

GX[®]

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

WEAPONS OF MASS
RECONSTRUCTION

BUSHMASTERS IN
AFGHANISTAN

>> ON THE ROAD

COMBATIVES
GROWS UP

NEW RESPECT
FOR OLD-SCHOOL
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THE PRICE
OF PEACE

TEENS' SONG
OF HOPE
P. 77

Merry Christmas

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A Lifetime of Service

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the citizens of the state of Florida, I am honored to congratulate and salute you, the United States Army National Guard, as American Citizen-Soldiers.

Founded upon the ideals of freedom and democracy America has long relied upon the men and women in our Armed Forces to ensure these principles are properly preserved for future generations to enjoy The

United States Army National Guard is our first line of defense toward this purpose. I pay tribute to the men and women who are currently serving and have served in the National Guard for their willingness to serve in times of war as well as those who conducted peacetime vigilance. Your service and devotion are admirable and today provide a source of strength and support and instill a spirit of freedom in the minds of all.

More than 440 years ago, a small contingent of Spanish Soldiers and civilian settlers gathered on the banks of a wild, sub-tropical inlet in Florida with the intent of defending their newly founded settlement of St. Augustine. This group of about 50 Civilian-Soldiers formed a militia that is considered the historical roots of the Florida National Guard. Florida's National Guard has served in every major conflict, provided essential service to our homeland defense, and continues to serve as role models for a younger generation discovering the meaning of commitment, honor and duty They have worked hand in hand with local and federal government agencies to provide assistance to those whose homes have been damaged by natural disasters, most notably the hurricanes that have passed over Florida in recent years.

As governor of the great state of Florida, on behalf of millions of Floridians, I offer sincere thanks to the brave men and women who have served us so honorably

Sincerely,

*Charlie Crist
Governor of Florida*

"The National Guard continues to serve as role models for a younger generation discovering the meaning of commitment, honor and duty."

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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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“I will never quit.”

—Excerpt from The Soldier's Creed

We're about to close our fifth year of GX. It's been an intense ride, for sure. Over the years, we've bumped along in your Humvees, soared sideways in your Black Hawks, even sweated it out in Iraq and froze our butts off in Alaska. Through all the missions and training we have witnessed, one thing remains constant: that steel determination in the Soldier's eye.

No matter what a Soldier may look like or act like—no matter if they're all-out hooah or a quiet observer—all the Soldiers we've met carry a steadfast commitment to the expansion of Freedom and the protection of our Nation. I've seen those moments firsthand. You're sitting with a Soldier, maybe chowing on a burger or hoofin' it on a road march, and if you ask them why they serve, the smiles snap into a straight-lipped reply. And that reply always echoes *The Soldier's Creed*.

This same resolve no doubt fueled Arizona's Bushmasters like a freight train. This issue, we explore their deployment (see pg. 34) as tribute to all Guard Soldiers taking the fight straight to the face of the enemy. That's courage beyond that of the common man. That's the hero quality inherent in our fighting force.

May God continue to bless and protect the American Soldier. We are forever in awe of your heart, your endurance and your strength.

Thank you!



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

Soldier's Creed

I am an American Soldier.
I am a Warrior and a member of a team.
I serve the people of the United States and live the Army Values.
I will always place the mission first.
I will never accept defeat.
I will never quit.
I will never leave a fallen comrade.
I am disciplined, physically and mentally tough, trained and proficient in my Warrior tasks and drills.
I always maintain my arms, my equipment and myself.
I am an expert and I am a professional.
I stand ready to deploy, engage, and destroy the enemies of the United States of America in close combat.
I am a guardian of freedom and the American way of life.
I am an American Soldier.



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>> **BLINDED BY THE LIGHT**

[**Fort Lee, VA**]

A Soldier contending in the "Best Warrior" competition participates in a night-fire exercise at Fort Lee, VA, Oct. 2, 2008.

 Photo by SFC Tom Steber



» CROWD FAVORITE

[Towson, MD]

Olympic hero and Baltimore native Michael Phelps gets a lift in a Maryland Army National Guard Humvee during a parade held in his honor in Towson, MD.

