, the Guard has a long-standing State Partnership Program, which was designed to build relationships with emerging democracies by pairing states and U.S. territories with more than 59 countries around the world.

"This is a terrific opportunity for our Soldiers to take their military and civilian skills and apply them in a real-world training environment, while at the same time helping the people of the republic



**A HELPING HAND!** SSG Deshanna Taylor, a medic with the state medical detachment, works on a patient in support of U.S. African Command.

of Senegal," said BG Alberto Jimenez, commander of the Maryland Army National Guard. "This exercise is a continuation of the ongoing efforts by the Maryland National Guard in support of emerging democracies in countries like Bosnia-Herzegovina, Estonia and now Senegal."

Former Maryland assistant adjutant general Army MG Edward Leacock, now deputy director of the Intelligence and Knowledge Development Division at AFRICOM, said the exercise "set a strong precedent for future U.S. Africa Command engagements where the U.S. military will actively seek the partnership of stakeholders to meet common challenges."

McGill said Gladden and his medical team's mission didn't end when the last patient left the clinic. The Guard team left behind all excess medical supplies and equipment for future use by the Senegalese government. **GX**

**PROMOTION**

SFC Michael Donohue was promoted to SFC while serving in Iraq.



# Strength on the Home Front

By SFC Clint Wood

## GX Interviews Echo Company Soldier's Spouse

**T**he Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's Echo Company, 3rd Battalion, and 142nd Aviation have been serving in Iraq for more than three months now.

These brave Soldiers from across the state of New York and several from Missouri are not the only ones making an extreme sacrifice during this 10-month deployment. Their family members are maintaining the strength on the home front like thousands before them.

GX caught up with one of these spouses, Vanessa J. Herman, the wife of SFC Michael Donohue. Herman, the assistant director of Governmental Relations at Stony Brook University, is a very busy woman, too. She travels to Washington, DC, more than 25 times annually to represent the university.

**GX:** *Where did you and Michael meet?*

**VH:** Mike and I met online. I emailed him initially as he had the most sarcastic profile I had seen. I thought to myself, "This guy will get me." We met online in mid-January 2004, then in-person on Jan. 31, 2004, and have been together ever since. We were married on Jan. 31, 2005.

**GX:** *He has been in Iraq for three months now; how has it been?*

**VH:** I am fortunate that my career keeps me very, very busy. The time has gone by quickly for me. I also have a large supportive family and great friends. So far, so good.

**GX:** *What has been the most difficult thing about the deployment so far?*

**VH:** It is hard not to worry at times. Though he reassures me he is safe, hearing about car bombs and other assorted things on the news can be difficult. Mike is my best friend, and I miss talking to him every day, several times a day. Evenings can be difficult, especially when you're lying in bed alone. There is a sense of sadness that can surround that time.

**GX:** *How do you communicate?*

**VH:** A majority of our contact is via phone. First by personal cell phone (until we got the bill!), and then with him calling me using V OIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol). We also use SKYPE, and though it can be choppy, it's great to see and hear him, even if it's only for a few precious minutes. It does wonders. We try to talk three to four times a week and usually do, unless my travel schedule and his busy work schedule collide.

**GX:** *What is special about your husband and his fellow Soldiers?*

**VH:** I think anyone who volunteers to serve in the military should be commended. I think too many people lose sight of the fact that all of the men and women serving in our military are volunteers.

**GX:** *How proud do you feel being married to a deployed Soldier?*

**VH:** I am, of course, very proud and supportive of my husband no matter what, now more so than ever. Though everyone may not agree with the reasons behind his deployment, I am proud of his commitment.

**GX:** How does it feel to know that you and your husband are sacrificing to protect this country?

**VH:** I think there are many people who make sacrifices on a daily basis to protect our country. Though not everyone is on the front lines like our Soldiers, I am proud to do my part to the best of my ability.

**GX:** What is special about the National Guard in your eyes?

**VH:** The National Guard provides a great opportunity for men and women to contribute, usually on a part-time basis, while learning valuable skills and life lessons that will ultimately benefit them throughout their entire lives and careers. Also, there are some great people I have gotten to know in Mike's unit, like SFC Dan Colello and LT Raquel Acosta. I consider both to be good friends.

**GX:** How do you support your spouse?

**VH:** We always try to support each other. I do my best to make myself available when he calls, and we make dates to talk to each other. I also try to mail him a box or large envelope every week or two.

**GX:** How do you take care of things on the home front?

**VH:** I have always been very independent, so things are fine. I am very organized and have always handled the finances. I am confident I can deal with whatever comes up, though the first few months Mike was gone, something broke each month—the oil burner went, the dishwasher broke, the alarm control box fizzled out, etc... You just roll with the punches.

**GX:** What has changed (for both you and your spouse) while Mike has been deployed?

**VH:** I guess you never fully appreciate what you have until it's gone. We always had a close relationship but in a way, this deployment is bringing us closer. I also have to bring out the trash twice a week and fill up the birdfeeders. On a good note, our house has never been so clean.

**GX:** What does it feel like being a New Yorker and a spouse of a deployed Soldier?

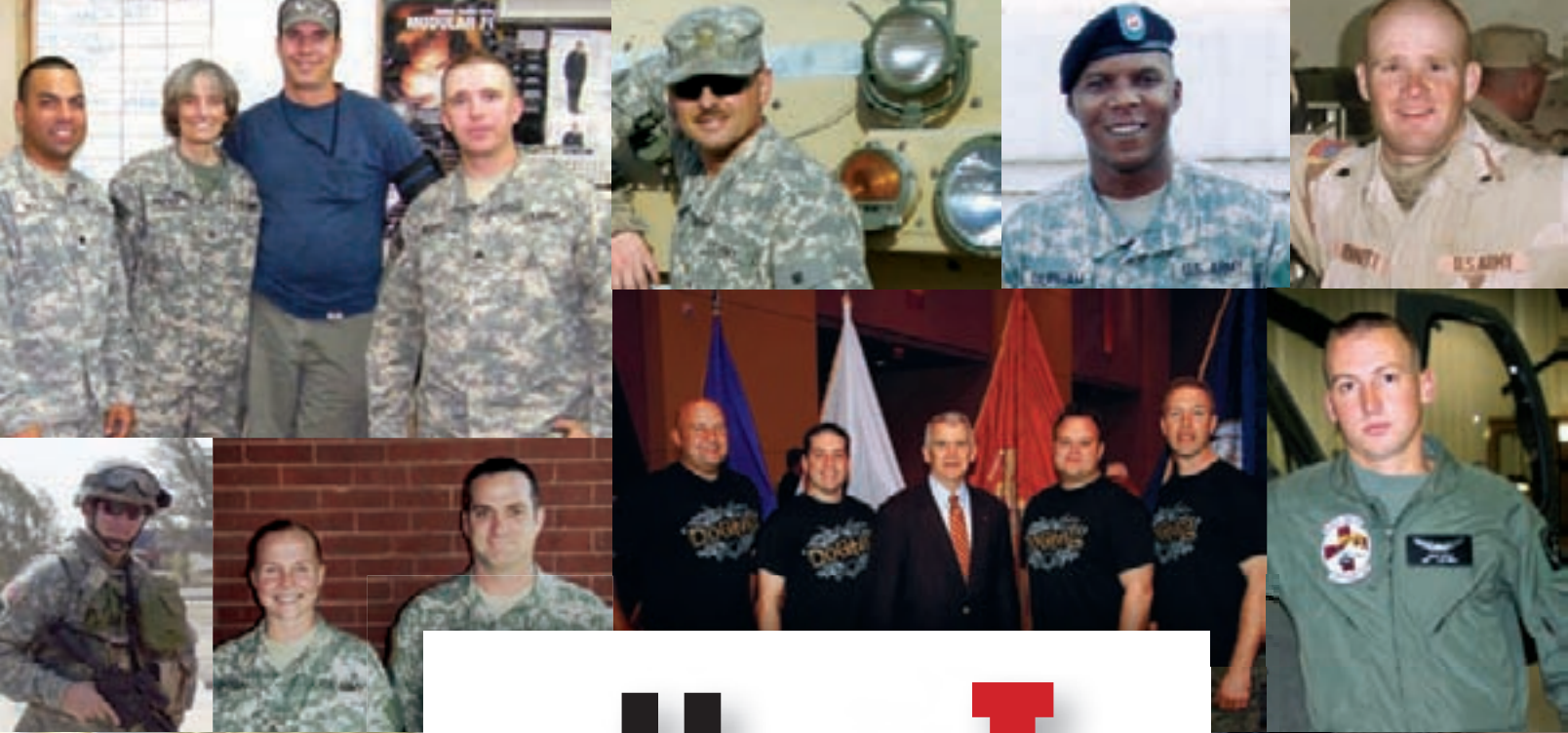
**VH:** I am fiercely proud of my state. I have deep roots here and I, along with millions of my fellow New Yorkers, were devastated when the 9/11 attacks took place. Whether or not the events on 9/11 are linked to Iraq, there is a heightened sense of awareness and pride that goes hand-in-hand with being married to a member of the New York Army National Guard. **GX**

**WE ALWAYS HAD A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BUT IN A WAY, THIS DEPLOYMENT IS BRINGING US CLOSER TOGETHER."**

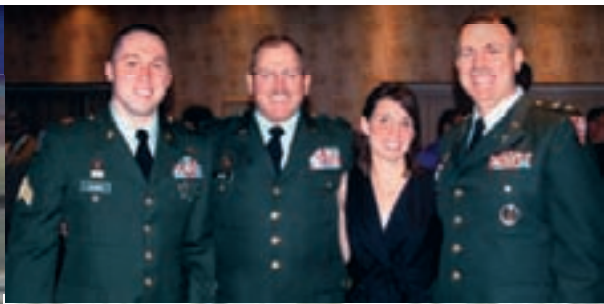
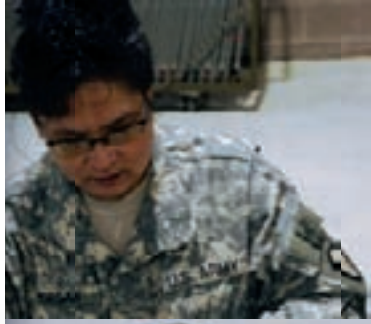
>> Vanessa J. Herman,  
wife of SPC Michael Donohue

#### DUSTY LANDING

An Apache AH-64 hovers before it lands near Baghdad International Airport (BIAP).



# How **I** change the world



★ SOLDIERS SOUND OFF ON MAKING A DIFFERENCE ★

*Intro by Staff Sgt. Marcia Beene Dickerson  
Photos courtesy of GX readers*

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Since the first shot of the Revolutionary War, Citizen-Soldiers have been changing the world. Whether large or small, actions by **Army National Guard Soldiers** make a difference in the lives of all Americans, as well as people across the far reaches of the globe. And, since good deeds seldom see the spotlight of mainstream media, we asked you, our readers, to share your stories for our spotlight. Here's how you change the world.

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I helped build a playground in south St. Louis for local children. I try to make life better for my fellow Soldiers by serving as the unit retention counselor as well as the unit equal opportunity representative. I also work with the 1035th's Family Readiness Group to foster a close-knit environment between our Guard family and the Soldiers' families. ★ SGT Craig Durham, Missouri Army National Guard

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When I am not at work with the Alaska National Guard, I am volunteering at my local high school. I love the fact that through coaching track and football, I am able to keep kids off the streets and focused on a positive path in life.

★ SSG Robert Harris, Alaska Army National Guard

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**While deployed to Afghanistan as a member of an Embedded Tactical Trainer Team, I have advised Afghan Border Police units. These brave and motivated men have**

**successfully reduced the flow of Taliban insurgents through the Afghan-Pakistan border. My wife, Holly, is currently going through AIT training and will join me in future deployments.**

★ CPL Roberto Di Giovine, South Carolina Army National Guard

With the 38th Troop Command Medical Detachment and through my civilian job as a volunteer with my local fire department, I am able to provide emergency fire protection and education. I really enjoy the satisfaction I get by giving back to my community.

★ SSG Ned Tri, Alaska Army National Guard



“This spring, our battalion led the offensive into Sadr City, leading to a lasting peace in Baghdad.”

★ LTC Philip Boucon, Michigan Army National Guard

I deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and traveled throughout United States Army Forces Central Command working with National Guard Soldiers, helping them with personnel issues such as promotions and pay. For me, it was not only about the journey, but also the achievement and smiles brought to the Soldiers knowing they were being taken care of.

★ CW4 Nancy Bell, Florida Army National Guard

While deployed to Arizona to support Operation Jump Start, I worked with the U.S. Border Patrol, apprehending multiple individuals attempting to enter the U.S. illegally and seizing large amounts of drugs being smuggled across our borders, keeping our country and streets safer.

★ SGT Dallas Clayton, Virginia Army National Guard



Coordinator, I educate high school students on the experiences of National Guard Soldiers from our past and present. I tell the National Guard story, so that it does not get lost.

★ SGT Ryan Teague, Ohio Army National Guard

While deployed to Iraq, I became friends with many children in the surrounding village and tried to teach them that Americans are not so different from them, and we are not their enemy.

★ SSG Todd Funkhouser, Virginia Army National Guard

I am changing the world one class at a time. As a Heritage Outreach Program

**While deployed with the 101st Air Assault Division in Afghanistan, I visited the small village of Dahane Djarf and helped them with opening a newly constructed hospital. Soon, the villagers won't have to trek dozens of kilometers into Kabul to receive quality medical care.**

★ LTC David J. Larson, Wisconsin Army National Guard

During my deployment to Iraq with Company D 1/149th Infantry, I was part of counterinsurgency operations and created a safer environment for our troops and the local citizens.★ SGT Roger Sizemore, Kentucky Army National Guard



I discovered in Iraq that I have a gift for capturing the wonderful smiles of children. I made it my mission to take as many photos of children as I could. In my hooch each evening, I would print pages and pages of small 2"x3" photos and mark the name of the village. The next time I went to that village, I would take the photos and pass them out to the children who might never have had a photo of themselves before! It was one way that I know I am changing the world through my photography!

★ MAJ Sven Olson, Arizona Army National Guard

While deployed to Kosovo, I frequently delivered school supplies to needy Serbian and Albanian schools. I know that the pencils, erasers and coloring books helped the kids and their teachers, and in a broad sense, gave them the opportunity for a brighter future through education.

★ SGT Eric Schroeder, Virginia Army National Guard

While I served in Kosovo, I helped Multi-National Task Force (East) plan and execute more than \$1 million in quality of life improvement projects for the people of Kosovo. Our efforts helped meet the specific needs of our local communities. Our humanitarian assistance efforts also helped us build a sense of trust with the population and provide a bright future for the children of Kosovo.

★ LTC Eric Barr, Virginia Army National Guard

**While deployed to Iraq with A Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry, I served as a scout vehicle commander on more than 65 combat logistics patrols in central and western Iraq. We always completed our mission and never had a casualty or loss of equipment for the entire deployment.**

★ SGT Charles Rush, Virginia Army National Guard



I have been in the Army for 14 years and served both on active duty and in the National Guard. I have been recruiting for more than two years now, and nothing makes me prouder than to see my young recruits become Soldiers. I am by them every step of the way. It is absolutely amazing to change someone's life for the better and prove to them that serving their country and state is the most rewarding challenge anyone can fathom. All of the other benefits (i.e., the tuition assistance, Montgomery G.I. Bill, the enlistment bonus, etc.) are rewards for their patriotism. My recruits look up to me, looking for direction. I give them that direction; I give them the tools they can use their entire lives and continually to make this a better country, state and Army National Guard.

★ SSG Benjamin Fox, Indiana Army National Guard

While deployed to Afghanistan, my platoon performed patrols and missions that helped the Afghan people feel safe during the time of the first democratic national election in that country.

★ SGT Stephen Greene, Virginia Army National Guard

While deployed to Iraq with the 46th Military Police Command, I acted as a Board President of the Multi-National Force Review Committee. Now detainees have a process to explain the circumstances of their detention and be released.

★ LTC Michael Pelot, Michigan Army National Guard



**HOW I CHANGE THE WORLD**



I am a UH-60 Black Hawk crew chief in C Company 1/169th MED. While deployed to Balad, Iraq, in 2007, I performed aircraft maintenance to support the fight. Last summer, I flew more than 25 hours in support of the relief following Hurricane Gustav. ★ SGT Jacob White, Kentucky Army National Guard

While deployed to Iraq with the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team, I assisted in the development of human intelligence in support of Target Packet Development. With this intelligence, we were able to remove insurgents from the streets of Iraq. ★ CPT Michael Brethorst, Minnesota Army National Guard

**While deployed, I escorted media so they could tell the Guard story, and I provided security for BG David Perkins.**

★ SPC Christopher Johnson, Michigan Army National Guard

During my time with the Alaska National Guard Public Affairs Office, I was able to play the role of Santa Claus during the Alaska National Guard's annual Operation Santa. I was able to go to villages all over the state and bring Christmas to children who otherwise would not have had one.

★ SSG Ken Denny, Alaska Army National Guard



As a member of B Company, 935th Aviation Support Branch of the Illinois National Guard, I was deployed with the 1108th Mississippi Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot to Kuwait from 2007–2008. While in Kuwait, I supervised two other enlisted Soldiers, SGT Luis Nieves and SGT Thomas Wulfle, and worked with two Logistics Support

Area Contractors, Thomas Gabriel and Billy Thurmond. This team of electricians provided support to aviation units by continuous repair and fabrication of aviation-related electrical components. Our expertise and ability produced limited aircraft downtime.

★ SSG Crystal Porter, Illinois Army National Guard

I make a difference in the world by collecting much-needed humanitarian goods and shipping them to people in war-torn countries where the military is serving. I do this to assist the Soldiers in building bridges to these people, through the act of giving. I have been shipping humanitarian items such as medical supplies, school supplies, hygiene kits, clothing, shoes, toys, etc., for the past five years and have shipped more than 65 40-foot ocean containers to Iraq and Afghanistan.

★ Paul "Chief Wiggles" Holton, Utah Army National Guard





Levee breaks in Fernley, NV, left thousands of people with flooded, uninhabitable homes. My unit (593rd Medium Transportation Company) and I were able to change the world by delivering much-needed FEMA relief supplies to them.

★ SSG Tracy Castro, Nevada Army National Guard

For the past two years, I have spoken to elementary schools in the St. Louis area supporting the “Power of 11 Cents” program, which is one of many ways that students across the country can support the troops through service projects. The project in the last three years has raised 7,800,000 pennies for the Missouri Military Family Relief Fund, and 100 percent of all funds go directly to our troops and their families.

★ SGT Tina M. Fountain, 70th Troop Command, Missouri Army National Guard

With the Michigan Army National Guard Inspector General’s Office in Iraq, I fought alongside the men of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Iraqi Army Division, using my role as an embedded Military Advisor to help better an allied nation’s army.

★ MSG David Duncel, Michigan Army National Guard

During my deployment to Iraq, my unit was tasked to a small village south of Talil. Using my engineering training, I helped reinforce berms along the riverbank to prevent the entire village from being flooded by the overflowing Euphrates River.

★ 1SG Robert Schooler, Alaska Army National Guard

During my latest deployment to Iraq, I was able to help in the construction of a temporary school in Al Awaad. We (the 297th Infantry) brought in portable classrooms to replace the actual buildings that had been destroyed by local insurgents. Through doing this, I was able to give the children of Al Awaad a chance to go to school, something that had been denied to them for so long.

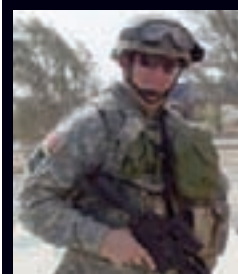
★ COL Mike Bridges, Alaska Army National Guard

As a human resource specialist with the 1/138th, I am dedicated to the care of the Soldiers. When Soldiers return from deployment, I make sure they have an Army job to return to, and I maintain the jobs for Soldiers who are already working at Camp Atterbury. I research the duty positions at Camp Atterbury and ensure the best candidate possible fills the job description. I change the world by providing assurance and a sense of comfort for Soldiers to know that they have support.

★ DC Daniel Heiwig, Indiana Army National Guard

**While deployed to Iraq with the 205th Military Police Battalion, I provided engineer support to the installation, community and Iraqi Army. I helped repair local schools and develop IED control devices on culverts to help make the roads safer for Iraqi families and coalition forces.**

★ SSG Robert Myers, Missouri Army National Guard



Every time I put on my uniform, I know I represent the United States of America and its citizens, and I know I am helping protect those who can’t protect themselves.

★ CPT David Prokop, Wisconsin Army National Guard



My job as a human resources specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 149th Mechanized Enhanced Brigade, allows me to help Soldiers with their problems and prepare them for mobilization for both their wartime mission and relief efforts here at home.

★ SPC Kelli Key, Kentucky Army National Guard

**While I was deployed to Afghanistan with B Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry, my squad would often give one of our MREs from our ruck to the starving children because they are the future of their country.**

★ SSG Neil Lilly, Virginia Army National Guard



During my deployment in 2003–04 to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, I provided maintenance support for Charlie Company, 203rd Engineer Battalion. This maintenance support ensured that the platoons could continue to repair the roads carrying supplies to both U.S. Soldiers and Iraqis.

★ SGT Joe Breidenstein, Missouri Army National Guard



I currently serve proudly with the Arizona National Guard (Joint Force Headquarters). After serving over 10 years on active duty as a medic, I separated for about four years. I heard that a military police unit from Arizona (860th MP) was heading to Iraq and had only three medics at the time. I volunteered and went as their fourth. While in theater, my unit conducted more than 300 missions outside the wire and in some

of Iraq's not so great areas. I just did my job, but I was able to help several of my Soldiers and even treated one under fire. I am currently serving as Arizona's State Line of Duty Administrator, which is even more rewarding. Every day, I make sure my Soldiers are taken care of with line of duties, medical appointments and make sure their bills and their families get the help they need. When a Soldier has an issue, I do whatever I can to help them out.

★ SGT William Dykens, Arizona Army National Guard

In the last three years, I have helped many young men and women change their lives for the good by enlisting them in the Army National Guard. Many of those Soldiers are now serving our country overseas and changing the world. I also just saw one of my recruits in *GX* magazine destroying marijuana plants for the drug task force.

★ SSG Hank Meek, Tennessee Army National Guard

**“While deployed to Kosovo, I frequently delivered school supplies to needy Serbian and Albanian schools.”**

★ SGT Eric Schroeder, Virginia Army National Guard

**I was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II with 1st Battalion, 33rd Field Artillery, 1st Infantry Division. I provided security and over-watch for the first democratic election voting process to take place in Iraq. I know that because of my team and myself, the people of Iraq will grow to be a free nation. Since then, I have had the opportunity to assist Soldiers with their careers and goals as a Battalion Career Counselor with the 29th Special Troops Battalion, 29th Infantry Division. I communicate my experiences and knowledge and relay the importance of serving state and country in these times of adversity.**

★ SGT Michael Wells, Virginia Army National Guard



I recently returned from Iraq where I was a convoy commander in Al Anbar Province with Company A, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry. I personally ensured the safe delivery of building materials to construct new combat outposts for the Iraqi Army. These outposts are making Iraq a safer place because they allow the Iraqi Army to secure areas that were previously unpatrolled. This also makes American Soldiers safer because the Iraqis are less dependent on American Soldiers and resources to get the job done. ★ SSG James Rowe, Virginia Army National Guard

I am with the 262nd Combat Engineers and serve as a heavy equipment operator. I work full time with the Maine Army National Guard Family Program. As the Family Readiness Assistant, I assist Maine Military Families throughout the deployment cycle.

★ SPC April Stultz, Maine Army National Guard

In July, we returned from Baghdad, Iraq, where we conducted route clearance. Our mission was essential in that we cleared multiple main supply routes from IEDs. This spring, our battalion led the offensive into Sadr City, leading to a lasting peace in Baghdad. I am proud to have served with all of the fine Soldiers of this battalion.

★ LTC Philip Boucon, Michigan Army National Guard

While serving as a Battalion Career Counselor for 2/127th Infantry, I drafted congressional correspondence, which changed the interpretation of U.S. Code, allowing expedited citizenship to be extended to several Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers. I work with the local community on several annual projects: the \*M\*A\*S\*H\* Bash, an annual blood drive put on by the Community Blood Center, Appleton, WI, which collects hundreds of pints of blood for use in the Fox Cities communities; as a board member for the Neenah based "Quarry Quest," we helped to raise more than \$300,000 dollars, which in turn, was donated to various children's charities; we helped to fund and open a local natural history museum; and aided in the continuing support of the Fox Cities Children's Museum.

★ SFC Bill Rosenau, Wisconsin Army National Guard



**As a Soldier with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, it's my job as a print journalist to help share stories about Soldiers' many accomplishments, sacrifices and selfless service with the public. As a New Jersey native, I joined the Army National Guard because of 9/11, and I'm grateful to serve among America's brave men and women.**

★ SSG Liest Marelli, Colorado Army National Guard

As an intelligence analyst with the 138th Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, I make sure our Soldiers have all the information they need to get the job done. I've also worked security missions to ensure public safety during local community events.

★ SPC Bobbi Witt, Kentucky Army National Guard



I currently serve with the 135th Army National Guard Band, and my support for the National Guard extends beyond my weekend drills and annual training. I take every opportunity to support and promote the National Guard through music with a rock and country band known as DoGtag. Performances take place in a variety of venues, from schools to colleges, to performing for retired Col.

Oliver North, for Veteran celebrations. Each performance gives me the opportunity to share the great opportunities about the National Guard with individuals from different walks of life. It's great to hear their responses about the National Guard and their questions pertaining to the National Guard. ★ SSG Charles Bart, Missouri Army National Guard



I am a standard installation/division personnel system analyst for the Maine Army National Guard. I act as an NCOIC for Soldier Readiness Processing and ensure Soldiers are provided the proper benefits, pay and entitlements prior to mobilizing overseas. ★ SSG Mary Quirion, Maine Army National Guard



While deployed with the 116th Engineers in Iraq, my unit helped repave and rebuild roads for Main Supply Route

Tampa. We also did many humanitarian missions to the locals, which included most of our Christmas presents from home. We gave [them] to the local children. Also, we helped destroy numerous weapons that were being used for IEDs.

★ SPC Nick Bennett, Utah Army National Guard

➤ I am a TAC Officer at 3rd Battalion, 183rd Regional Training Institute and have recently returned home from Iraq. While on deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, I assisted in the development of the Base Defense Operations Center for the International Zone in Baghdad, Iraq, to improve the security situation of both Americans and Iraqi citizens.

★ CPT Mike Taylor, Virginia Army National Guard

I change the world because I stand ready 24 hours a day seven days a week, to respond to terrorist acts on a moment's notice, to serve our civilian first-responders and ultimately the people of Nevada. That's how I give back to my community.

★ SSG Joe Sherych, Nevada Army National Guard.

I make a difference in the lives of at-risk youth by providing them with motivation and direction and a reason to stay off of drugs.

★ 1LT Richard Jordan, Nevada Army National Guard

**I change the world by being a member of the 1st Battalion, 183rd Regional Training Institute and training the Soldiers that are deploying all over the world. Having a daughter serving in Iraq makes me feel that I have changed the world just by raising her to have pride and service to our great nation.**

★ SGT Steven Randolph, Virginia Army National Guard



From August '07–April '08, I deployed to Iraq. During that time, my unit, E Troop, 105th Cavalry, conducted 360 convoy security missions throughout the Iraqi theater. Our

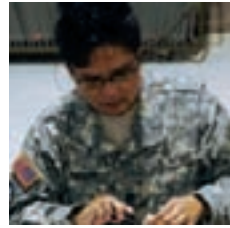
mission helped to secure the goods needed throughout Iraq and, in a small way, will assist with bringing democracy to the people of Iraq.

★ LTC Mike Murphy, Wisconsin Army National Guard



I make a difference by helping keep the Guard strong and by ensuring Soldiers' careers are taken care of. It is difficult for them to focus on the mission if they are having difficulty understanding their career options. It's my job to help sort it all out.

★ SGT Stuart Noel, Missouri Army National Guard



With the 297th Signal Company during my deployment to Afghanistan, I was given the task of being an escort driver. Our mission directly affected the success of other units in the area by assisting them in receiving the vital supplies they required.

★ SSG Carol Morgan, Alaska Army National Guard

I am a human resources specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 133rd Engineer Battalion, and work on full-time National Guard duty with the G-1. My job is to support the Soldiers of the Maine Army National Guard through records management and Soldier Readiness Processing. By doing this, when the Soldier is ready to deploy, all their affairs are in order to take some of the stress off their families.

★ SPC Tiffany Bickford, Maine Army National Guard



I deployed to Baghdad, Iraq in 2004 with Battery B, 1/103rd Field Artillery, where we were given the mission of U.S. Embassy security detachment while

the U.S. Marine Corps was tasked with another mission for six weeks. To my knowledge, we were/are the only Army National Guard unit in U.S. history to hold an embassy under daily indirect fire. It was an honor.

★ SPC Erik Lee Conley, Rhode Island Army National Guard

**With Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry, I provided security of supplies that were instrumental in the success of continuing operations in forward operating bases located in central and western Iraq.**

★ SPC Deon Loucks, Virginia Army National Guard

Being in the Missouri National Guard has given me many opportunities to help people in their time of need. Over the last eight years, I have renovated schools and police stations in Iraq, built schools and medical clinics in the Dominican Republic and Guatemala, performed search missions and clean-up in New Orleans and Lake Charles, LA, and various state emergency duties throughout Missouri. Having the opportunity to do all of this has made me proud to be in the National Guard because I feel that I have made a positive impact on people's lives.

★ SGT Travis Nicholls, Missouri Army National Guard

# 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 in GX.

*Info and photos courtesy of NGB-ASM*

## >> QUALITY CHALLENGE

Make a New Year's Resolution to kick the year off right by accessing ARNG Soldiers that are in categories I-III A as well as into the Active First Program, and you and your NCOIC will be handsomely rewarded. The ARNG is determined to meet the DoD standards of 60 percent of our new enlistments qualifying in categories I-III A; YOU are critical to meeting that objective! See your chain of command or read the SMOM on the Quality Challenge at [virtualarmory.com](http://virtualarmory.com) and find out what rewards you and your family can enjoy by meeting the Challenge.



## >> PATH TO HONOR

This program has been highly successful since its inception in 2007, but December 2008 turned out to be a milestone in this Army National Guard recruiting gem. For the first time in the history of Path to Honor, there were more than 10,000 new applicants (10,022 to be exact) in December. This is incredible and is a testament to the strength of this program.



## >> 1-800-GO-GUARD.COM WEB PORTAL

Although still in Beta testing, a select group of recruiters are putting the National Guard Web Portal through the ringer to iron out any kinks with the system. Soon, PTH applicants and RSP Warriors will be able to use this site as an educational tool to support their respective goals and initiatives. The portal will also be a pathway to PTH and allow Soldiers to track G-RAP nominations and Mission Zone initiatives. The National Guard Web Portal is expected to launch later in FY09.



**>> DAVE**

Have you ever seen a cool picture on [www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com](http://www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com), or perhaps in a poster or brochure, and wondered, “Where can I get a copy of that to use myself?” Well, we’ve got the answer to your question: DAVE!

**What is DAVE?** DAVE stands for Digital Asset Virtual Enterprise. Briefly, DAVE is an online repository of digital ARNG marketing assets.

**What are digital ARNG marketing assets?** This includes things such as posters, pictures, movies and videos, logos, patches, etc. Assets are being added all the time.

**What can it do for me?** It will allow you to download these digital marketing assets to use in creating your own customized presentations, handouts, etc.

**Where can I find DAVE?** DAVE is available through your Portal account at the [www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com](http://www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com) Web site. At the home page, click on the SIGN IN button in the upper right corner. At the Army National Guard Web Portal page, enter your email address and password (then click submit). At the Destination page, click on the DAVE icon.

DAVE resources are intended for official use only.



**>> COMING SOON**

Guard presence on Facebook, MySpace and YouTube: With millions of Americans flocking to these Web sites hourly, the Guard sees a golden opportunity to get some exposure and face time with people across the country who might not have heard what the National Guard has to offer. The Guard has started initiatives to create its own sites and break through to a whole new level in recruiting and awareness.

## Rallying Support: USFA and EMI Pledge Support to Soldiers

Courtesy of ESGR

**EMMITSBURG, MD**—Mr. James Rebolz, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) National Chairman, announced that the Honorable Gregory B. Cade, United States Fire Administrator, signed a Statement of Support for the National Guard and Reserve on Dec. 9, 2008. In addition to the signing by Cade, Dr. Cortez Lawrence, Superintendent of the Emergency Management Institute, also signed a Statement of Support.

The United States Fire Administration (USFA) and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) join with thousands of America's public and private employers in pledging:

- \* To fully recognize, honor and enforce the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).
- \* To assure their managers and supervisors will have the tools they need to effectively manage those employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve.
- \* To continually recognize and support our country's service members and their families in peace, in crises and in war.

"This is a significant event not only for the USFA and EMI, but also for all federal and state Department of Public Safety employees. The first responder employment segment is one of the largest employers of National Guardsmen and Reservists in the country," Rebolz said. "I am asking all of America's public employers to reaffirm that their current human resources policies are a leading examples of compliance with Uniformed

Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA)."

"The USFA and EMI join a cadre of Fortune 500 companies, national employer associations, and state and federal agencies in publicly demonstrating support for our armed forces," Rebolz added. "By signing the Statement of Support, Chief Cade and Dr. Lawrence are sending a clear message to Public Safety Departments across the nation to join with the USFA and EMI to ensure that while their employees are serving their country, they do not have to worry about their civilian jobs."

**"...While their employees are serving their country, they do not have to worry."**

>> James Rebolz

As an entity of the Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency, the mission of the USFA is to foster a solid foundation in prevention, preparedness, and response by providing national leadership to local fire and emergency services. When Congress passed P.L. 93-498, the Federal Fire Prevention and Control Act, in 1974; it established the USFA and its National Fire Academy (NFA). Since that time, through data collection, public education, research and training efforts, USFA has helped reduce fire deaths, making our communities and our citizens safer.

"The men and women of America's fire service are known for their unwavering dedication to their



**EMI SUPPORT** ESGR National Chairman James Rebolz and Dr. Cortez Lawrence, Superintendent of the Emergency Management Institute, pose for a photo after Lawrence signed a Statement of Support.

fellow citizens in every community across this nation," said U.S. Fire Administrator Greg Cade. "Among our firefighters, there are a great number who take their dedication to an exceptional level. These special firefighters are dedicated to protecting this nation and our way of life as members of the National Guard and Reserves. These men and women are not only worthy of our admiration,

but also our unwavering support as they accept and carry out their duties as members of their own National Guard and Reserve units."

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 that require extraordinary actions on the part of everyday citizens, ESGR will continue to be the informational agency for the employers of America's citizen warriors. More information about ESGR Employer Outreach Programs and volunteer opportunities is available at [www.ESGR.mil](http://www.ESGR.mil) or by contacting Tom Bullock, Chief, Employer Outreach, of the National ESGR Committee, at 703-696-1386, or email [tom.bullock@osd.mil](mailto:tom.bullock@osd.mil). **GX**

**"This is a significant event not only for the USFA and EMI, but also for all federal and state Department of Public Safety employees."** >> James Rebolz





# Air Assault!

## Fast Ropin' and Chopper Rides

By SFC Ken Suratt

If you missed the back cover of the November issue of *GX*, let me get you up to speed ... AIR ASSAULT IS BACK! The National Guard Bureau-Army Strength Maintenance Division (NGB-ASM) has announced the 2009 ROTC SMP Air Assault course dates. A total of 260 seats have been reserved for ROTC Cadets who want to challenge themselves and attend the intense 11-day training school conducted in June through August. These seats will be reserved for qualified ARNG SMP Cadets on a first come, first served basis.

### Prerequisites

- i. MSIII (Junior) Cadets attending LDAC (Leadership Development

- and Assessment Course) Summer of 2009
2. MS II Cadets GRFD (Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty) and non-GRFD ARNG SMP can participate, with priority to ARNG MS II SMP Cadets
3. MS IV Cadets may attend only after the completion of LDAC
4. Minimum APFT score of 210 (70 points minimum per event. No exceptions to this standard.)
5. Current Army Physical
6. Meet HT/WT requirements IAW AR 600-9.

Air Assault is broken down into three phases:

- Phase 1:** Combat Air Assault Operations
- Phase 2:** Sling Load Operations



### Phase 3: Rappelling

The Air Assault course culminates with Cadets conducting a 12-mile foot march. In next month's *GX*, we will take an in-depth look at all three phases of the Air Assault course and how you can start a training program to successfully complete this school. Contact your State OSM

### Course rotations

(See change of dates as published in November *GX* issue. These are the revised dates.)

Camp Rilea, OR

**1 June-12 June**

Camp Rilea, OR

**15 June-26 June**

Camp Edwards, MA

**10 Aug.-21 Aug.**

FT. Benning, GA

**13 July-24 July**

FT. Benning, GA

**10 Aug.-21 Aug.**



# YOUR RIGHTS UNDER USERRA THE UNIFORMED SERVICES EMPLOYMENT AND REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS ACT

USERRA protects the job rights of individuals who voluntarily or involuntarily leave employment positions to undertake military service or certain types of service in the National Disaster Medical System. USERRA also prohibits employers from discriminating against past and present members of the uniformed services, and applicants to the uniformed services.

## REEMPLOYMENT RIGHTS

You have the right to be reemployed in your civilian job if you leave that job to perform service in the uniformed service and:

- ☆ you ensure that your employer receives advance written or verbal notice of your service;
- ☆ you have five years or less of cumulative service in the uniformed services while with that particular employer;
- ☆ you return to work or apply for reemployment in a timely manner after conclusion of service; and
- ☆ you have not been separated from service with a disqualifying discharge or under other than honorable conditions.