Photo by CPT Rick Breitenfeldt







>> THE MIGHTY BUCKEYES

[Camp Arifjan, Kuwait]

Answering the pressing need for critical Joint Node Network communications in Afghanistan, about 40 Soldiers from the 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team respond yet again to the call of duty. The Ohio Army National Guard is making a difference in all three areas of the Global War on Terrorism: Kuwait, Iraq and now Afghanistan.

Photo by PFC Kimberly Johnson, 37th BCT







HONOR AND SERVICE: Two New York Soldiers earn medals for combat actions in Afghanistan.

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FOR THE TROOPS: Country music star Trace Adkins talks about his USO tours and Soldier support.

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"LEADERSHIP IS INTANGIBLE, AND THEREFORE NO WEAPON EVER DESIGNED CAN REPLACE IT."

>> GEN Omar Bradley



WAR HORSE
CW4 Jolly Harper stands by his combat-proven AH-64 Apache Gunship while in Afghanistan.

Raining Fire

FLORIDA PILOT RECEIVES AWARD FOR AERIAL COMBAT *By Christian Anderson*

ORLANDO, FL—CW4 Jolly Harper received the Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC) for valor on the battlefield while providing close air support to a United States Marine Corps convoy under ambush in Afghanistan in 2004. Harper was presented the award during a ceremony July 19 at the National Guard Officers Association conference in Orlando.

COURTESY OF THE FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD



GUNSHIP PILOT CW4 Jolly Harper behind the “wheel” of his AH-64 Apache Gunship.

HARPER MADE AN AGGRESSIVE 180-DEGREE TURN (WING OVER) AND ENGAGED THE ENEMY ON THE HILLTOPS.

took heavy machine gun fire while evading at least half a dozen rocket-propelled grenades (RPGs).

As he prepared to make another diving attack on the enemy forces, Harper noticed enemy combatants retreating through an orchard. He attacked these combatants before again re-engaging the enemy on the hilltops. After he made several passes, the enemy decided to call it a day, but Harper wasn't quite ready to pack it in. Harper and Fox pursued the enemy and terminated the threat.

The Apache had to return to the Forward Operating Base (FOB) for fuel and ammo, but Harper then turned back to the scene to continue fire support for the Marines. He again engaged and eliminated the fleeing enemy one more time before maintaining aerial recon/security presence until the Marines reached their destination.

At the end of the day the Marines confirmed 37 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.

The Distinguished Flying Cross has a rich 80-year history and is reserved for only America's finest aviators. Congress created the medal July 2, 1926, to honor pilots who execute extraordinary feats of airmanship. Since then, the DFC has been awarded to brave pilots in every major conflict in U.S. history. **GX**

For our Soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan, there are two main options when a firefight goes sour: Call in the artillery or call in air support. Both can offer devastating consequences to the enemy, and both have saved countless lives during the Global War on Terror. But there is something very comforting about hearing those rotor blades turning overhead. These pilots truly watch over you.

For a group of Marines being ambushed in Afghanistan on June 8, 2004, nothing could have sounded sweeter than Harper's Florida National Guard AH-64 Apache Gunship thumping overhead.

The AAR report from June 8, 2004, states that Harper's “expert use of the AH-64 Apache Gunship helicopter's aerial weapons platform and his calm demeanor under extreme circumstances throughout both engagements not only saved he and his crew, but also saved the United States Marine convoy from destruction in an ambush from three sides.”

These few words just barely touch on Harper's bravery and

dedication to fellow Americans in battle.

Pilot-in-Command Harper and his Co-Pilot Gunner CW2 Eric C. Fox were tasked with directly assisting elements of the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU) with ground operations. Harper was scouting out the road about one mile ahead of the Marines when he received word that they were

taking fire from the surrounding high ground.