## HEALTH INSURANCE PROTECTION

- ☆ if you leave your job to perform military service, you have the right to elect to continue your existing employer-based health plan coverage for you and your dependents for up to 24 months while in the military.
- ☆ Even if you don't elect to continue coverage during your military service, you have the right to be reinstated in your employer's health plan when you are reemployed, generally without any waiting periods or exclusions (e.g., pre-existing condition exclusions) except for service-connected illnesses or injuries.

If you are eligible to be reemployed, you must be restored to the job and benefits you would have attained if you had not been absent due to military service or, in some cases, a comparable job.

**RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM DISCRIMINATION AND RETALIATION**

If you:

- ☆ are a past or present member of the uniformed service;
- ☆ have applied for membership in the uniformed service; or
- ☆ are obligated to serve in the uniformed service;

then an employer may not deny you:

- ☆ initial employment;
- ☆ reemployment;
- ☆ retention in employment;
- ☆ promotion; or
- ☆ any benefit of employment

because of this status.

In addition, an employer may not retaliate against anyone assisting in the enforcement of USERRA rights, including testifying or making a statement in connection with a proceeding under USERRA, even if that person has no service connection.

☆ The U.S. Department of Labor, Veterans Employment and Training Service (VETS) is authorized to investigate and resolve complaints of USERRA violations.

☆ For assistance in filing a complaint, or for any other information on USERRA, contact VETS at **1-866-4-USA-DOL** or visit its **website at <http://www.dol.gov/vets>**. An interactive online USERRA Advisor can be viewed at **<http://www.dol.gov/elaws/userra.htm>**.

☆ If you file a complaint with VETS and VETS is unable to resolve it, you may request that your case be referred to the Department of Justice or the Office of Special Counsel, as applicable, for representation.

☆ You may also bypass the VETS process and bring a civil action against an employer for violations of USERRA.

The rights listed here may vary depending on the circumstances. The text of this notice was prepared by VETS, and may be viewed on the internet at this address: <http://www.dol.gov/vets/programs/userra/poster.htm>. Federal law requires employers to notify employees of their rights under USERRA, and employers may meet this requirement by displaying the text of this notice where they customarily place notices for employees.



**U.S. Department of Labor**  
**1-866-487-2365**

**U.S. Department of Justice**

**Office of Special Counsel**

**1-800-336-4590**

**WE GOT 'EM** Soldiers from the 278th Regimental Combat Team take down a suspected insurgent while deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom in early 2005.



# “I Volunteer, Sir!”



Since 1774, thanks to the spirit and selfless sacrifice of its Citizen-Soldiers, Tennessee has consistently raised more troops than called for, earning its nickname as the Volunteer State.

*By CPT Darrin Haas,  
Tennessee National Guard Historian*

**In** the 1770s, CPT Evan Shelby and his company of 49 militiamen from the Watauga settlement (Tennessee’s present-day Sullivan and Carter counties) were ready for war. Attacks from Shawnee tribes along the Virginia frontier were increasing, and colonial settlers had begun fighting back. Most had combat experience from fighting in the French and Indian War or along the western frontier. Lord Dunmore, Royal Governor of Virginia, had ordered four regiments of militia and volunteers to be organized to “pacify the hostile Indian war bands.” CPT Shelby immediately assembled Watauga’s

first volunteer company, and on Aug. 17, 1774, they marched from their homes to join the massing Virginia regiments—marking the first time “Tennesseans” deployed for war as a militia.

Within weeks, Shelby and his company were integrated into Dunmore’s Army and camped along the Ohio River in Virginia. Early that morning, two of Shelby’s men discovered and fired upon a hostile native force advancing on their camp. The Battle of Point Pleasant had begun. By day’s end, the Tennesseans had defeated the natives and won the most vital engagement of Dunmore’s War—and exhibited what would become Tennessee’s now legendary volunteer tradition.

SSG RUSSELL KLIKA



## Volunteers for the War of Independence

For the next few years, the militia was called for the occasional skirmish with British soldiers leading up to America's War for Independence. The region had been annexed by North Carolina, and by 1780, volunteers from two newly-created counties were asked to provide 100 men each to augment a 2,000-man campaign into South Carolina.

Instead of 200 men, 400 answered the call. Under COL John Sevier and COL Isaac Shelby (the son of the Watauga militia's founder), the militiamen engaged in numerous actions against British troops commanded by MAJ Patrick Ferguson. Ferguson had threatened to "March his army over the mountains, hang their leaders and lay their country waste with fire and sword."

In September, 480 Tennesseans led by Shelby and Sevier assembled with other colonial militiamen at Sycamore Shoals, near Elizabethton. These "Overmountain Men" attacked Ferguson's Corps, which was protecting the left flank of Lord Charles Cornwallis' army. The British force was defeated, and Ferguson was shot and killed by Sevier's

troops. Known as the Battle of King's Mountain, it was the turning point against Britain's southern campaign. It also created a distinct regional identity for Tennesseans.

## A New State

Following American independence, North Carolina ceded the territory that is now Tennessee to the federal government. Territorial governor William Blount organized a militia of 14 infantry companies and a cavalry troop to protect settlers from tribal attacks. Following John Sevier's 1794 Nickajack expedition, the militiamen had secured the territory. And on June 1, 1796, Tennessee became the 16th state, and the Tennessee Militia was officially born.

As settlers continued pushing west and south through the state, tribal hostilities resumed. COL Andrew Jackson of the Tennessee Militia—and later the 7th President of the United States—maintained the militia and often engaged hostile Creek warriors along the state's borders. But by 1811, Jackson's men were primed for another kind of battle.

## "Old Hickory" and The War of 1812

When the federal government declared war with Great Britain, the southeast was of strategic importance. In the fall of 1812, Tennessee was asked to send 1,500 Soldiers to help defend New Orleans. Jackson assembled more than 2,000 volunteers and marched to Natchez, MS. But after a few weeks, Jackson's Tennessee forces were dismissed. Many Soldiers were sick and in need of food, supplies and medicine. Determined to get his troops home, Jackson acquired provisions at his own expense and sent his mounted Soldiers toward Nashville. Giving his own horse to the sick, he trudged the 450 miles home with his foot-Soldiers, earning their respect and his nickname, "Old Hickory."

However, the Tennesseans would not be home for long. In August, Creek warriors, known as "Red

By 1780, Tennesseans saw their first major action against the British.



Sticks," attacked and massacred more than 400 settlers near Mobile, AL. Outraged, the Tennessee General Assembly immediately authorized the governor to raise 3,500 militiamen to respond.

Jackson wrote an impassioned call to his "Brave Tennesseans" to avenge "The blood of our fellow-citizens!" Within days, militiamen from across the state enthusiastically answered, and within weeks, 5,000 Tennesseans (including famous Tennesseans like PVT David Crockett and LT Sam Houston) attacked Creek Territory.

The fighting was severe, but the Creeks were defeated at numerous battles. At Horseshoe Bend, Jackson and his army defeated roughly 900 Creek warriors while suffering the loss of only 47 Soldiers. The battle would break the back of the Creek resistance and force their surrender. This first major victory of the War of 1812 propelled Jackson to national prominence and a promotion to major general in the U.S. Army.

Next, Jackson and his army secured Mobile and drove the British out of Pensacola, FL. Then they hurriedly marched to New Orleans and joined forces with other Soldiers and volunteers from across the South to defend the city. On Jan. 8, 1815, Jackson's troops defeated a veteran British army at the Battle of New Orleans.

The Tennesseans returned home from the War of 1812 as heroes. The sheer numbers of volunteers and their victories against both Creek and British forces set a precedent that would help earn the "Volunteer State" its nickname.

## Living Up to the Name

While many Tennesseans continued the volunteer tradition, serving in the First and Second Seminole Wars, Veterans David Crockett and Sam



### OLD HICKORY

SFC Joel Gibbons, Cavalry Scout platoon sergeant, 1st Squadron, 278th Regimental Combat Team, Task Force Liberty, stands guard while an Iraqi child passes information on a weapons cache found near the Iranian border to the unit commander, CPT James Hite.

Houston were forging careers—and legends—through the military. Crockett became Lieutenant Colonel of the 57th Militia Regiment and was elected to Congress. Sam Houston became the adjutant general for Tennessee and would be elected the governor of Tennessee, and later, Texas.

These two Tennesseans, and many others, carved their names in history helping Texas achieve independence. Crockett and his band of Tennessee Mounted Volunteers died defending the Alamo in 1836, and soon afterward, Houston was appointed commander-in-chief of the Texan Army when Texas independence was declared.

In 1846, when war with Mexico broke out, President James K. Polk (a Tennessean) put out a nationwide call for volunteers. Tennessee Governor Aaron Brown issued a call for two infantry and one cavalry regiment—a total of 2,400 men. Instead, 30,000 Tennesseans offered their services, with some towns forming entire companies on the spot. Recruits tried to purchase slots in militia companies to ensure that they would be able to join in the fight. A lottery was established to select men for the newly formed 1st and 2nd Tennessee Infantry Regiments and the accompanying cavalry regiment.

## The Civil War

The militia saw little action during the 1850s. However, in 1861, the “War Between the States” broke out. Tennessee was divided over the

**The 30th Infantry Division broke through the Siegfried Line with the 117th Infantry to become the first unit in the entire XIX Corps to capture its objectives.**



**PROUD LEADER** CPT Frank Tims, commander of Battery B, 196th Field Artillery Battalion, accepts a citation for his unit in 1951. The battalion earned three Presidential Unit Citations during its tour in Korea.

secession issue, but in response to the governor’s request for volunteers, men around the state rapidly organized into companies and regiments. On June 8, Tennessee voted to secede from the union—the last state to do so. And by July, the militiamen of the Provincial Army of Tennessee transferred the “largest and best organized Southern force” to the Confederate government.

Throughout the Civil War, Tennesseans served on both sides, with more than 120,000 Soldiers fighting for the Confederacy, and more than 31,000 for the Union (more than all other Confederate states combined). Tennessee was often referred to as the “Shield of the South,” with more than 1,000 battles or actions taking place within the state, second only to Virginia.

During post-war reconstruction, Tennessee was the first Southern state admitted back into the Union, as it was the first to ratify the 14th Amendment and only seceded state to voluntarily abolish slavery in 1865. Congress had abolished state militias in all former Confederate states—except Tennessee, whose militia was mobilized to monitor election sites against possible Ku Klux Klan actions. The state also created their first 12 African-American militia companies.

## The Birth of the Tennessee National Guard

In 1887, the Tennessee National Guard was established. The state created Tennessee’s First Brigade, with three infantry regiments: one from East, Middle and West Tennessee, the three grand divisions of the state. It also organized the First Regiment of Artillery and maintained the 12 African-American companies. The Guard was called out in 1891-1892 for the Coal Creek War, a vicious fight with miners from East Tennessee over the use of convict labor.

During the Spanish-American War in 1898, Tennessee again was among the first states to offer her full quota of Soldiers. All equipped units were mobilized, and four regiments were created. More than 4,300 Tennesseans volunteered for service, including 17 who fought with Teddy Roosevelt’s Rough Riders.

The 4th Tennessee deployed to Cuba, while Soldiers of the 1st Tennessee deployed to the

Philippines as reinforcements. When the War Department formed regular Army regiments to replace the state units, more than 300 1st Tennessee troops re-enlisted with the new 37th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiment, fighting in the Philippines until 1901. The 1st Tennessee was one of the most honored volunteer regiments and was the last to leave federal service.

## WWI Service

Nearly every Tennessee Guard unit had been deployed for service along the Mexican border in 1916, with the last of them returning only two weeks before America’s entry into WWI in April 1917. But within six days of the declaration of war, Guard units were again placed on active duty.

After learning that the Army was desperate for artillery units, Tennessee Senator Luke Lea began recruiting across the state. His intent was to raise an all-volunteer regiment similar to the Rough Riders. It took only a few weeks before he had more men than needed.

Lea offered the unit to the Guard, and on July 25, 1917, the regiment formally became the First Tennessee Field Artillery. And when President Woodrow Wilson drafted all Guard units into the federal Army, Lea got to take his all-volunteer regiment to war.

All Tennessee units were federalized, and most became part of the newly created 30th Infantry Division (ID). Tennessee units organized into the 117th Infantry, 115th Artillery and 114th Machine Gun Battalion. The Soldiers nicknamed the 30th “Old Hickory” in honor of Andrew Jackson. Lea’s regiment became the 114th Field Artillery Regiment.

## The “Old Hickory” Division

During the war, the 30th ID earned fame as the first unit to break the famed Hindenburg Line, and fought valiantly in every major battle of the war, suffering more than 8,400 casualties. Twelve Guard Soldiers (five from Tennessee) received Medals of Honor, more than any other division.

During the war, the 30th served in Europe with distinction, coming ashore at Normandy just six days after D-day, and fighting heroically through

**1829**

Andrew Jackson, 7th President, joined the South Carolina militia at age 13 to fight against the British. Later, in the Tennessee militia he rose to the rank of major general.

**1845**

James Polk, the 11th President, was appointed a captain in the Tennessee militia in 1821. By 1824, he had been promoted to major, but soon resigned to serve in Congress.

**1846**

During the Mexican War, so many men wanted to enlist in the 1st Tennessee Infantry that the state gained its nickname, “The Volunteer State.”

**1917-1918**

During WWI, most units were part of the 30th Infantry Division, which fought in France. Five Tennessee Guard members earned the Medal of Honor.

**1941-1945**

The 30th Infantry Division helped stop the German assault during the Battle of the Bulge.

France. At Saint Barthelmy, the 117th Infantry defended against Hitler's 1st SS Panzer Division, preventing the Germans from driving to the sea at Avranches. The regiment received two presidential unit citations (PUC) and even earned the enemy's respect. Top German generals later said this was one of two critical engagements that led to the defeat of the Nazis in the west.

Regarded by the German High Command as "Roosevelt's Shock Troops," the 30th ID, with the 117th Infantry, became the first unit in the entire XIX Corps to capture its objectives. It earned three more PUCs for the attack and capture of Aachen. And again, it defeated Hitler's 1st SS Panzer Division at Stavelot, Belgium, during the Battle of the Bulge.

Tennessee's 117th Infantry Regiment received five PUCs by the end of the war, making it one of the most decorated Army Infantry regiments.

After spectacular service in WWII, the Soldiers of Tennessee were called again for the Korean War. Tennessee mobilized 11 units, with the largest—the 278th Regimental Combat Team—remaining stateside guarding installations. But many Tennessee Guard Soldiers volunteered for combat deploying with active duty units. The 196th Field Artillery Battalion received a PUC for helping repulse the massive 1951 Chinese invasion.

## The "Volunteers" Division

In 1954, Tennessee organized the 30th Armored "Volunteers" Division. It would be the primary unit in the state until 1973, and one of its most celebrated. During its lifetime, the "Volunteers" stepped up often in state service from enforcing school integration laws in Clinton, TN, in 1956, to quelling riots in Memphis and Nashville following the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

While no units from Tennessee were mobilized for Vietnam, hundreds of Guard members volunteered to serve with the active army. One Soldier, MAJ Homer Pease from Johnson City, personified Tennessee's volunteer spirit during the Vietnam War. A Soldier with two Bronze Stars and two Purple Hearts from WWII, he volunteered to go to Vietnam where he was awarded the Silver Star and a third Purple Heart.

## "The Volunteers are here!"

During the 1970s, Guard members responded to numerous state missions. Military policemen responded to a 1975 inmate revolt at the Tennessee State Penitentiary and helped hunt down and capture four fugitives who escaped from Fort Pillow State Prison in 1984.

In 1991, more than 3,600 Tennessee Soldiers responded to the call for Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. When the troops from Tennessee arrived in Saudi Arabia, MAJ Bill Preston overheard one Soldier declare, "Tell them the Volunteers are here!"



**FORWARD MARCH** Soldiers of the 130th Military Police Company practice quelling riots at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center, IN, in 2007.



**ROAD TO IRAQ** Soldiers of Tennessee's 212th Engineer Company display pride in helping achieve quick victory over the Iraqi army during Desert Storm in 1991.

The 196th Field Artillery Brigade (including the 1st Battalion, 181st Field Artillery) was one of only two Army Guard combat units to see actual combat. Tennessee's 212th Engineer Company, attached to the 101st Airborne Division, broke through the border berm into enemy territory, building a six-lane road. The unit traversed 6 miles before the ground war began, becoming the first unit of the division into Iraq and one of the first U.S. units to breach the Iraqi defensive zones.

## Volunteering to Protect Americans

During the 1990s, the Tennessee National Guard responded to numerous natural disasters, including snowstorms, tornadoes and hurricanes. They provided security at the Ocoee River during the 1996 Olympics. And after 9/11, when the world stood still, the Tennessee National Guard didn't. Soldiers immediately secured local armories, patrolled the state capitol and secured six major airports throughout the state. The 268th Military Police Company secured the Milan Ammunition Plant as well as other sensitive sites.

## From Iraq to New Orleans

In March 2003, Tennesseans were some of the first units to cross into Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 730th Quartermaster Company fought alongside the forward elements of the 3rd Infantry Division and were at Saddam International Airport during the fall of Baghdad. The 267th Military Police Company and C Company, 46th Engineer Battalion, forged ahead in the first days of the war to establish Camp Bucca, the theater internment facility. Many other Tennessee units would follow, including almost 4,000 troops of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment—the largest single mobilization of Tennessee Soldiers since WWII.

At home, 1,200 Tennessee Guard members responded in the first days of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, providing humanitarian relief in Mississippi and Louisiana. Tennesseans were also involved in Hurricanes Rita and Gustav, securing damaged areas, providing humanitarian assistance and conducting rescue operations. Tennessee was also one of the first states to help secure the southwest U.S. border during Operation Jump Start.

At the close of December 2008, more than 14,000 Tennessee National Guard members had deployed in support of the War on Terror. This included some units alerted for their second deployment, and many Tennessee Guard Soldiers who volunteered for second, third and even fourth deployments.

Since the first muster of CPT Shelby and his volunteers in 1774, Tennesseans have always demonstrated their volunteer spirit through their actions by deploying wherever and whenever they are needed. Whether deploying overseas or domestically, rest assured, the Tennessee National Guard will be there. **GX**



For more on the Tennessee National Guard, go to [www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/TN](http://www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/TN).



the 'Ask the Dietitian' forum, which provides nutrition guidance that customers can use when shopping in the commissaries."

(For more information, visit the DeCA Web site's Dietitian section at Commissaries.com.)