Harper made an aggressive 180-degree turn (wing over), called for his wingman CW2 Mark Anderson and 1LT Cody Atchison to “saddle up” 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



FRONT, CENTER AND PROUD While his wife, TJ Harper, looks on, CW4 Jolly Harper (right) receives the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism from Adjutant General of Florida MG Douglas Burnett during the National Guard Association of Florida's Annual State Conference in Orlando, July 19.

**VICTORY
MAP**



COLORADO: The Colorado National Guard's Joint Counterdrug Task Force, in partnership with the Drug Enforcement Agency and Miss Colorado, led the charge to bring an anti-drug message to 65 schools across the state during Red Ribbon Week. Two Army OH-58 Kiowa helicopters and associated counterdrug crews made up to five presentations per day, starting with Peiffer Elementary School in Littleton, CO, on Oct. 13.

CONNECTICUT: MG Thaddeus J. Martin, adjutant general and commander of the Connecticut National Guard, announced a formal welcome-home ceremony on Oct. 8 for 15 Soldiers of the Embedded Training Team (ETT) of Hartford and a send-off for nine Soldiers from Detachment 2, Company I, 185th Aviation Regiment of Groton. The ETT assisted, mentored and trained the Afghan National Police and helped develop their capability and capacity to fight terror within the country's borders in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

FLORIDA: Starting Nov. 8, 2008, and continuing through 2009, the World Golf Hall of Fame in St. Augustine, FL, will continue the tradition of honoring Bob Hope's life achievements and military contributions in an exhibit dedicated to the entertainer. Hope was named an Honorary Veteran by the United States Congress in 1997 and became the first and only person to receive this award. Visit wgvm.com for more information.

GUAM: The Guam Army National Guard and their supporters were recognized in a ceremony at the University of Guam field house on Oct. 5. Guam's Governor Felix Camacho addressed the Guard Soldiers, their families and employers during the Freedom Salute ceremony. "You are taking care of the next generation. You are securing the future for generations to come so that they may live in peace and enjoy more freedom," Camacho said.

KANSAS: Approximately 130 National Guard Soldiers of the 1161st Forward Support Company, Hutchinson, were welcomed home from their deployment to Iraq during a ceremony on Friday, Oct. 10. "It's great to have these Soldiers back home," said MG Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. "I'm proud of their hard work and dedication during this deployment, and I'm grateful for the support their families and friends provided them throughout their time away."

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Passing the Test

SOLDIERS RECEIVE COMBAT ACTION BADGES

By SPC Justin Adelmann

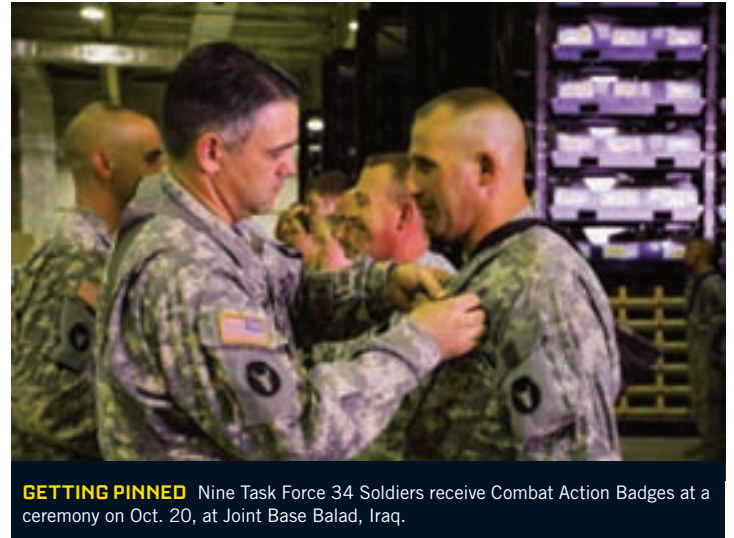
BALAD, IRAQ—By order of BG John Nunn, the assistant adjutant general for the New Jersey National Guard, nine Soldiers were awarded the Combat Action Badge (CAB) for their service during their deployment in Iraq with B Company 434th Main Support Battalion in 2005. At that time, they were responsible for running convoy missions, hauling supplies and vehicles, and providing convoy security.