"I also encourage shopping at the commissary for the high-quality produce, lean meats and the significant cost savings," Hawkins

**"Your body is like a car—you wouldn't put cheap gasoline into a Ferrari and then expect peak performance."**

>> LTC Karen Hawkins

# Bringing the Benefit to You

BETTER NUTRITION, BETTER HEALTH

By Patrice Mauck-Messer

When you think about the stereotypical, garden-variety nutritionist, you probably wouldn't visualize Karen Hawkins—because she's a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve. She's also a popular columnist for DeCA, the Defense Commissary Agency; a young single mother to Ryan and Justin, her two teenage boys; and an avid athlete, logging up to 100 miles every weekend cycling throughout Virginia.

In the past year, Hawkins has become passionately involved in the unique nutritional challenges

innate to the lifestyle and experiences of the Guard Soldier and family.

According to some sources, as many as 50 percent of Guard Soldiers may be overweight. This seems hard to believe, but according to Hawkins, a 2005 Department of Defense survey shows increases in overweight Soldiers over the past 10 years. The number of military personnel classified as overweight has increased steadily, from 48.6 percent in 1995 to 57.9 percent in 2005. This correlates with the overweight trend in the civilian population.

As rising numbers continue inching up, the food environment,

including policies affecting health promotion, food availability and education, needs to be addressed. Military members need new policies and programs that involve, inform and educate them on how to make healthy choices.

"I believe in teaching people how to make informed choices that meet their personal dietary needs, whether they're trying to make healthy food choices, lose weight, manage health issues or feed their families," Hawkins says. "Making smart choices is so important to good health and also helps with disease prevention and management. This focus is reflected in

continues. "For example, a family of four can save up to \$3,000 a year by shopping at the commissary instead of local grocery stores."

Many Soldiers and their families live under a very high level of stress due to deployments. "This situation can be counteracted to some extent by eating regularly scheduled and balanced meals," Hawkins says. For example, she recommends foods high in omega-3 fatty acids, such as cold-water fish like salmon, trout and mackerel, plus walnuts, canola oil, and ground flaxseed.

"Through our new Bringing the Benefit to You campaign, we are reaching out to our Guard and Reserve members who have earned the commissary benefit, but who cannot easily travel to a commissary to shop on a regular basis. Bringing the Benefit to You includes taking pieces of the commissary to Guard and Reserve units through onsite truckload case-lot sales."

The Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) is a major concern for



today's Guard Soldier. "You know how much you are allowed to weigh for your age group according to the military standards six months before you take the APFT," Hawkins

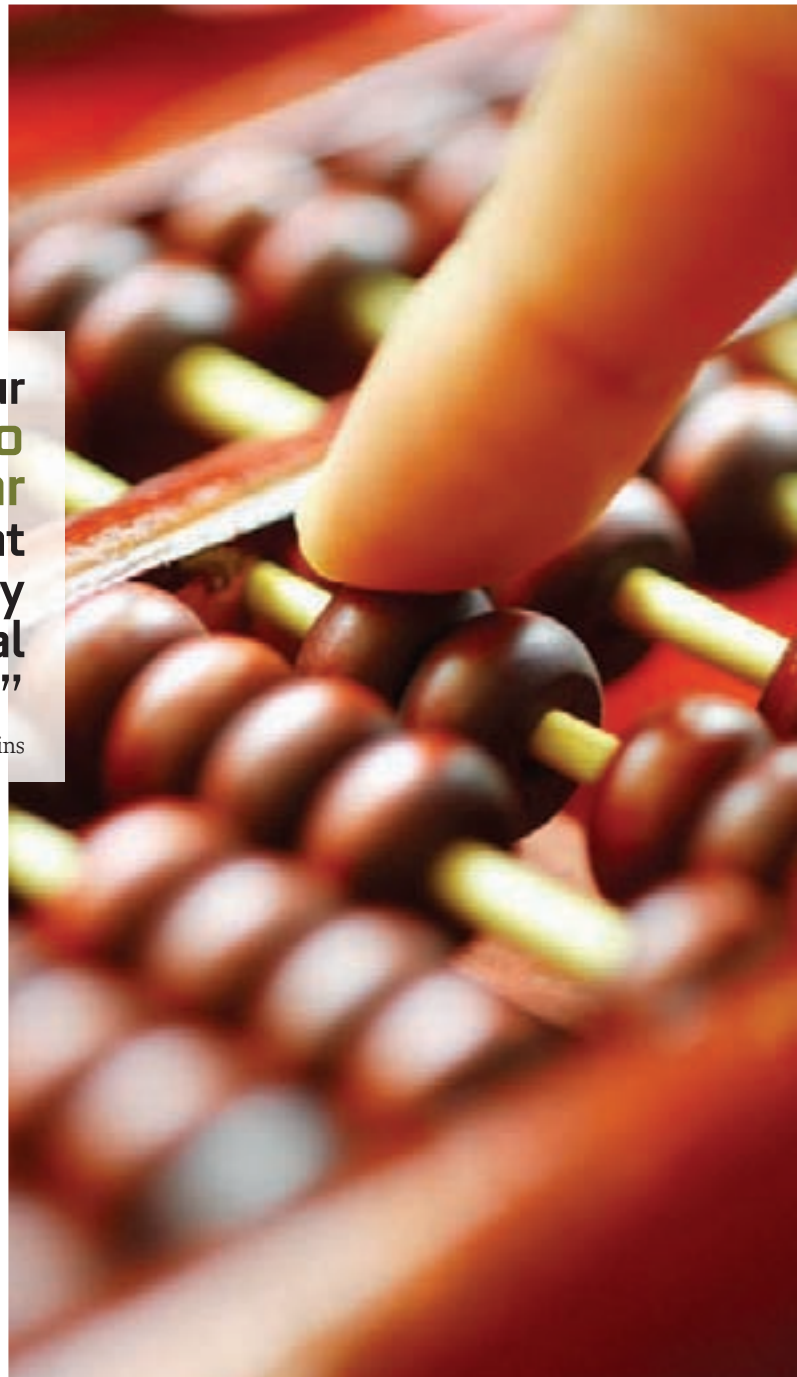
management tracking tool located at DecadeOfHealth.com. A key message of the campaign is understanding and living by the "calorie equation"—maintaining weight

The ARNG Decade of Health Alliance with the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association has been extremely successful and was the first such coalition within the Department of Defense. As DeCA prepares to join that alliance as a full partner, Hawkins feels that her organization has much to offer in this collaborative effort.

"DeCA can give recognition to the foods that the ARNG Decade of Health and the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association recommend for Soldier and family nutrition, and it can

also provide support as a primary nutrition leader in America," Hawkins notes.

"If there is one important message that I can offer to all ARNG Soldiers about nutrition, it is that the healthier the choices you make, the healthier you'll be in your life," she continued. "Your body is like a car—you wouldn't put cheap gasoline into a Ferrari and then expect peak performance. Similarly, if you put low-grade food into your body, it won't function as well and may eventually break down. Ultimately, it is your decision—do you want to ride in a Ferrari or a clunker?" **GX**



explains, "so you can manage your weight prior to the weigh-in through healthy eating. If you need to lose weight, it is a lot easier to do it over a six-month period than during the weeks before a weigh-in.

"A practical step to take is to keep a food diary, writing down everything you eat and drink for a few days. Many of us do not pay attention to how much we really eat and drink, so keeping a record is a good way to track it. Also, to ensure weight loss, control portion sizes, eat lean protein and more fruits and vegetables, drink water, and be physically active every day for 30–60 minutes."

Hawkins added that one of the most effective tools for weight management is the Army National Guard Decade of Health 2008 Campaign, Lighten Up!, which uses interactive community-building features to engage Soldiers and their families in the battle of the bulge.

One of the most exciting elements of the ARNG Lighten Up! Campaign for healthy weight management is a free online weight

**"A family of four  
can save up to  
\$3,000 a year  
by shopping at  
the commissary  
instead of local  
grocery stores."**

>> LTC Karen Hawkins

means burning as many calories as you take in; losing weight means burning MORE calories than you consume. Make sure everyone in the family checks out the great news and resources in the ARNG Lighten Up! section of the Decade of Health Web site.

"There is also a useful tool that one can access with a password on the Military OneSource Web site," Hawkins says. "The Healthy Habits Coaching Program has the 'I Can Change,' 'I Can Thrive' and 'I Can Relax' programs located at MilitaryOneSource.com."

# Make Preparedness a Family Mission.

All Families are invited to join the ARNG Decade of Health community at [www.decadeofhealth.com](http://www.decadeofhealth.com) during the 2009 launch of a Family-focused campaign, ARNG Ready and Resilient.©



**ARNG**  
Ready & Resilient©

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

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





\*Want more money management tips? Visit [USA.com](http://USA.com).

# Weather the Market

MAKING YOUR \$\$ COUNT WITH DOLLAR COST AVERAGING



Courtesy of USAA

If you want to invest regularly, regardless of market conditions, consider using an investment strategy called dollar cost averaging. While the name may seem daunting, it is a simple concept.

Dollar cost averaging means you invest the same dollar amount at regular intervals over time. Simply put, you invest the same amount of money at the same time each week or month. By consistently following this strategy, you may be able to reduce the impact of market fluctuations on your investment portfolio.

**How It Works:** For example, let's say that you decide to invest \$100 each month toward your child's college education in a 529 College Savings Plan. As the illustration at right shows, you automatically buy more shares when prices are low and fewer shares when prices are high.

**Dollar Cost Averaging:** When you add to your portfolio on a regular basis, the average cost of the shares you buy is lower.

**Average you paid:** \$6.67 per share  
**Average share price:** \$7.50 per share

Your regular monthly investment of \$100 bought more shares when the price was low and fewer shares when the price was high. The result? The average cost of the shares you purchased is less than the average market price per share over the period.

**Automatic Dollar Cost Averaging:** If you think dollar cost averaging is

the right strategy for you, start investing now. The longer you have to ride out the ups and downs of the market, the more opportunity you have to potentially grow your investment portfolio and reach your long-term goals.

Consider the investment objectives, risks, charges and expenses of the USAA mutual funds carefully before investing. Contact us at (800) 531-8910 for a prospectus containing this and other information about the funds from USAA Investment Management Company, Distributor. Read it carefully before investing. **GX**

## Dollar Cost Averaging

Month	Amount Invested	Price Per Share	Shares Purchased
January	\$100	\$10	10
February	\$100	\$5	20
March	\$100	\$10	10
April	\$100	\$5	20
<b>Total: \$</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>\$30</b>	<b>60</b>

*Note: This hypothetical example is for illustrative purposes only and does not represent the performance of any particular investment. Actual results will vary.*

GETTY IMAGES

# Unraveling the Mystery of College Accreditation

By Johanna Altland



Before enrolling in a college or university, and definitely before giving them any money, it is important that you ensure the school is accredited by a legitimate accrediting agency.

**Accreditation is so important** because it indicates that a school is reputable and has met certain quality standards. It is like a stamp of approval.

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

## What is accreditation?

Accreditation is a voluntary process that an institution undertakes in order to be recognized publicly for its performance, integrity and quality. Basically, it is a guarantee to you, the student, that you are receiving a quality education and a degree that will be recognized by your employer.

The accreditation process can sometimes take years for a school to complete and requires a visit from the accrediting agency's evaluation committee (typically comprised of peers within the education field) to examine an institution's goals, operations and achievements. The committee then provides the institution with the suggestions, recommendations and judgments of the accrediting body.

Because accreditation is reviewed periodically, as often as every five years for some schools, institutions are encouraged to continuously monitor themselves and focus on areas of improvement.

## Who are the approved accrediting agencies?

Because there are a variety of accrediting organizations, including some that aren't legitimate, you should look for a school that has been accredited by agencies that are recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) (Ed.gov) and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). (Chea.org).

## How do I know if a school is accredited?

One way to tell if a school is accredited is to call and ask who it is accredited by or check its Web site. Most schools will have a Web page full of information devoted to their accreditation and licensure. Then, do your homework. Find out if the accrediting body is recognized by the ED.

Another way is to search the Department of Education's Institution Accreditation Database (Ope.ed.gov/Accreditation/Search.asp). With this database, you can search by institution name, agency, geographic region, state or type of institution.

## What is the difference between institutional accreditation and specialized or programmatic accreditation?

Institutional accreditation applies to an institution as a whole, meaning that all aspects of the organization have been reviewed from the faculty to the admissions process to the coursework. For example, Grantham University is accredited by the Accrediting Commission of the Distance Education and Training Council (DETC), Detc.org.

Specialized or programmatic accreditation normally applies to specific programs or departments within an institution. For example, a university's engineering program may be accredited by the Accreditation Board for Engineering and Technology (ABET), while the school as a whole could be accredited by an institutional accrediting agency.

## Are all state-approved colleges accredited?

Not necessarily. State approval assures that colleges and universities have satisfied certain requirements established by the state in order to grant degrees. State approval is separate from accreditation by an approved accrediting body.

## Will a school's accreditation status affect my ability to get a job after college?

Many employers will investigate the accreditation status of the institution that awarded your degree. If your school isn't accredited, your employer may decide that your degree isn't valid. To ensure that your degree and the hard work you put into earning it is valued in the eyes of your future employer, do your research and be sure that your school is accredited.

As you can see, accreditation plays an important role in higher education. Not only does it keep institutions accountable, it holds them to high standards while letting you know that you are earning your degree from a reputable organization.

## How to spot a diploma mill

Because of recent news coverage, the subject of diploma mills is on a lot of people's minds, particularly those who are in the process of choosing a school to earn their college degree. In July, a list of names of hundreds of people working in the military, government and education sectors who spent over \$7 million buying phony high school and college degrees from a Spokane, WA, diploma mill was published in a story that received nationwide attention.



A diploma mill is "an unaccredited institution of higher education that grants degrees without ensuring that students are properly qualified," according to the American Heritage Dictionary. This is not to say that every school that isn't accredited is a diploma mill, but there are definite "red flags" to watch out for, such as:

**The Slogan "Get a Degree for Your Experience":** Many of us have seen this e-mail pop into our inbox from time to time, and it is a tell-tale sign of a diploma mill. Sure, getting a degree without having to do the work sounds tempting, but it could get you into a lot of trouble. There are many institutions that give some college credit for work or life experience, and this is a legitimate practice. But, beware of those who want to award you an entire degree based on life experience or on a resumé review.

**The Look of the Institution's Web site:** Granted, there are many diploma mills in existence that have very professional, well thought-out Web sites, but one sign of a diploma mill is an institution whose Web site looks cheap and thrown together. Also, check to see if the Web site has information on the school's mission, degree programs, course requirements, library resources and a school catalog. All of these are items that

you would expect to see on a legitimate school Web site.

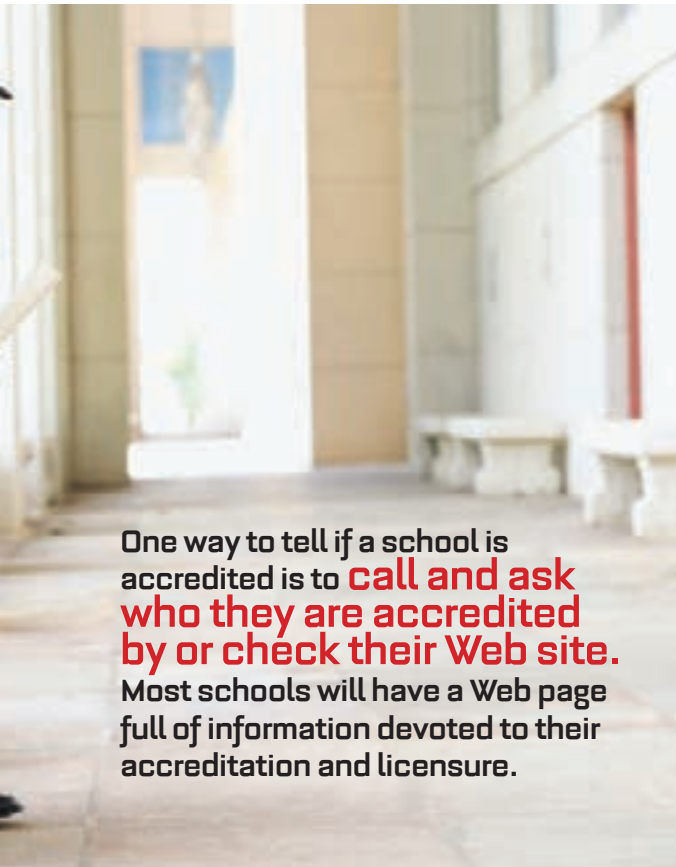
**No Contact Information:** Schools that want you to enroll with them will go out of their way to provide you with several ways to contact them. A reputable school will make their address and phone number available to you on its Web site. Some diploma mills will only interact with you through their Web site, and the phone number they list will have a recording instructing you to leave your name and phone number even during normal business hours.

**No Faculty or Staff Information:** Reputable schools are proud of their faculty and staff and are more than willing to showcase them on their Web site. You should be suspicious of schools that don't list any names; they might be hiding the fact that they don't have any faculty.

**A Flat Fee Degree:** If a school wants to charge you one lump sum for a degree that will require little to no coursework, this is a sign that they might not be very credible. Genuine institutions will charge you by the course, credit hour or semester, and you will be held accountable for your work.

**Similar Name:** Be very leery of a school whose name sounds strikingly familiar to that of a well-known, accredited institution. For example, the names Hamilton University, Berkeley Professional University and American West University may seem familiar at first glance, but these are all diploma mills whose names are eerily similar to respectable institutions of higher learning like Hamilton College, University of California–Berkeley, and American University.

While there are many tell-tale signs of a diploma mill, the best thing you can do is your homework. Research the school, ask questions and use the Internet as a resource. For a list of schools and accrediting agencies recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, visit: [Ope.ed.gov/Accreditation/Search.asp](http://Ope.ed.gov/Accreditation/Search.asp). Also, Wikipedia.com has a list of unaccredited institutions of higher learning, as well as a list of unrecognized accreditation associations of higher learning. **GX**



**One way to tell if a school is accredited is to call and ask who they are accredited by or check their Web site. Most schools will have a Web page full of information devoted to their accreditation and licensure.**



## Accrediting Agencies

Most accrediting bodies fall into three major categories: national, regional and specialized/professional. Below is a list of the most commonly recognized accrediting agencies:

- \* Distance Education and Training Council
- \* Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
- \* New England Association of Schools and Colleges
- \* North Central Association of Colleges and Schools
- \* Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
- \* Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
- \* Western Association of Schools and Colleges

Please note that the list above is not comprehensive. For a complete list of accrediting agencies recognized by ED, please visit: [Ope.ed.gov/Accreditation/Search.asp](http://Ope.ed.gov/Accreditation/Search.asp).

# Riding the Bullet Train

Guard Athletes Race Toward  
Bobsled Gold



**TURN FOR THE BETTER**  
SGT Mike Kohn pilots his two-man bobsled into the belly of turn 12.

*I stood on the top of the Olympic Park bobsled track in Park City, UT, on a bright, sunny November morning, preparing to photograph the Team USA women's bobsled team. They were about to make a run down this historic track—the site of the 2002 Winter Olympics. This weekend kicked off the season's America's Cup international race.*

Story and photos by SFC Clint Wood

One of the drivers was more than just another Olympic bobsledding hopeful. SGT Shauna Rohbock is one of the Army National Guard Soldiers in the elite National Guard Outstanding Athlete Program (NGOAP). To participate in this program, Soldiers must maintain a high national ranking in their specific sport. Rohbock and her brakeman, Valerie Fleming, were selected to the World Cup Team—one step away from the Olympics.

I was there to catch up with all five of the Guard bobsledders and to get a look inside the bobsledding world. I spent two days getting to know SGT Rohbock, SGTs Mike Kohn, William Tavares and Jeremy White, and PFC John Napier.

All five are world-class athletes. Like Rohbock, Kohn and White are in the NGOAP program. Tavares and Napier belong to the prestigious U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program (WCAP). Like the NGOAP, the WCAP has stringent eligibility requirements, and only the toughest get—and stay—in.

Rohbock's, Kohn's and Tavares' resumes read like a "Who's Who" of bobsledding. Rohbock was a brakeman for the women's bobsled team that earned a silver medal in the 2006 Winter Olympics in Torino, Italy. Kohn, who at 18 became the youngest competitor in the 1991 Olympic Trials in Lake Placid, was a brakeman for the four-man bobsled team that won a bronze medal in the 2002 Winter Olympics in Utah.

Tavares, the team's assistant coach, is a three-time Olympian who competed in luge in the 1992 Olympics. He also coached Utah Guard member Jill Bakken and her brakeman to a gold medal in the 2002 Olympics.

Twenty-one-year-old Napier has been bobsledding since he was 8, and he cut his teeth on the notoriously challenging track at Lake Placid, NY. Lake Placid has 20 curves—Olympic Park has 15.


White was the first person in U.S. history to compete in three different events for the same Olympics—speed skating, bobsledding and skeleton (an insane sport where athletes pilot a one-man sled in a prone position on bobsled tracks). He is also the newest Soldier on the NGOAP bobsled team.

### **For Love of the Game**

It's clear these athletes love this sport. They spend endless hours preparing and get their bodies pummeled—all for a run that takes less than a minute.

"Ninety-nine percent of the sport for us is off the ice," remarked Kohn, who got into bobsledding in high school. He cited sanding the runners to a smooth polish and adjusting the sled's setup as examples of their off-ice commitment.

Rohbock, who got her start at Brigham Young University, quipped, "If you want your fingernails to be perfect, you're in the wrong sport, because they're constantly black, ugly



**FOR THOSE  
BRIEF SECONDS,  
YOU FOCUS  
EVERYTHING  
YOU'RE FEELING  
INTO THAT ONE  
MOMENT."**

>> SGT Jeremy White on getting into the sled

and dirty." But bobsledding isn't just dirty—it's hard and risky. So why do they do it? "Because it's fun! We're crazy! We love it!" Rohbock exclaimed.

Her first run, though, was anything but fun. "It was like getting shoved into a garbage can and rolled down a hill," Rohbock recalled. "It looks smooth on TV, and everyone thinks we're just sitting there and having fun when we get to the bottom. But it's actually pretty rough."



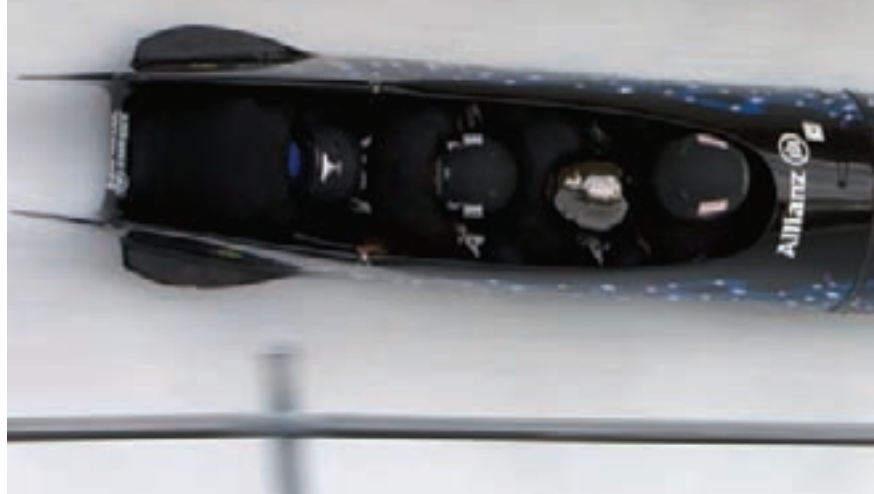
**PUSH START** PFC John Napier, right, glances up for a second as his team pushes his bobsled at the start. A team has 60 seconds to push its sled from the start to the first timer, which is 15 meters away.

**FAST SHOES** Each bobsledder wears these special shoes with spikes that are arranged like a brush. The top of the spikes may not be thicker than 1 mm, spikes may not be longer than 4 mm, and they may not be arranged further than 3 mm from each other.



IT WAS LIKE  
GETTING  
SHOVED INTO A  
GARBAGE CAN  
AND ROLLED  
DOWN A HILL.”

>> SGT Shauna Rohbock on the first time she ever bobsledded





## Citizen-Soldier-Bobsledder

For serious competing athletes who also want to serve in the military, the Army National Guard is a no-brainer. The part-time nature of service in the Guard leaves them plenty of time for training.

As Rohbock pointed out, the NGOAP offers Soldiers opportunities that most non-military athletes don't get.

Kohn, who had always wanted to join the military because his father was in the Army, agreed. The elder Kohn spent 27 years in the active Army and reserve and was a Green Beret.

"I knew I couldn't [both] bobsled and be in the active Army," Kohn explained, "so the National Guard worked out well. It allowed me to be a Soldier and an athlete at the same time."

## Feeling the Pinch

Imagine someone 6 feet tall squeezing into an area only a little larger than the cockpit of an Indy car. Now picture them doing it while the sled is being pushed down an icy hill and maneuvering their feet around a protruding steering mechanism. At 5'11", I had a hard time doing it, and my practice bobsled was sitting still in a parking lot.

The last step into the sled can spell disaster for the driver. The 6'1", 215-pound

Kohn once jumped in and accidentally kicked the steering mechanism loose.

"I'm telling you, it's a funny feeling to jump in the sled going into turn one, look down and see your steering [mechanism] by your feet—where you can't reach it," he explained, adding that loading into a sled is a precision job.

So getting in isn't easy. But these Soldiers explained that you get used to it, and after a while, you don't think much about it.

## The Adrenaline Rush

A run starts on the hilltop, but the official time doesn't start until 15 meters down the hill. This means the teams have that much distance to gain momentum, and 60 seconds to get to the first timer. A bell and green light signals the start of the run.

In less than six seconds, the team rounds the first turn, about 50 meters away.

As a pusher, White said the start is a big rush for him. He is smaller than normal bobsled athletes, standing 5'10" and weighing about 198 pounds. The average male bobsled athlete is about 6 feet and 200 pounds. Waiting to start at the top of the hill, his adrenaline is pumping.

"For those brief seconds, you focus everything you're feeling into that one moment," he stated. "You're working as a team, so you're all relying on each other [to get] in the sled right and get it accelerated."

Kohn pointed out that everyone is physically tired after pushing the sled the first 50 meters. Then, for the best aerodynamics, everyone but the driver puts their head down—making it hard to catch their breath.

"It's a pretty uncomfortable position," Kohn said.

According to Rohbock, flexibility is key to maneuvering the sled. She described going down the icy chute like "a 500-pound lineman jumping on your back."

"The g-force hits you so hard—you're just like, 'Aaaaah!'" she laughed.

The g-force, of course, relates to the earth's gravity, and is the force that determines how much we weigh. For example, 5 Gs equal a force five times that athlete's weight.

So once they round the first turn, what happens? Kohn had a difficult time explaining the experience. "I want to say it's like a roller coaster, but it's not

because you're changing directions so much," he observed.

Kohn noted that even though the sled is pulling 4 to 5 Gs, drivers feel them a little bit less because they have a support seat.

Kohn explained that a perfect race line is when the sled is in the center of the curve—at a 90-degree angle to the track. If you race too high on the track, it makes for a longer trip. If you go too low, you lose the centrifugal force.

Overall, White described the steering this way; "If you overdo it, you would be hitting everything on your way down, so timing and finesse [are everything]."

## Stopping an 80 mph Bullet

At the end of a run, stopping a 1,400-lb craft moving at 80 mph is no small task.

"You've got to be pretty strong [and] hold it for a good 100 meters. It's a football field worth of braking," said Kohn.

White added that braking depends on the tracks. "There are some tracks where you really need to yank on it because you're going so fast," he explained. "You put your legs and back into it. You're trying to slow this thing down, so it doesn't go darting off the track. It rattles your cage a little bit."

## Coaching a Guard Bullet Train

A former men's and women's head coach, Tavares has been the assistant coach and sled technician for the men's and women's bobsled teams since 2007. The 45-year-old stepped down as head coach to spend more time with his children.

"I'm more nervous now as a coach than as an athlete," he acknowledged. "You have no control over what they are going to do. You never know until they have to perform."

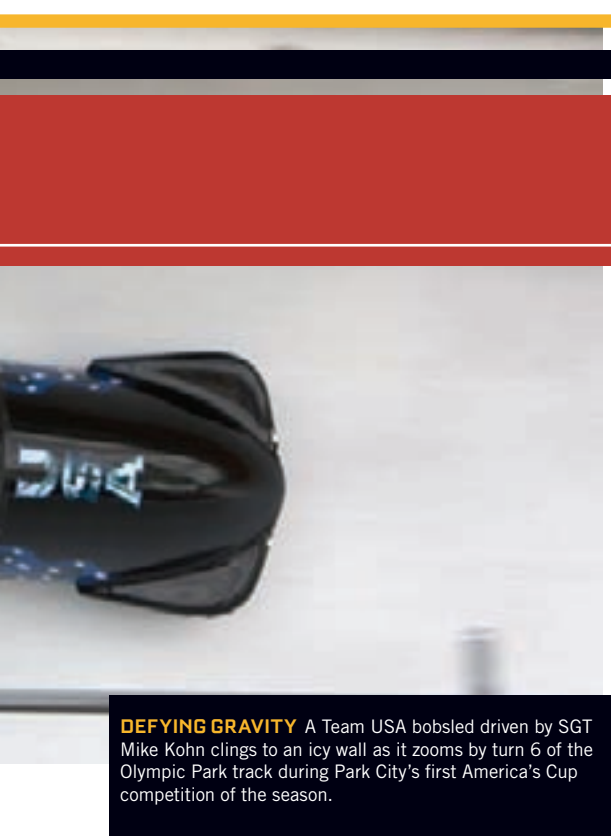
Tavares, a medalist as team driver for the U.S. National two-man and four-man bobsled teams in the America's Cup competitions, taught Bakken, and later Rohbock, how to drive.

He felt that Rohbock and Fleming winning medals at the 2006 Olympics was key to their success.

"You have to know how it feels to win," he said.

He also stressed that the team has to have confidence in their equipment. That way, when they enter a race, they know that everything has been done for them.

I asked Tavares the difference between coaching male and female athletes. He said that with men, the emphasis is on the team concept, adding, "You [also] need to instill a lot of confidence in them."



**DEFYING GRAVITY** A Team USA bobsled driven by SGT Mike Kohn clings to an icy wall as it zooms by turn 6 of the Olympic Park track during Park City's first America's Cup competition of the season.

In contrast, he feels women's teams are more meticulous. "I find that they are more organized going into a race or training," he acknowledged. "They have a schedule of what they want."

Tavares described Rohbock and Fleming as two of the "fastest and strongest girls out there right now. This year, they are just amazing me."

Likewise, as the team's handyman, Tavares' sled-maintenance skills and driving experience amaze his athletes.

"He's multi-talented," Kohn shared.

"He is the go-to guy when something is broken," Rohbock agreed.

And he's not afraid to make the inaugural slide down the hill with rookies. New bobsled drivers can be scary to ride with, but Tavares is always willing to jump in with them.

### From Blades to Bobs

SGT Jeremy White competed as a speed-skater in the 1998 and 2002 Olympic trials and is known for his speed. In fact, last year a bobsled driver referred to White and another speedy 5'7", 180-pound World Cup teammate as "the afterburners."

This event could have been his first competition this season had he not sustained an injury while training. He admitted that he tried to do too many things. His year included joining the Guard as an aviation operations specialist in June 2007 and completing Basic Combat Training (BCT) in the fall.

"I jumped right into sprinting, trying to get ready," he said. "My central nervous system was just, like, 'No.'"

Normally, missing this event would keep an athlete out of the National Championships

#### SOLDIERS AND ATHLETES

SGT Jeremy White, left, and SGTs Shauna Rohbock and Mike Kohn are bobsled athletes for the National Guard Outstanding Athlete Program (NGOAP).



in Lake Placid, but White has received approval due to the circumstances of his injury.

As an Olympic speed-skater in the 2002 Olympics trials, he finished 12th despite injuring his back two months before the event. He owned up that doctors and therapists recommended that he not compete.

"You're so close to your dream and your goal that to have somebody tell you that it's not going to be realized is something you won't accept," he shared.

So White pushed on, posting a personal record time and finishing 12th.

In the fall of 2003, he tried out for skeleton. He did well on the tests and was chosen for the development team at Olympic Park.

"Overall my strength was my push start," White conceded. He was second fastest in the nation his first year, en route to qualifying for the national trials and other events.

His quickness from the start inspired a retired bobsled driver to invite him to be on his America's Cup team in 2004. White was about 175 pounds at the time.

"For me to break into that sport at that weight was pretty amazing," he stated. "It goes to prove you don't need to look like everyone else to be proficient in certain capacities."

To further assist the bobsled team with speed, White recruited a fellow skeleton teammate—a former semi-pro soccer player and personal trainer—to become the second pusher.

This athlete also only weighed 168 pounds.

"In the bobsled world, most drivers and coaches wouldn't even give a second thought to having someone like that in the federation," White claimed.

This team raced in seven practice runs before eventually winning the competition and posting the second fastest time in its first America's Cup race. Ultimately, they did so well, the driver came out of retirement and they formed a team.

The next race—at Lake Placid—tested the team's mettle. According to White, "That track really does something to you. You take a beating. And you come out of it, but at that point, you pretty much [either] want to get out of the sport, or you like it enough to stay in it."

The team's chemistry was phenomenal. White thinks they could have qualified for the Olympics, but a member left for family-related reasons.

By this time, White knew living both of his dreams as an active-duty service member and an Olympic athlete would not work. He wasn't going to leave the military behind, but there wouldn't be enough time to train after a normal workday. So when he learned of the National Guard's NGOAP, he jumped at the chance.

"The choice was easy," he exclaimed. "It was something I had to do."

White knows that the possibility of being deployed looms, but he doesn't let it bother him: "In the long run, saving lives is worth more than a 1,000 gold medals and that's what it comes down to."

### The Bobsledder's Workout

So what kind of workouts do these athletes do? Kohn's is a cross between an Olympic sprinter's and an Olympic weightlifter's.



**STEERING SYSTEM** A bobsled is steered by two D rings attached to a rope and pulley system that connects to the front runners. If you pull the right ring you turn right and vice versa.

# IF YOU WANT YOUR FINGERNAILS TO BE PERFECT YOU'RE IN THE WRONG SPORT, BECAUSE THEY'RE CONSTANTLY BLACK, UGLY AND DIRTY."

>> SGT Shauna Rohbock



#### SQUEEZING IN

SGT Shauna Rohbock squeezes into her bobsled at the start. Her brakeman is Valerie Fleming.

"So it's a lot of intense training—weightlifting, sprinting, plyometrics and Olympic lifting," he explained.

Napier added, "You want that lower center of gravity, that lower rotational mass."

"But for girls, we still want to look good in our speed suits," Rohbock quipped. "So we still work a little bit on our upper body. No—actually we need the weight—so we have to work some on our upper body."

Rohbock pointed out that bobsledders train for sprinting speed on a track, and weight-lift for strength. The key, she explains, is to balance the two.

"Some people keep their speed when they get stronger, but others lose it," she noted. "So you have to find [out for] yourself how much strength and weight you can gain and [still] keep your speed before you have to cut back on your lifting."

Speed can also affect these Soldiers' Army Physical Fitness Tests (APFT or PT)—especially the two-mile run.

"Every year the PT test is like pain [in] my body," Rohbock said. "We don't do the distance running because we train for strength, speed and power. So when [the military] PT tests come around, it's like—'Oh no, two miles of sheer pain.'"

"We can get through the PT test, but it's like Carl Lewis running a marathon," Kohn said. "It's just different cell types, different fiber types."

"Endurance kills speed," noted Napier, adding that because bobsledders are strong, the push-ups and sits-ups aren't difficult for them. They all agreed that they can pass the APFT, but it's hard

for them to achieve the maximum score in certain events.

"Everybody thinks that we're going to max the test, but we're not endurance athletes," Rohbock explained.

"But we can push a bobsled faster than any of them," Kohn joked. "I guarantee you that."

#### Every Athlete's Dream

I asked Kohn and Rohbock what it was like competing in the 2002 Olympics. Rohbock was one of the athletes that tested the timing before the competition. They both remember that the event was very well attended. Spectators were "wall-to-wall," lining the entire track from top to bottom.

As a passenger during these tests, Rohbock could look up and see the spectators and their many state and national flags. "I remember looking and people were just packed [in]," Rohbock said. Both mentioned how loud the crowd was, noting that normally, bobsledders can't hear anything in their sleds. But at the Olympics, Kohn described, "It was like being in the middle of a football game."

#### Why Bobsledding?

"Dedication, heart and attitude keep somebody in this sport, no other thing," White explained.