LTC Eric Waage, 834th Aviation Support Battalion commander, presented the Soldiers with the award.

"The Combat Action Badge is a non-skill badge—there is no school at which you can earn these," Waage said. "But like the skills badge, you still have to take a test. These Soldiers have passed that test."

After presenting the awards to the Soldiers, Waage addressed those in attendance.

"I want to compliment these Soldiers on coming over for a second tour," Waage said. "It is a wonderful morning for the bat-



GETTING PINNED Nine Task Force 34 Soldiers receive Combat Action Badges at a ceremony on Oct. 20, at Joint Base Balad, Iraq.

alion to be able to award them; we are all extremely proud."

According to Army Regulation 600-8-22, the CAB provides special recognition to Soldiers who personally engage the enemy, or are personally engaged by the enemy during combat operations.

Because they were attached to a New Jersey unit, the Minnesota Soldiers waited a considerable

amount of time to receive the award.

SSG Rick Culver, A Co., 834th ASB Transportation Platoon Sergeant and CAB recipient, gave a glimpse of his previous deployment.

"On a convoy, I saw all these clumps of grass on the road. So enough, there was an [improvised explosive device]," Culver shared. "As we called it in, mortar rounds started to drop in around us. I wasn't scared—the adrenaline was just pumping through me, and I was doing what I was trained to do." **GX**



ATTENTION The Combat Action Badge (CAB) provides special recognition to Soldiers who personally engage the enemy, or are engaged by the enemy during combat operations.

"I WASN'T SCARED—THE ADRENALINE WAS JUST PUMPING THROUGH ME, AND I WAS DOING WHAT I WAS TRAINED TO DO."

>> SSG Rick Culver

SPC JUSTIN ADELMANN



< THANK YOU
SGT Travis S. Smithers from Watertown, NY, receives the Purple Heart from COL Gary Yaple, deputy commander of CJTF-Phoenix.

RECOGNITION >
CPT John Shannon of Elmira receives the Meritorious Service Medal from COL Gary Yaple, deputy commander of CJTF-Phoenix.

Medals for Two New York Soldiers

By LTC Paul Fanning

▶ CAMP PHOENIX, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN—New York Army National Guard Soldiers from Watertown and Elmira were recognized Sept. 19 during award ceremonies held at Camp Phoenix as they prepared to return home from deployment.

SGT Travis S. Smithers from Watertown, NY, was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in combat operations in May 2008. CPT John Shannon of Elmira was awarded the Meritorious Service medal for his service in command of an enlarged infantry company of security force Soldiers that was mobilized last year.

Both Soldiers are members of the Security Force Company built around the New York Army National Guard's A Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry, headquartered in Geneseo. Additional platoons came from the Hudson Valley, Capital District, the Adirondacks and the North County.

Last September, these 230 infantry Soldiers from New York's 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team were mobilized ahead of the main deployment of New York Soldiers for Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. They have now completed their tour of duty and will be returning home in the very near future.

"You have done an awesome job since you arrived here so many months ago," said COL Gary

Yaple, deputy commander of CJTF-Phoenix and New York's 27th IBCT. "You were each hand-selected for this assignment because of the work you did," he said.

Nearly 40 percent of the unit has served in Iraq, and many from the team performed homeland security duty following the 9/11 attacks in New York City and at other locations across the state.

"And, now you are going home with everyone you came here with.

That is an accomplishment," Yaple said. "Thank you for doing a terrific job."

CJTF-Phoenix is part of Combined Security Transition Command-Afghanistan, with the mission to mentor and train the Afghan National Army and police, and provide assistance to the government of Afghanistan and its people. The task force is composed of nearly 9,500 service men and women from all U.S. branches, coalition partners and civilian professionals, distributed at almost 260 forward operating bases and combat outposts throughout Afghanistan.

Nearly 1,700 members of New York's 27th IBCT were mobilized for the mission, which is the largest number from a single state that has been deployed for CJTF-Phoenix thus far. The Soldiers came from communities across New York and formed the largest single deployment from the New York National Guard in recent memory.