Kohn's goal is competing in another Olympics. The opening ceremonies in Salt Lake City were "rewarding enough for me." Rohbock added, "That feeling is unbelievable. Even before we won a medal, just walking into the opening ceremonies was awesome." **GX**



#### SGT Shauna Rohbock

**Age:** 31  
 Joined Utah Guard in 1998  
**MOS:** 42A—Human Resources Specialist  
**Career-best power clean:** 224 pounds  
**What's on your iPod:** A mix of songs; Cold Play



#### SGT Mike Kohn

**Age:** 36  
 Joined Virginia Guard in 1999  
**MOS:** 11B—Infantry  
**Career-best power clean:** 319 pounds  
**Favorite movie:** *The Godfather*



#### PFC John Napier

**Age:** 21  
 Joined Vermont Guard in 2007  
**MOS:** 21K—Plumber  
**Career-best snatch lift:** 222 pounds  
**Favorite food:** Cheeseburger



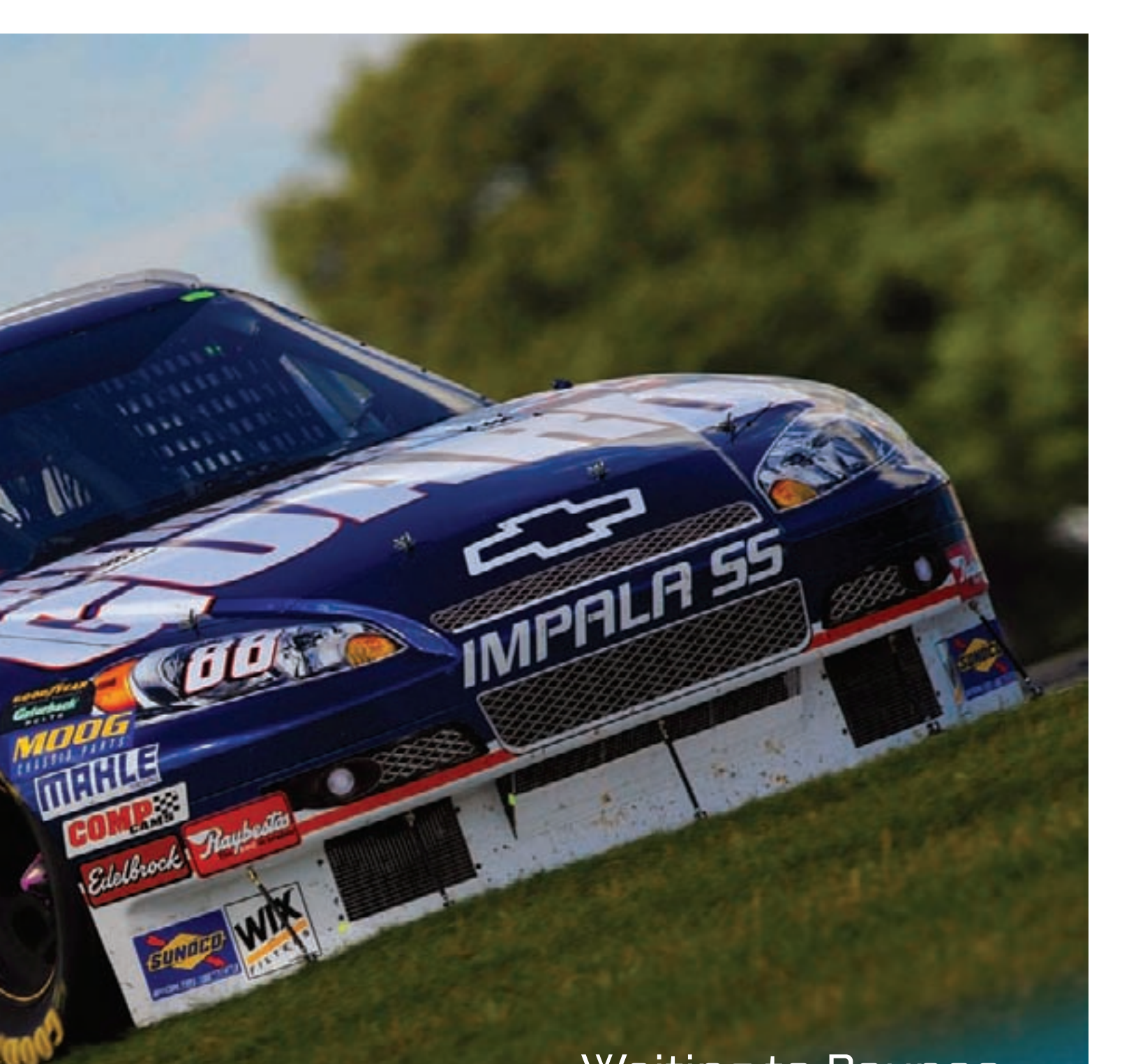
#### SGT Jeremy White

**Age:** 33  
 Joined Colorado Guard in 2007  
**MOS:** 15P—Aviation Operations Specialist  
**Former speed skater and skeleton racer**

# Fighting Spirit

▶ SHARP AND STRONG





# Waiting to Pounce

Dale Jr. is ready to bring the No. 88 National Guard/AMP Energy Chevy into Victory Lane again for the 2009 season.

## SPORTS

Dale Jr. is ready to attack the '09 season.

62

## FITNESS

Build power in Operation Leaps and Bounds.

68

## GEAR

Ma Deuce still kickin' after 90 years.

74

# BACK TO ATTACK

DALE EARNHARDT JR. BRINGS THE THUNDER IN '09

By SFC Clint Wood



COURTESY OF HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS

**He drives like there's no tomorrow**, pushing his body and his car's limits to a whole new level and never looking back. He makes passes that other drivers can only dream about and has the fearless confidence in his car, team and, most importantly, himself to be one of the most successful drivers in NASCAR.

Just like his father, Dale Jr. lives, eats and sleeps NASCAR. He is NASCAR.

Most NASCAR fans know that Dale Earnhardt Jr., is the son of one of the most famous stock car racers, the late Dale Earnhardt, a seven-time NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Champion and five-time National Motorsports Press Association Driver of the Year.

And most racing fans know that 34-year old Dale Jr., a six-time winner of NASCAR's Most Popular Driver Award, represents the Army National Guard as the driver of the No. 88 blue and white National Guard/AMP Energy Chevrolet Impala SS. And he's back to dominate in '09 as the Guard's primary driver.

#### JR.'S LEGION

This union proved to be a smashing hit for 2008 as his fans loyally followed him and wore the colors of the National Guard. Put all the media and record merchandise sales aside, Dale Jr. was supported at every race by legions of fierce and loyal fans eager to see him win.

It seemed that every fan I encountered in Talladega was wearing the white and blue National Guard colors. Several also were still wearing the distinctive red Budweiser No. 8 apparel, too. For those of you who didn't know, Dale Jr. switched to No. 88 in the 2008 season when he joined Hendrick Motorsports. Budweiser had sponsored him since his 2000 rookie season.

Backing up, I was also starstruck at this race ... I couldn't believe that I had finally made the pilgrimage to Talladega, AL, where the legendary Talladega Superspeedway resides. This track throws the stiffest competition into a dizzying world of speed and chaos as racers jockey for top position at more than 200 miles per hour. I had dreamt of visiting Talladega since I was a small child and to witness Dale Jr. racing there became one of the greatest moments in my life as a NASCAR fan. There were thousands of fans roaring and cheering for their favorite driver, producing a noise that surely shook the great state of Alabama. The sight is amazing, unlike any other sporting event, and gives you goose bumps when you first walk in and take it all in. This is what auto racing is all about—this is NASCAR.

Dale Jr. finished his first season with the Hendrick Motorsports stable by capturing 12th in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series points championship. With a win in Michigan and multiple top-5 and top-10 finishes, Dale Jr. is picked to burn the competition again for 2009.

And this inferno couldn't come at a better time. Hendrick Motorsports is celebrating its 25th anniversary this season.

#### MAN ON A MISSION

Dale Jr., who has appeared on more than 150 magazine covers, wrote on his Web site, [www.DaleJr.com](http://www.DaleJr.com), that his father was as much an iconic figure to him as he was to his fans, and he always looked up to him.

Like Dale Sr., Dale Jr. learned about discipline while growing up. He attended Oak Ridge Military Academy in Oak Ridge, NC, and embarked on a journey to become the man that he is today. The second oldest military prep school in the United States, Oak Ridge has a reputa-

tion for instilling discipline and honor in the young men who attend.

Dale Jr., who *Racer* magazine named in its 2004 issue the most influential person in motorsports, also raced in the Pepsi 400 in Michigan in 2000 with his father and brother, Kerry. It was the second time a father and two sons raced in the same Sprint Cup event.

Dale Jr.—the only third-generation NASCAR champion after winning the 1998 and 1999 Nationwide Series Titles—will have fans madly cheering nationwide this season.

#### TWO ARE STRONGER THAN ONE

What better way to bring awareness to the Army National Guard's special programs and benefits than adding Jeff Gordon to the team for eight NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races. Gordon, who is one of the most popular NASCAR Sprint Cup Series drivers, will be the special programs driver, creating awareness and support for various programs, including the



## Q&A

WITH DALE EARNHARDT JR.

In an exclusive interview, *GX* asked Dale Jr. how it feels to represent the National Guard, and what it might be like to become a Guard Soldier.

**GX:** If you could be in the Army National Guard, what job would you have and why?

**DEJ:** That's a tough one. The Guard has so many opportunities. I would probably take something in the field though—infantry style.

**GX:** What makes NASCAR a patriotic and favorite American sport?

**DEJ:** The fans are mainly blue-collar people and many have friends or family in the military.

**GX:** After spending a season on the same team as Jeff Gordon, what is it like to be under the same sponsor now?

**DEJ:** I'm pretty excited to work with Jeff this season under the Guard banner. Hopefully we both can make the Guard proud.

**GX:** Racing has brought you fame and

fortune. Putting all the perks aside, why do you really race?

**DEJ:** I race just to beat the other guy. The simple rush from competition is the main reason I began to race.

**GX:** Where is your favorite place to drive off the track?

**DEJ:** I like riding trails with my four-wheelers back home. Cutting through the woods is a great stress reliever.

**GX:** What is your cell phone ringtone?

**DEJ:** Right now? ... "10 A.M. Automatic" by The Black Keys.

**GX:** If you had a theme song, what would it be?

**DEJ:** "Ramble On" by Led Zeppelin.

National Guard Youth Challenge, Active First, College First, Path to Honor and Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve (ESGR),

All of these programs are extremely important to the Guard's mission and are very different from each other.

- Active First allows Soldiers to join the Active Army for as long as two years, then transition into the Guard, giving them experience from both sides of the Army.

- College First allows Soldiers to join the Guard and pursue a bachelor's degree, allowing them to go to college for two years without being subject to a federal deployment

- The Youth Challenge takes at-risk teens and provides them with job training, life skills and the confidence to tackle life successfully, as well as a glimpse into the life of a National Guard Soldier.

- Path to Honor is an online enlistment application tool designed for highly motivated individuals who have made the decision to join the Guard. This tool allows future Soldiers to take control of their enlistment process while still having the valuable support of a Guard recruiter to answer questions and address concerns.

- ESGR provides support for and awareness of employees' rights among employers nationwide, preserving civilian jobs for Guard Soldiers and other reservists who are deployed or conducting military training.

Gordon will drive the No. 24 DuPont/National Guard Chevrolet, which will feature each of these programs on its hood during the following races:

- \* March 8 at Atlanta Motor Speedway
- \* April 5 at Texas Motor Speedway
- \* May 9 at Darlington (SC) Raceway
- \* June 14 at Michigan International Speedway
- \* July 11 at Chicagoland Speedway
- \* Sept. 12 at Richmond (VA) International Raceway
- \* Sept. 20 at New Hampshire Motor Speedway
- \* Oct. 25 at Martinsville (VA) Speedway

"Your sacrifices allow me to do what I love, and that is to drive," Gordon remarked as he sat in the front of his silver and black Chevrolet in a video for National Guard Soldiers. With "National Guard" in huge, white letters nearly covering the entire hood, the car looked like it was itching to pop the clutch and tear off for a victory lap.

"I have the privilege of representing you, the finest fighting force in today's military. Thank you for your service, and see you in victory

## Fast Facts

### DALE JR. 411

Age: 34

Birthplace: Concord, NC

Career Sprint Cup Series victories: 18

First Sprint Cup Series win: Texas Motor Speedway in April 2000

### RACING ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- 2004 Daytona 500 winner
- Scored a record-breaking fourth consecutive win at Talladega Superspeedway on April 6, 2003
- 2000 Sprint All-Star Race winner
- 1998, 1999 Nationwide Series champion
- 22 victories in Nationwide Series



### JEFF GORDON 411

Age: 37

Birthplace: Vallejo, CA

Career Sprint Cup Series victories: 81

First Sprint Cup Series win: Lowe's Motor Speedway in 1994

lane," Gordon said in an interview for the National Guard.

For those who don't know who the 37-year-old is, they've surely seen photos and television footage of this fast and intense racer in the winner's circle several times over the last few years. Gordon embodies the concept of using speed and finesse to drop his competitors and redline into victory lane.

Born in California but raised in Indiana, Gordon began his racing career at the age of 5 racing quarter midgets (similar to go-karts but with a metal body covering and a high roll cage).

Eight years later, he strapped himself in a 650-horsepower sprint car—three years before the class' minimum age. His family overcame an insurance hurdle to allow him to race in these rockets, which were similar to the quarter midgets but bigger and much, much faster.

Over the next 25 years, Gordon's racing accomplishments include winning the USAC National Midget title, the USAC Silver Crown title, the NASCAR Cup Series Championship four times, the Daytona 500 three times, the Brickyard 400 four times and more than 80 races in the Sprint Cup Series.

He was also voted the third-most-popular driver this season and voted into the 2009 National Midget Auto Racing Hall of Fame. Racing greats Mario Andretti and A.J. Foyt raced in the Silver Crown Series, which adds credit to Gordon as one of racing's legitimate and skilled drivers.

As the driver for the fast and sleek No. 24 DuPont/National Guard Chevrolet, he will be

representing all the brave Army National Guard Soldiers who serve with dignity, honor and selflessness at home and abroad. GX got to sneak in a few questions with Gordon about his partnership with Dale Jr. and the National Guard.



**Dale Jr. will fly the National Guard colors this season at the following races:**

- Feb. 7** Budweiser Shootout at Daytona International Speedway
- March 1** at Las Vegas Motor Speedway
- March 22** at Bristol Motor Speedway
- April 18** at Phoenix International Raceway
- April 26** at Talladega Superspeedway
- May 2** at Richmond International Raceway
- May 24** at Lowe's Motor Speedway
- June 7** at Pocono Raceway
- June 28** at New Hampshire Motor Speedway
- July 4** at Daytona International Speedway
- Aug. 9** at Watkins Glen International
- Aug. 16** at Michigan International Speedway
- Sept. 6** at Atlanta Motor Speedway
- Sept. 27** at Dover International Speedway
- Oct. 4** at Kansas Speedway
- Nov. 8** at Texas Motor Speedway
- Nov. 22** Season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway

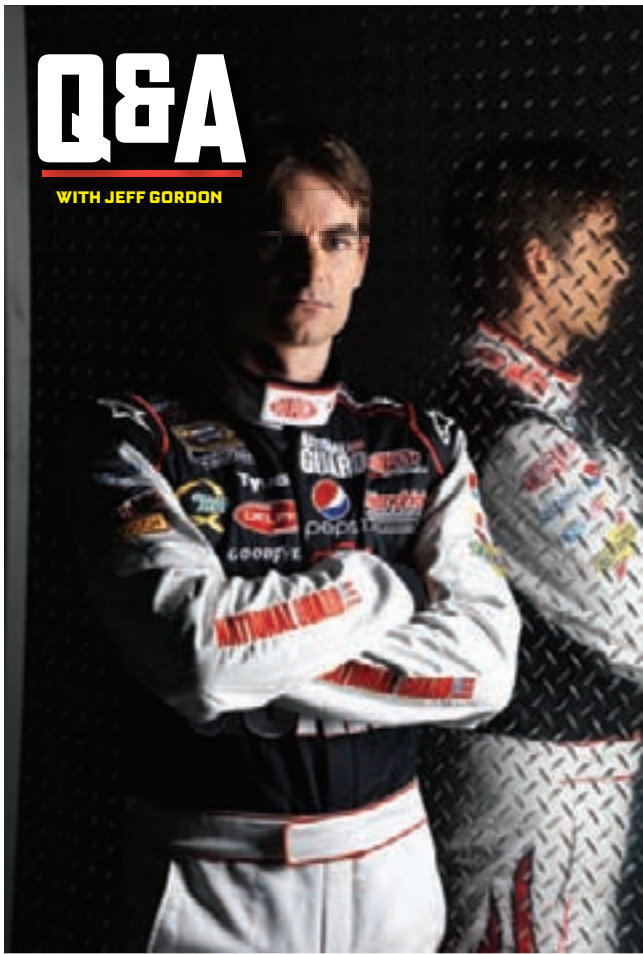
His car will have a joint paint scheme—The Dale Jr. Foundation car—at the NASCAR Sprint All-Star Race at Lowe's Motor Speedway May 16.

For more on Guard Racing, go to [www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/guardracing](http://www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/guardracing)



# Q&A

WITH JEFF GORDON



**GX:** What does it mean to represent the National Guard, the oldest military service in the United States?

**JG:** Obviously, it is a huge honor. You're able to represent and honor your country by that service, and to be able to do it on home soil as well as abroad—I think that it speaks volumes about what it means to represent the National Guard.

**GX:** How does teamwork play a part in the success of the No. 24 DuPont/National Guard Chevrolet team?

**JG:** Well, obviously, to have the National Guard on board takes teamwork to a whole other level. We are a team and a unit going out there to win races and do our own type of battle on the racetrack, but then to also represent the National Guard. We represent all those men and women who are already serving in the National Guard, as well as those who may serve in the future.

**GX:** What does the National Guard offer to those graduating high school students who aren't sure what direction they want to go in their life?

**JG:** On top of the structure and discipline that the National Guard offers, it can also pay your college tuition or even put you on a path to honor and place you in a job.

**GX:** What is the biggest thing you would like to see happen with your association with the National Guard?

**JG:** I think a lot of people don't understand all the different programs that the National Guard has to offer, so I want to try to create more awareness of these programs, such as Active First, where you can earn a bonus up to \$60,000 if you enlist under that option. The Guard also helps with your college tuition by paying up to 100 percent of your classroom fees. There are many other programs, but those are just to name a few.

**GX:** Do you personally know anyone who has served in the military?

**JG:** I had some friends I went to high school with that went into the military, and they came back a new person. It's amazing to me what the military can do for those seeking that path to honor that next step in their life.

**GX:** What would you say to someone who is thinking about joining the National Guard?

**JG:** I would say, "do it." I mean it's a great opportunity to serve your country. It is a very honorable thing to do, as well as all of the great benefits and opportunities that come along with it.

**GX:** Who in your mind should be a "National Guard" Soldier?

**JG:** I think that anybody can be in the Guard. Men or women who have a direct path and those who are seeking a path. But I think we all are proud to be Americans, and I think all of us would like to be able to serve our country in some way. To be enlisted in the National Guard is a great way for you to serve your country and do something that you can be very, very proud of, as well as create great opportunities for yourself in the future.

**GX:** What are some of your goals both on and off track for 2009 season?

**JG:** Our goals are pretty much always the same: We go out, we want to win races, and we want to win the championship. The way we achieve those goals is we look at what we did last season, and we find ways we can be better. Whether we won the championship or whether we finished seventh in points, it's always about trying to create a better team and a better environment, as well as make the cars go faster and execute as a team the best way that we possibly can. We want to be competing for race wins; we want to be competing for the championship, and I feel like we've got an incredible opportunity with the National Guard this year to go out and win another championship. I think 2009 is going to be a great year for us. **GX**

## Look What's on Jeff's Hood!



The No. 24 car will be representing the Guard's Active First, College First and Youth Challenge programs in addition to ESGR and Path to Honor at select races in 2009.