The remaining members of the task force are expected home in early 2009. **GX**



< THE PURPLE HEART is the oldest military decoration in present use and is awarded to those who have been wounded or killed while serving with the U.S. military.

THE MERITORIOUS SERVICE MEDAL > recognizes outstanding meritorious achievement or service by a member of the Armed Forces in a noncombat area.



**VICTORY
MAP**



MAINE: The 169th Military Police Company of the Maine Army National Guard was recognized Oct. 5 for its service in Iraq. The unit's 36 members spent a year in the volatile Anbar Province training and mentoring Iraqi police officers. At their home base in Waterville, the troops were treated to a Freedom Salute ceremony. Military leaders, members of Maine's congressional delegation and Gov. John Baldacci were on hand to offer their thanks for a job well done.

LOUISIANA: The Louisiana National Guard broke ground Nov. 20, to mark the start of construction for the long-awaited joint military center to be built in Baton Rouge, LA. "This is a great day for Baton Rouge, and I am proud to be part of such an extraordinary event," said Mayor-President Melvin "Kip" Holden. "It is not only an effort to build a partnership between the city and the military, but it is about forming a family," explained Holden. The new Armed Forces Reserve Center will provide operation and training facilities along with a field maintenance shop for the Louisiana Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Marine Corps Reserve forces. LANG will have the largest presence at the facility with approximately 370 Soldiers from the 769th Engineer Battalion. The Army Reserve's 1190th Transportation Group will be second with approximately 250 Troops and 3rd Battalion, 23rd Marine Regiment will bring in approximately 130 Reserve Marines. These units are currently based throughout the Baton Rouge area.

NEW YORK: The New York Army National Guard exceeded its 2008 recruiting goal, enlisting more than 2,000 new Citizen-Soldiers throughout the year and achieving a year-end strength of 10,276 Soldiers. "The Guard has been called more than ever [over the past three years], and it is a remarkable success story to attract almost 29,000 great Americans to our rolls during such challenging times," said MG Joseph J. Taluto, adjutant general for the New York National Guard.

NORTH CAROLINA: LTG H Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, presented the Bureau's Distinguished Service Award to North Carolina Gov. Mike Easley on Oct. 2 in Raleigh. Easley is the co-lead governor for National Guard issues for the National Governors' Association. He has testified on Capitol Hill to get more resources and support for Guard Soldiers, Airmen and families, and to clarify the role

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24



MAKING THE CALL
SGT John Farrar, an infantryman from the ILARNG's 178th Infantry Regiment, scans his surroundings as he provides security during a training scenario at Fort Bragg, NC, Oct. 9, 2008.

The Afghan State of Mind

ILLINOIS GUARD TRAINS FOR PRT MISSION

By SSG Jon Soucy

FORT BRAGG, NC—Humvees rolled along a gravel road, cutting through the center of the small village of nondescript cinderblock buildings. Stones crunched under their large tires.

After a security check, the vehicles' occupants headed toward a building where a planning meeting between U.S. military personnel and local village and tribal leaders would ensure fairness in upcoming elections in a land fraught with turmoil. Peace could prevail.

Though the flag of Afghanistan hung inside the building, Old Glory ruled this village, a mockup located in North Carolina.

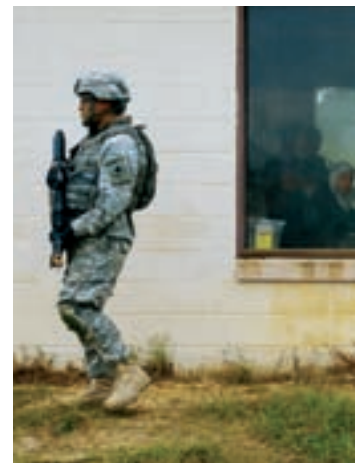
The village and the scenario were all part of a training mission for members of a provincial reconstruction team (PRT) that was preparing at Fort Bragg for their deployment to Afghanistan's Khowst province.