## Not Your Average Go-Karts

### SUPERKART DRIVERS RACE FOR THE WIN AT THE SUPERNATIONALS XII

Story and photos by SFC Clint Wood

**T**wo famous song titles fit the “need-for-speed” go-kart racing event I attended Nov. 20–23 in Las Vegas: “Bob That Head” and “Life in the Fast Lane.”

Rascal Flatts’ “Bob That Head” came to mind when I saw the heads of these racers nearly shake off from putting the pedal to the metal and sliding through a sweeping right turn in go-karts sitting just 2 inches above the pavement, heading for a 700-foot straightaway.

The Eagles’ “Life in the Fast Lane” is for the speeds these rockets reach—an estimated 110 mph.

**“With 100 karts, it’s a little bit more competitive than the IndyCar series.”**

>> Dan Wheldon, Superkart and IndyCar series driver

Not enough adrenaline for you? Consider this: These racers aren’t wearing seat belts either (which, of course, is dangerous and illegal for most of us!).

“They don’t use seat belts so [that] the driver will be thrown free if they flip,” explained Lee Beard, father of one of the racers and crew chief/team manager for David Powers Motorsports. His son, Zach, finished 22nd in the one of the races after crashing midway through the feature, or main, ride.

These go-karts—known as superkarts—weigh up to 400 pounds, so the last thing a racer would want is to be strapped in as it barrel-rolls across the pavement.

I witnessed the best of the best in superkart racing at the Supernationals XII in Las Vegas. Presented by Superkarts! USA and sponsored by the Army National Guard, the event took place in the massive parking lot of the Rio All-Suite Las Vegas Hotel and Casino.

Of the more than 100 drivers, none was more famous than 2005 Indy 500 winner Dan Wheldon and NASCAR Sprint Cup Series racer Jamie McMurray, who won four U.S. go-kart titles between 1986–92 and won the World Go-Kart Racing Championship in 1991.

A native of Great Britain, Dan raced in the Tag Senior class and finished 26th in the 30-lap feature after starting 16th. He was making a pass for seventh on a tight left turn when his kart hit the

barrier and punctured his tire. The turn was so tight that most of the drivers’ left rear tires were off the ground as they entered it.

“It was a lot of fun but I clipped the barrier trying to get to the front quickly,” said Wheldon of his flat tire. “You’ve got to try and move to the front pretty quick and unfortunately when I clipped the barrier I got a puncture.”

Entering this turn, which was among the 11 turns, most of the racer’s left front tires were off the ground, too (the only other time I’ve seen race cars powering through turns on three wheels was when photographing Wisconsin Late Models in Minnesota).

Each racer in the Tag class also had three guaranteed heat races in an attempt to either race in the class’ A or B feature. Forty racers competed in each feature, lined up two wide at the start.

“They went well,” said Wheldon of his heat races. “You can’t underestimate the competition of these guys. They do it week in and week out and me just showing up for what is probably the biggest go-kart race in America is ... to think you’re going to come in here and steamroll these people is very wide of the mark.”

Wheldon, who also is the driver of the No. 4 National Car in the IndyCar Series, compared



this event to the Indy 500, saying he felt the biggest similarity was the level of competition.

“With 100 karts, it’s a little bit more competitive than the IndyCar series,” he admitted. “Both are extremely difficult and require a lot of attention to detail from everybody involved, including the driver. [But] both are a ton of fun.”

On a personal note, Wheldon, who began go-kart racing when he was 8 years old, added, “I represented the National Guard, and I was very proud of that.” **GX**



# Escape the Choke

Story and photos by SGT Michael Kerkhoff

**THE HOLIDAYS ARE OVER, THE NEW YEAR HAS STARTED AND IT'S TIME** to get back to the mats. I know that in many parts of the country it's cold and snowy outside, and because of that, many Soldiers are reluctant to train (PT) outdoors.

If your rSG is anything like mine, there is no way he's going to allow you to snowboard for PT every day. So get out to the mats and train. Training Combatives will bring many positives to you and your Soldiers' physical

condition. It will increase your flexibility and raise your cardio.

Holding a platoon or company tournament during drill weekend will test the skills of the unit's Soldiers, as well as build camaraderie within the unit.

As an added bonus, Combatives is "Warrior Task 33," so your unit's training noncommissioned officer can log it as training completed.

If you have Combatives experience, get your Soldiers out on the mats and start training because there are only eight months left until the Army National Guard Combatives tournament. **Let's roll! GX**

## TO CONTINUE WITH THE ESCAPE SERIES,

this month's focus is the: "Escaping the Rear Naked Choke."

As with any other submission, the rear naked choke can be countered. The moves we work on here may work for you or may not. Much of this depends on your level of experience and that of your opponent. We at CATC encourage you to try everything you learn, so you can see what works for you and what doesn't.

**1.** Soldier 1 (BDUs) has Soldier 2 (ACUs) in the rear mount and has applied the rear naked choke. Soldier 1 is in the dominant position. The only way he could be in a more dominant position is by having Soldier 2's belly down.

**2.** First, Soldier 2 will go two to one on the arm that Soldier 1 has around his neck. Soldier 2 will place one hand on the bicep and one hand on the forearm of Soldier 1. Soldier 2 will pull Soldier 1's arm down and away to create space. Notice that Soldier 2 is not trying to completely pry away Soldier 1's arm. Soldier 2 is creating enough space to suck in his chin to be able to breathe.

**3.** As soon as Soldier 2 has created space, he shrugs his shoulders and moves his hips forward. This does two things: It further aids in keeping Soldier 1 from attacking the throat and creates space for Soldier 2 to maneuver his body to escape.

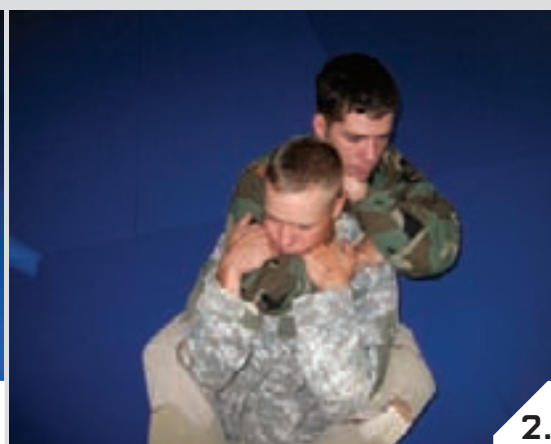
**4.** Soldier 2 will straighten the leg that's on the opposite side that the choke is being applied, in order to free Soldier 1's hook.

**5.** Once Soldier 2 is free from Soldier 1's hook, Soldier 2 will plant the leg he has just freed to use as leverage and turn toward Soldier 1's bicep. As Soldier 2 turns toward the bicep, he uses the foot he planted to drive into Soldier 1. Soldier 2 drives forward until Soldier 1 is on his back.

**6.** Soldier 2 then takes a dominant body position.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.

# OPERATION LEAPS AND BOUNDS

## Power and Plyometrics, Part 1 of 2

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



**Q:** SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert, Hello. I am 19 years old. I just started to try your workouts on 1-800-GO-GUARD.com, and my recruiter gave me the last issue of GX magazine. The workouts are great! I am trying to join the California National Guard, but I am 20 pounds overweight. I was a pretty good athlete in high school but fell off the bandwagon after I graduated. I have been jogging for a few months, and my endurance is increasing slowly. How can I build endurance faster, so I can cut these pounds and qualify for the Guard? Any advice is greatly appreciated! Thanks!  
Jason

**A:** Jason, Thanks for making the choice to serve your state and country! Regarding endurance and weight loss, we like to use power and plyometric drills to increase strength and endurance. Be advised that plyometric drills are not for the basic athlete, or for anyone with a weak or injured back, knees, hips or ankles. Plyometric drills are considered intermediate to advanced exercises. If your joints can handle leaps and jumps, then you will see outstanding results after using Operation Leaps and Bounds. We tried power and plyometric drills with several Soldiers.

Here is what one had to say about the program: "The hard part about losing weight is getting started and figuring out what to do. With SGT Ken's program, it tells you exactly what to do and for how long. I joined the Guard, and I knew I was overweight. I contacted SGT Ken, and he sent me his workout routine. Within the first two weeks, I lost 10 pounds and could feel that I was getting stronger. I have done a lot better on my APFT scores and have had nothing but success from SGT Ken's workout routine."—PFC Mark M. of the Arizona Army National Guard

Here is your challenge:

- Use the 30-day workout calendar in Operation Pushing for Points from GX 5.6.
- Add Operation Leaps and Bounds to the exercises in the calendar for every Monday and Thursday.
- Reduce the running interval training listed on Thursdays, so that you will not exceed 60 minutes of training.
- Follow our diet plan, Operation Diet Dissection, posted on 1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness.
- Get plenty of rest at night, and take two days off from training every week so your muscles and joint tissue can rest and recover.
- Keep us informed of your progress, and let us know when you qualify for the Army National Guard. Be safe, and have fun!

**HOOAH!**

—SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn’t do than by the ones you did do.”

—Mark Twain

## WARM-UP PHASE

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

**Stretching** (5 minutes)

## MUSCLE TARGET PHASE

### Half Sit-ups

**START:** Lie down on your back with legs together and bent 90 degrees at your knees. Place your heels on the ground and point your toes upward. Interlock your fingers, and place your hands behind your head.

**ACTIONS:** Tighten your abdominal muscles, and raise your upper body until your shoulder blades come off of the ground, return to the start position and repeat.

**Note:** Do not pull on your neck with your hands. Keep your elbows wide and your chin pointing upward.

**Basic:** 1–30 repetitions

**Intermediate:** 31–60 repetitions

**Advanced:** 61–90 repetitions

### Basketball Drill

**START:** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

**ACTIONS:** Step forward and slightly laterally with one leg into a lunge, bending your forward leg until it reaches 90 degrees at the knee, back leg slightly bent. Maintain your balance in the center, shoulders aligned with your hips. Return to the start position. Jump vertically as high as you can, arms extended overhead and land with knees slightly bent. Quickly, switch directions and repeat. Continue until your goal is reached. Performing the actions in both directions once equals one repetition.

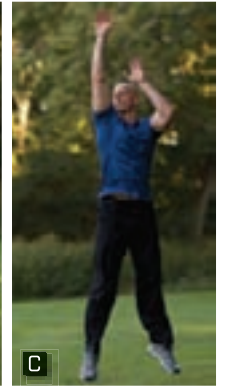
**Fit Tip:** Challenge yourself by holding a set of dumbbells or a medicine ball during the exercise!

**Basic:** 1–10 repetitions

**Intermediate:** 11–20 repetitions

**Advanced:** 21–30 repetitions

#### BASKETBALL DRILL



#### SINGLE-LEG LATERAL LEAPS



### Single-Leg Lateral Leaps

**START:** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

**ACTIONS:** Shifting your balance to the right, thrust your left leg to the left, leaping between three and five feet and elevating your arms to the sides at shoulder-height. Land and balance your body on your left leg, bending your left knee, and arms returning to your sides. Quickly, switch directions and repeat. Continue until your goal is reached. Performing the actions in both directions once is one repetition.

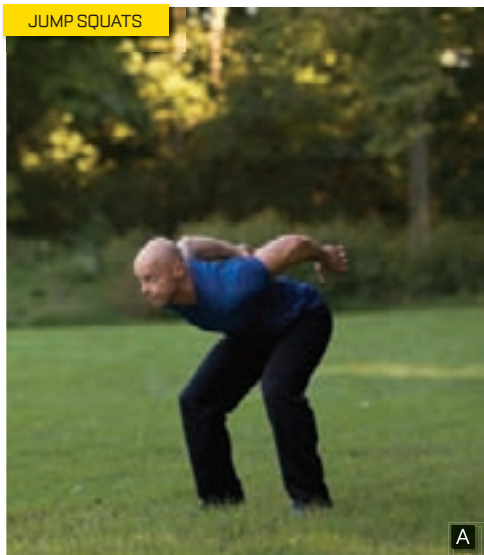
**Note:** You can perform this exercise without leaping (basic level).

**Basic:** 1–10 repetitions (no leaping)

**Intermediate:** 10–20 repetitions (with leaping)

**Advanced:** 21–30 repetitions (with leaping)

## JUMP SQUATS



A



B



C

### Jump Squats

**START:** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

**ACTIONS:** Bend forward at your hips and bring your arms behind you. Jump vertically as high as you can, arms extended overhead. As you land, squat until your knees bend 90-degrees and hips move back as if sitting on a chair.

Maintain your weight directly over the middle of your feet and heels. Keep your knees aligned with your feet. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

**Note:** You can perform this exercise without jumping (basic level).

**Warning:** Do not let your knees bend beyond your toes.

**Basic:** 1–20 repetitions (no jumping)

**Intermediate:** 10–20 repetitions (with jumping)

**Advanced:** 21–30 repetitions (with jumping)

## SKI JUMPER DRILL



A



B

### Ski Jumper Drill

**START:** Stand with your feet together, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your hands on your hips and elbows to the sides.

**ACTIONS:** While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, bend your knees and thrust your body laterally 2 to 3 feet, landing with knees slightly bent. Quickly, switch directions and repeat. Continue until your goal is reached. Performing the actions in both directions once equals one repetition.

**Basic:** 1–20 repetitions

**Intermediate:** 21–40 repetitions

**Advanced:** 41–60 repetitions



If you don't step forward, you're always in the same place."

—Nora Roberts

## FORWARD LEAPING SQUATS



### Forward Leaping Squats

**START:** Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

**ACTIONS:** Bend forward at your hips and bring your arms behind you. Leap forward as far as you can, arms in front of you. As you land, squat until your knees bend 90-degrees and hips move back as if sitting on a chair. Maintain your weight directly over the middle of your feet and heels. Keep your knees aligned with your feet. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

**Basic:** 1–10 repetitions

**Intermediate:** 11–20 repetitions

**Advanced:** 21–30 repetitions

“Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go.”

—T.S. Elliot

### JUMPING SWITCH LUNGES



### Jumping Switch Lunges

**START:** Place one leg in front and the other straight behind you, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward. Align your shoulders with your hips. Position your arms at your sides, elbows slightly bent and palms facing inward.

**ACTIONS:** Lower your body by bending both legs at the knees until your forward leg achieves 90 degrees of knee flexion. Jump vertically as high as you can, arms extended outward, switching leg positions in midair and landing in a lunge. Maintain your balance in the center. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

**Note:** You can perform this exercise without jumping (basic level).

**Warning:** Do not let your forward knee bend beyond your toes.

**Basic:** 1–10 repetitions (no jumping)

**Intermediate:** 1–10 repetitions (with jumping)

**Advanced:** 11–20 repetitions (with jumping)

### Flutter Kicks

**START:** Lie flat on your back with your hands under, or slightly outside your buttocks, palms down. Raise your feet 6–12 inches off the ground.

**ACTIONS:** Flutter kicks are a four-count exercise where you raise your left leg to a 45-degree angle for position one, keeping your right leg stationary. Next, raise your right leg to a 45-degree angle while, at the same time, moving your left leg to the start position. Counts three and four are repetitions of the same movements. Quickly, repeat until your goal is reached.

**Fit Tip:** The lower your legs are positioned, the more back muscles you engage for this exercise. Keep your back flat against the floor with your arms supporting

the sides of your body. If you experience discomfort in your lower back, raise your legs to a higher position.

**Basic:** 1–10 repetitions

**Intermediate:** 11–20 repetitions

**Advanced:** 21–30 repetitions

## COOL-DOWN PHASE

**Stretching** (5 minutes)

**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.

For more health and fitness information, go to [1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness](http://1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness) or email [sgtken@GXonline.com](mailto: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.

# Comprehensive Fitness

## Top-5 Stress Relieving Tips

By Stephanie Weichert

Looking for ways to improve your overall health—physical, emotional, psychological and mental?

Discover the new Army total health program—the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program. Based on the growing evidence that lifestyle is a major factor in our well-being, this initiative encourages more than just push-ups.

The focus of the program is managing stress, and improving our response to it. “Being Army Strong is being more than just physically fit,” said BG (Dr.) Rhonda Cornum, the Army’s assistant surgeon general, in an interview with *GX*. Total fitness is “characterized as high levels of resilience, adaptability, self-confidence and agility.”



© ISTOCK PHOTO



## THE BIG PICTURE

Many of us are adept at dealing with situational stress—one problem at a time. But the real goal is to achieve ongoing, long-term balance, stability and peace of mind. For starters, you may need to reprioritize. The more you simplify your life, the less stress you're likely to feel.

Try these top-5 tips to minimize stress and start feeling great:

### 1. Exercise.

A study by *Science Daily* on runners who ran for two hours revealed that endorphins were released in the prefrontal and limbic regions of the brain. These regions, among others, deal with long-term storage of episodic memories and thoughts of how you feel about yourself. So, prolonged periods of exercise will make you feel good.

### 2. Rest.

Your body needs time to recuperate. The National Sleep Foundation in the United States says that for adults, seven to nine hours per night of sleep is optimal. Getting sufficient sleep facilitates:

- \* Alertness
- \* Increased memory and problem solving
- \* Increased overall health
- \* Reduced risk of accidents

Here are tips from the National Sleep Foundation for better sleeping:

- \* Avoid caffeine and nicotine close to bedtime.
- \* Avoid alcohol, as it can lead to disrupted sleep.
- \* Exercise regularly, but complete your workout at least three hours before bedtime.
- \* Establish a regular, relaxing, stress-free bedtime routine, such as relaxing in a bath or hot tub.
- \* Create a dark, quiet, sleep-conducive environment.

## 5 Ways to Improve Your Health Fast

TRY THESE 5 TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR LIFE WITH MORE ENERGY AND A STRONGER SENSE OF WELL-BEING.

- 1. HEALTH:** Cut out unnecessary sugar. Think before you reach for a donut, mid-afternoon piece of candy or a can of soda at work. If your body is a car, then the food you eat is the fuel. Eat premium quality foods for maximum performance.
- 2. FREEDOM:** Spend less time on your cell phone or answering emails. Set aside certain times of the day for these tasks, and then move on from them.
- 3. JOY:** Do something you enjoy. This can be as simple as taking time for a good long walk or sipping a cup of tea for a few minutes while you gaze out the window.
- 4. KINDNESS:** Do not say anything about yourself that you wouldn't say about someone else. This includes both the running dialogue in your brain and in actual conversation.
- 5. ORDER:** Organize your workspace and your home. At work, go through all of the paperwork on or around your desktop. File what you need, shred and throw out everything else. At home, start with one small space at a time, perhaps a closet or chest of drawers.

### 5. Stop complaining and think positively.

You can change your circumstances by changing your perception. "Happy people appear to be more successful than their less-happy peers in three primary domains—work, relationships and health."

Benefits of optimism may include:

- \* Decreased stress
- \* Increased immune system
- \* A sense of well-being and improved health
- \* Better coping skills during hardships

**BG (DR.) RHONDA CORNUM**, the Army's assistant surgeon general, says: "This way of thinking takes fitness to a whole new comprehensive level. Being fit is no longer solely about physical strength, but about spiritual and emotional fitness, too."