A PRT is a multi-agency unit designed to provide security while assisting with reconstruction efforts in unstable nations. The teams are a big part of coalition efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"This is clearly building a team of teams," said BG J. Michael Bednarek, commander of 1st Army Division East, which is in charge of training PRTs and other deploying units.

"The great 189th Infantry Brigade here ... has been masterful in putting together the most realistic environment that these provincial reconstruction teams will see, and it prepares them for when they deploy and arrive in Afghanistan," Bednarek said.

The training focuses on economic stability as well as traditional military tactics, Bednarek said. Illinois Army National Guard's B Company, 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment, based in Kankakee, IL, will be the security force for PRT Khowst. For some in



VIGILANT SGT Arnulfo Gomez, an infantryman with the Illinois National Guard's B Company, 1st Battalion, 178th Infantry Regiment, pulls security duty outside a building at Fort Bragg, NC, Oct. 9, 2008.

the unit, it's a nice change from previous deployments.

"Oh, it's a lot different," said SGT John Farrar, an infantryman assigned to B Company, who

SSG JON SOUCY

deployed to Iraq from December 2004 to July 2006. "Before, I was kicking in doors and arresting people. I was on a sniper team for our platoon, and we'd be sent in by ourselves for three days at a time in the dirt, dug in underneath a bush. So that was a pretty rotten experience, just being out there waiting for someone to place [a roadside bomb]."

Along with military forces like Illinois' 178th, the PRT also comprises specialists from agencies such as the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development.

"What is the economic engine for that particular provincial reconstruction team?" Bednarek asked, posing one of the questions that face PRTs as they deploy. "Clearly, the vast majority ... is agriculturally related. So you've got to focus on that to assist in developing that as part of the economy. That will then help provide job programs and opportunities for work.

"All of that provides an engine, if you will, to spur the economy," he continued, "which will then drive programs for overall governance for the government of Afghanistan."

As the PRTs move through their training, their performance is evaluated not only by military training cadre, but also by members of the State Department and other government organizations. And since the military portion of the PRT is a joint unit composed of service members from nearly all branches, the training may include new concepts for some. But varied backgrounds and experiences are also part of what brought the team together.

"I think in a roundabout way, [the diversity] absolutely does [help us]," Navy Cmdr. John Bennett, commander of PRT Khowst, said. "What happens is, by coming together from such different backgrounds, it kind of forces this bonding process rather quickly. We've actually grown quite close and come to know each other very, very well." **GX**



COFFEE BREAK Navy Cmdr. John Bennett, commander of PRT Khowst, talks with team members playing Afghan tribal leaders during a training scenario at Fort Bragg, NC.

"BY COMING TOGETHER FROM SUCH DIFFERENT BACKGROUNDS, IT FORCES THIS BONDING PROCESS ... AND WE'VE ACTUALLY GROWN QUITE CLOSE."

>> Cmdr. John Bennett, commander of PRT Khowst



LIVE EXERCISE Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Brandon Miller, a hospital corpsman assigned to PRT Khowst, speaks with team members playing Afghan villagers during a training scenario at Fort Bragg, NC, Oct. 9, 2008.



STEADY MIARNG SPC Michael Topping of the Kalamazoo Forward Support Company, 507th Engineer Battalion, fires his M16-A2 rifle during the live fire portion of a Convoy Live Fire Exercise.

Dark Skies and Black Ice

MICHIGAN SOLDIERS TRAIN IN CONVOY LIVE FIRE EXERCISE

By SSG James Downen

▶ FORT CUSTER TRAINING CENTER, MI—“Firers, watch your lanes.”

This sounds like the start of a typical weapons qualification for any unit on the range at Fort Custer Training Center (FCTC), MI, right?

Not to the Soldiers at the Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG) 177th Regional Training Institute’s (RTI) 88M10 Motor Transport Operator course in September. These Guard members weren’t firing from the prone or kneeling position; they were shooting off the beds of M1078 Light Medium Tactical Vehicles (LMTV) to qualify on a convoy live

fire exercise (CLFX).