**A MAN TOO BUSY TO TAKE CARE OF HIS HEALTH IS LIKE A MECHANIC TOO BUSY TO TAKE CARE OF HIS TOOLS."**

>> Spanish Proverb

### 3. Smile.

Smiling can release serotonin and endorphins—natural chemicals that help reduce pain and induce pleasure. Also, studies say that when you smile, you're seen as more sincere, attractive, sociable and competent.

### 4. Spend time with people who encourage you.

Surround yourself with positive thinkers. Friends who encourage you can help you stay on course and not give up during hard times.



SFC ERICA ISAACSON

**BIG GUNS** An instructor helps Soldiers of the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade put together the .50 caliber machine gun prior to convoy training at Camp Ripley, MN.

# Ma Deuce

M2 .50 CAL STILL KICKIN' AFTER 90 YEARS

By Camille Breland

“If the German Air Force had the Browning .50 caliber, the Battle of Britain would have turned out differently,” declared Hermann Goering, Commander-in-Chief of the Luftwaffe, after WWII.



**HALT!** SGT Gregory Peck and SPC Brian Seda, members of the Puerto Rico Army National Guard deployed in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo, stand ready to move at a moment's notice during a training exercise in Camp America Nov. 20.



PHOTO BY SGT LUNETTE HOKHE

## SPECS

**DATE OF INTRODUCTION:** 1918  
**CREW:** 1-4 (CREW LEADER, GUNNER, ASSISTANT GUNNER, AMMUNITION BEARER)  
**LENGTH:** 61.42 INCHES  
**WEIGHT (TOTAL):** 128 LBS  
**\*GUN:** 84 LBS  
**\*M3 TRIPOD (COMPLETE):** 44 LBS  
**BARREL LENGTH:** 45 INCHES  
**BORE DIAMETER:** .50 INCHES  
**MAXIMUM EFFECTIVE RANGE WITH TRIPOD MOUNT:** 1.24 MILES (2,000 METERS)  
**MAXIMUM RANGE:** 4.22 MILES (6,791 METERS)  
**CYCLIC RATE OF FIRE:** 550 ROUNDS PER MINUTE

## BUT THEY DIDN'T HAVE IT— WE DID, AND THE ALLIES WON.

For being one of the longest-serving weapons in the U.S. military, the “Ma Deuce,” Browning M2 .50 caliber, hides its age well. The almost-90-year-old machine gun has been used—and has kicked butt—in every major U.S. conflict since WWII.

## STARTING WITH A BANG

The M2 .50 cal is a product of weapons mastermind John M. Browning, also known for the .30 cal M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle used from WWI through the Korean War. Born in Ogden, UT, in 1855, Browning was fascinated by metal works and weapons from a young age. By the time he was 13, he had created his first gun from scraps, and soon moved on to bigger, tougher firearms.

Browning began designing and working on the .50 cal machine gun in 1917, near the end of WWI. By 1918, he had his first prototype, but the M2 version wasn't officially introduced for military action until 1932. It quickly became the go-to machine gun for ground, aircraft and naval troops because of its versatility: Ammunition could be fed from the right or left, and the gun was capable of single-shot or automatic, rapid fire. It also came in two versions—air- or water-cooled.

During WWII, the U.S. and its Allies used the .50 cal in every theater of operation. By 1945, 237 .50 cal were assigned to each infantry division, 385 for armored divisions and 165 for each airborne division.

For aircraft, the light-barrel .50 cal had a fixed, quad barrel mount that allowed up to eight guns to be carried in fighter planes like the P-47 Thunderbolt and P-51 Mustang. It also fit into single, twin or quad barrel turrets on bomber aircraft—the B-17 Flying Fortress and B-24 Liberator.

These weapons proved just as effective on the ground, with assistance from an M3 tripod mount—a folding, three-legged stand. Each of the tripod's legs can be stuck into the ground for further stability, allowing the .50 cal, then only 12 inches off the ground, to be deadly accurate.

From laying down suppressive fire, blocking road intersections or striking low-flying aircraft, this high-powered gun literally struck the final blow to the Germans, taking down Hitler and his Nazis.

## MA DEUCE KEEPS KICKIN'

Soldiers went on to use the .50 cal in the Korean, Vietnam and Gulf wars, and it's still found on the battlefield today, in the Global War on Terror.

The .50 cal has been and still is a favorite weapon of Guard Soldiers, since they're consistently called upon to serve and defend our nation from the enemy overseas. From pilots in the sky to gunners on the ground, Ma Deuce has thumped hard and heavy to protect America's liberty. **GX**



# 9 MILES OF HONOR

1SG Jim Williams Goes the Distance  
for Fellow Soldiers

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*By Christian Anderson*



**A VOW TO REMEMBER**

A Veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, 1SG Jim Williams works hard to ensure that fallen Soldiers will never be forgotten.



**AT THE FRONT** GX's own Dustin McNeal accepts the honor of holding the Stars and Stripes during the 3rd Annual Fallen Soldier March in Lebanon, TN, on Aug. 17, 2007.

# IT WAS ALL ABOUT REMEMBERING THOSE WHO NEVER CAME HOME. TO HONOR THEIR SERVICE AND ULTIMATE SACRIFICE. TO ENSURE THEY WERE TRULY NEVER FORGOTTEN.



**SURE, THERE ARE CHARITY FOUNDATIONS** and of course Memorial Day, but 1SG Jim Williams was looking for a way to remind the everyday civilian of the 17 Tennessee Guard Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice in the Global War on Terror.

Williams woke up on a hot, sunny morning, donned his ACUs, filled a rucksack up to about 30 pounds and grabbed an American Flag. As he laced up his boots, he wondered how many people would notice—and whether they would care.

It turned out the people of Lebanon, TN, cared a lot. As Williams marched down the scenic, historic roads of Lebanon, hundreds of people lined the streets to show their support

for not only the Army National Guard, but the good ol' Stars and Stripes, too.

## **PATRIOTIC SINCE BIRTH**

1SG Jim Williams was born July 2, 1965, in Nashville, TN, and comes from a long line of patriotic warriors. He has wanted to be in the military since he was small child, and knew he was destined to serve his country.

Williams' father spent 21 years in the Air Force and instilled in his young son, early on, the importance of service to country and the value of freedom.

"His service absolutely influenced my decision," Williams attests. "I was raised to serve and honor my country."

But it wasn't the Air Force or the National Guard that caught young Williams' eye. It was the U.S. Marine Corps. When Williams was just 6 years old, he saw a Marine with medals covering his chest and decided he wanted to be just like this hero.

"When I turned 17, my dad signed for me to do the Delayed Entry Program for the Marine Corps," Williams says proudly.

At 18, after graduating from Parris Island, the notoriously tough Marine boot camp in South Carolina, Williams began serving. He traveled the world as a rifleman for four years and then spent a year in the Marine Reserve. But it wasn't until a friend mentioned the Army National Guard that

**IN TENNESSEE,  
 WE WILL ALWAYS  
 REFLECT,  
 SUPPORT,  
 AND REMEMBER  
 THOSE FALLEN  
 SOLDIERS AND  
 THEIR FAMILIES.**

>> 1SG JIM WILLIAMS



Williams considered this branch.

“The two things that drew me to the Guard were the AGR program and the sense of family that the Guard has,” Williams explains. “Knowing I could call on any of my fellow Soldiers and they could be counted on.” The AGR—Active Guard Reserve—program allows for Guard members to work full-time as Soldiers.

So in 1989, Williams left the Marine Reserves and joined the ranks of one of America’s most historic fighting institutions: the Tennessee Army National Guard, a force that traces its lineage back to Davy Crockett and Andrew Jackson.

**ANSWERING THE CALL OF DUTY**

As with any Guard Soldier, Williams eventually received his call to deploy and never thought twice about carrying out his duty.

As a member of the 269th Military Police Company, Tennessee Army National Guard, Williams spent 20 months deployed, with a year of that in Iraq for Operations Iraqi Freedom 1 and 2. Long days coupled with dangerous missions were the norm, but the men and women of the 269th, including Williams,

kept their heads up and completed their assignments. But like any deployment, Williams’ was far from a cakewalk.

“The deployment was rough on everyone,” Williams confesses. “Living conditions were somewhat primitive, the missions were long and dangerous, and everyone had to deal with each others’ personalities.”

Williams made it through his deployment and went safely back to his family, which includes his wife of 10 years, Vanessa. But like many Soldiers who’ve been deployed and experienced combat, Williams experienced lingering questions.

“It was mentally tough,” he explains. “I was on a patrol that got hit by an IED and ambushed. I felt guilty that the driver of the vehicle I was in was severely wounded. I felt some responsibility for that situation.”

Williams, whose decorations include a Bronze Star, an Army Commendation Medal and a Purple Heart, wanted to do something to honor those Soldiers who deserved to be recognized—the warriors who never made it home.

“My service means sacrifice, loyalty and integrity. It means that I’ll do whatever it takes to make sure my Soldiers are taken care of and trained properly, no matter the outcome for me,” Williams explains. “It means that I will always stand up for what is right for my troops. My service is only as good as those that inspired me to do good things, to be forward-leaning, to remain motivated.”

**WORTH EVERY STEP** 1SG Jim Williams jokes with other Soldiers during the 4th Annual Fallen Soldier March in Lebanon, TN, on Aug. 15, 2008.



**THE FIRST TIME**

A few months after he returned from Iraq, Williams knew he wanted to do something to honor them—but what? What would get people to stop in their tracks, put their busy lifestyles on hold for a moment and appreciate their freedom and our Soldiers' sacrifices?

"Americans definitely take their freedoms for granted. [Basic activities] like going to the store, going to church or simply driving down the highway can get you killed in Iraq," Williams says. "Sometimes people focus on how many service members we've lost, and that is definitely a sad situation, but if you really give thought to what is going on over there, the Iraqis have paid a huge price for their newfound freedom."

"Basically," Williams explains, "I just decided to do it. When I did the first march, I really didn't know what to think. I invited a couple of Soldiers to march with me, but they thought I was crazy. A reputation I still have," he jokes.

**THE FIRST MARCH WAS ME, WITH A FLAG AND A PACK. THE SECOND MARCH WAS ME, TWO RECRUITERS AND A GX REPORTER. THE FOLLOWING TWO YEARS, WE'VE HAD UPWARDS OF 100 SOLDIERS MARCH."**

>> 1SG JIM WILLIAMS

Williams set out on foot from the National Guard armory in Lebanon, TN, and marched right down the road. At first, a few people honked their horns in support, waving and cheering him on. But the word spread fast and a couple of miles into the march, Williams became an attraction, as the spirit of patriotism grew.

That first march was an experience Williams will never forget. It represented a year of emotions all wrapped up in a few hours, and Williams thought of his fallen comrades with every step.

As he trudged along, he couldn't help but feel the pride of not only being an American, but also a Soldier in the National Guard. As he stood tall and carried his flag high, people began to pull off the roads in Lebanon in support. Williams couldn't believe it.



**WE WILL NEVER FORGET** A memorial for the fallen Soldiers of Tennessee located at the starting point of the Fallen Soldier March in front of the National Guard Armory in Lebanon, TN.

"I was astonished at the respect the community gave, and still gives, to this event. In small rural areas, it's customary to pull over when a funeral procession passes to show respect. Vehicles were showing this respect to the march. In addition, mothers with their children were on the side of the road saluting as the march passed.

"One lady stopped her vehicle on the busiest street in town and made all of her kids get out of the van to shake my hand," he recalls.

At the end of the day, Williams felt relieved. Like a weight had been lifted. He had served his country in Iraq, and now he had served his fallen comrades by honoring and remembering them.

"I was very emotional [during the first one], but somehow, as the event grew, it has become therapeutic for me, and I think it is for other Soldiers, too," Williams says.

**SOLDIERS, TOO**

"The march has definitely evolved," Williams says. "The first march was me,

with a flag and a pack. The second march was me, two recruiters and a GX reporter. The following two years, we've had upwards of 100 Soldiers march. In addition, other states have picked up the cause. California and Texas have done similar marches, and I've actually been invited to march in Texas in the near future."

Regarding the impact of his efforts, Williams comments, "We have Soldiers from Kentucky, Alabama and Missouri participate in this march. The third year, I met the most amazing woman, Ms. Angela Newman. She marched 9 miles representing her son, William, who had been killed in Iraq one month prior to the march."

**THE GX EXPERIENCE**

I first heard of 1SG Williams in the summer of 2007 when I was interning at GX. He sounded larger-than-life, and the march

CPT TIM IRVIN



amazed me. I missed the 2007 march but made sure I would be there for 2008. It was an incredible sight: 100 Soldiers in full gear marching down the road. Everywhere I looked, people were pulling to the side of the road, waving and cheering the Soldiers. Businesses would empty as their customers and employees moved to the curb, waving American Flags and whistling. It was truly one of the most patriotic events I had ever witnessed.

“When I returned, I had a hard time accepting that people just kept on with their normal lives while our Soldiers were fighting in Iraq and Afghanistan,” Williams says. “So I decided to do something about it. I would make them remember.”

Not only was the showing impressive, but Williams’s father, just returning from a knee replacement, was also able to make it to the march. Seeing two generations of military, side by side, was a unique experience, and you could see Williams beaming with pride as his father patriotically trudged on.

#### SUPPORT FROM DC

There was one civilian in particular whose participation seemed to thrill the other marchers: Tennessee Congressman Jim Cooper came all the way from Washington, DC, to pay his respects and help honor the memory of Tennessee’s finest.

“I was proud to march with Jim Williams and a dedicated group of Soldiers and civilians to honor our fallen heroes,” Rep. Cooper says. “Our troops and their families have made unending sacrifices for us over the past seven years, and Jim’s effort to recognize them is inspiring. Americans respect and honor all those who have given their lives for our country.”

#### NEVER QUIT

With close to 25 years of military service, you would think Williams would want to relax a little and let some younger Soldiers take the reins of the march. But he has no intention to quit the march anytime soon and plans to continue leading the pack for many years.

“My goal is to have this march take place in every state on the same day,” Williams adds. “It is a lofty goal, and some states seem reluctant to support such a march because of the risk incurred. However, with the proper safety measures, the risk is minimal.”

For Williams and many of the participants, the march is not about themselves or about their risk. These Soldiers ruck 9 miles on a hot Southern day for one reason: To remember. They march to remember the bond of Soldiers; to honor the brotherhood; and to uphold the promise uttered by the millions of Soldiers who have fought under the beautiful Stars and Stripes they promised to protect: “Never forget the fallen and always, always honor their memory.”

“In Tennessee we will always reflect, support and remember those Fallen Soldiers and their families,” Williams promises. **GX**

> For more information on the Fallen Soldier March, email 1SG Williams at [james.williams48@us.army.mil](mailto:james.williams48@us.army.mil).

#### HEAVY RUCKS, TOUGH SOLDIERS

Soldiers ditch their rucks before the 3rd Annual Fallen Soldier March, on Aug. 17, 2007, in Lebanon, TN. The rucks often weigh up to 50 pounds.



# APACHE WARRIOR



JUNE 8, 2004, AFGHANISTAN  
CW4 JOLLY HARPER, FLORIDA  
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, AND  
HIS CO-PILOT GUNNER WERE  
ASSISTING ELEMENTS OF THE  
22ND MARINE EXPEDITIONARY  
UNIT WHEN HE RECEIVED WORD  
THAT THE MARINES WERE  
TAKING FIRE FROM THE HILLS.

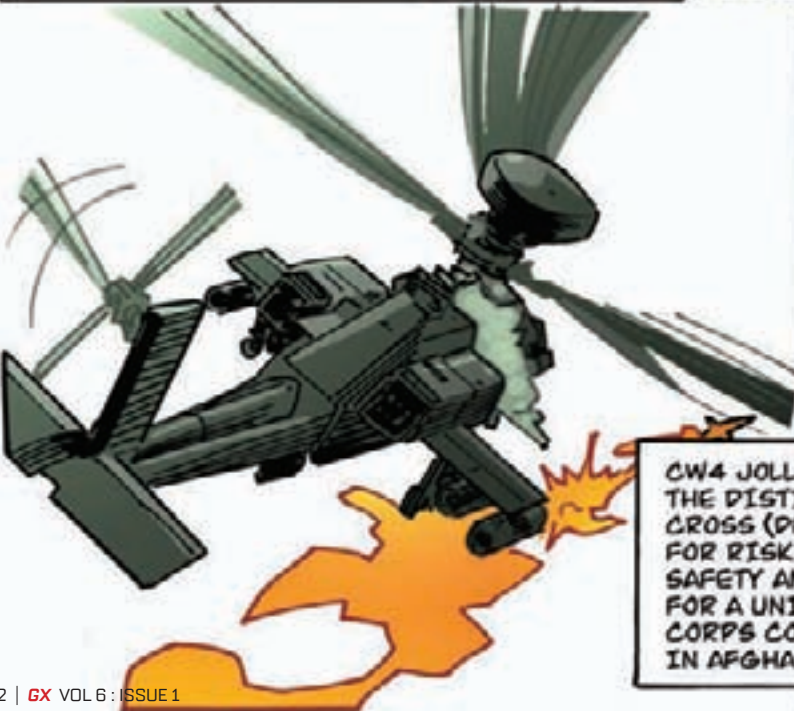
HARPER MADE AN  
AGGRESSIVE 180-  
DEGREE TURN AND  
ENGAGED THE ENEMY  
ON THE HILLTOPS,  
LETTING LOOSE A  
FURY OF FIRE FROM  
HIS 30MM CANNON  
AND HIS 2.75-INCH  
ROCKETS. ALL THE  
WHILE, THE FLORIDA  
APACHE TOOK HEAVY  
FIRE AND EVEN  
DODGED A ROCKET-  
PROPELLED  
GRENADE (RPG).



HARPER MADE MULTIPLE ATTACKS ON THE  
ENEMY, PURSUING AND DESTROYING THEM AS  
THEY RETREATED, REELING FROM HIS DEVAS-  
TATING FIREPOWER. HARPER REPLENISHED  
HIS AMMO AND FUEL, AND AGAIN RETURNED  
TO THE BATTLEFIELD TO ENGAGE THE ENEMY  
ONE MORE TIME.



THE MARINES  
CONFIRMED 27  
ENEMY KIA AND  
A HANDFUL OF  
WOUNDED, WITH  
"A LARGE PORTION  
OF THESE ENEMY  
KIAS BEING A  
DIRECT RESULT OF  
THE INTENSE AND  
ACCURATE AERIAL  
FIRES" FROM  
HARPER'S APACHE  
DURING THE  
ENGAGEMENT.



CW4 JOLLY HARPER RECEIVED  
THE DISTINGUISHED FLYING  
CROSS (DFC) JULY 19, 2008  
FOR RISKING HIS PERSONAL  
SAFETY AND PROVIDING COVER  
FOR A UNITED STATES MARINE  
CORPS CONVOY UNDER AMBUSH  
IN AFGHANISTAN IN 2004.

END

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