The course trains aspiring motor transport operators on three primary trucks—the 5-ton M923A2, M1078 LMTV and M915 Semi Tractor Trailer with Palletized Loading System (PLS).

There are several 88M10 courses nationwide, but the 177th is unique

because, according to Course Manager SFC Scott Rhodes, it’s the first to offer a CLFX and training on a skid mat run by the Michigan Center for Truck Safety that allows driving in conditions simulating black ice.

The course was certified in May 2007 as an Institution of Excellence

by Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) evaluators from Fort Lee, VA. Only two other 88M10 courses—Washington State and North Carolina—have received this rating.

The training the Soldiers underwent to earn the 88M10 MOS is tough, yet exciting. They eagerly recalled the challenging events they mastered.

PFC Chester Bouknight of the Detroit-based 182nd Forward Support Company found the use of night-vision goggles while driving especially challenging.

“We did our first iteration on the driving lane without night-vision goggles,” said Bouknight. “The driver must observe blackout drive with the naked eye, and this is hard to do.

“On the second iteration,” he continued, “we used the night-

THIS TRAINING HAS A WARTIME USE: INSURGENTS IN IRAQ HAVE BEEN USING OIL SLICKS AS A WEAPON AGAINST U.S. CONVOYS.

SSG JIM DOWNEN

vision goggles. The blackout drives stood out, but the depth perception was way different than with normal vision. This took some getting used to.”

SGT Timothy Partin of the Jackson, MI, 1461st Transportation Company, said his most “challenging truck-driving task was alley-docking with a 5-ton cargo truck.

“You must pull into an alley loading dock by backing into it,” he explained. “There are cones you must avoid, and you stop at a prescribed distance—within two feet of a dock that has rear bumpers.”

The 177th has a unique feature that no other Army Motor Transport Operator school offers. The school has an arrangement with the Eaton Corporation to send Soldiers through the Michigan Center for Truck Safety course at its facility in Marshall, MI.

Since the cost per Soldier is \$50, the MIARNG can save hun-



ON TARGET
MIARNG Soldiers blast down range with their M16-A2 rifles during a convoy live fire exercise (CLFX).

dreds of thousands of dollars in liabilities when a Soldier avoids a crash because of the techniques taught at Eaton. Rhodes said the savings incurred by preserving lives on the road are priceless.

Taught by Eaton instructor Thomas Reed, the course takes place on a skid mat that simulates black ice driving conditions by using the slick surface of the mat and water from a spray hose system. The students purposely drive

in slick areas, putting their trucks into skids and jackknife situations, and use the steering techniques they learn to realign their vehicles.

This training has a wartime use: Insurgents in Iraq have been using oil slicks as a weapon against U.S. convoys. The techniques to right a spinning truck on black ice also work on oil-induced slicks.

SGT Leigh Cole of the 1461st said the skid training was applicable to his civilian job with Conway Truckload. “This training could be useful in my trucking career, especially the chopping technique for recovering from a skid on a slick road,” he said. Chopping is accomplished by turning slightly and constantly as the driver steers toward the desired direction.

The course has been teaching Motor Transport Operators since April 2007. Rhodes said that while he’s proud of its achievements, its instructors are ready for more. “The Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers teaching the 88M10 course want to run a full-time course. The 177th ... has dedicated instructors, equipment and the facilities needed to teach the 88M10 course year-round.” **GX**

The students purposely drive in slick areas, put their trucks into skids and jackknives, and use the steering techniques they learn to realign.



MAKING A SPLASH MIARNG Soldiers receive training on recovery from vehicle skids at the Eaton Corporation skid mat facility in Marshall, MI.

**VICTORY
MAP**



of governors' authority over the Guard in state and national emergencies.

NORTH DAKOTA: North Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers from Company C of the 2/285th Aviation Assault Battalion, Bismarck, as well as two members of the Combined Support Maintenance Shop, Devils Lake, received instruction on the M240H Oct. 6-7 at Camp Grafton Training Center, Devils Lake, ND. The M240H is a belt-fed, gas operated machine gun that is considerably more reliable than the M240D that it replaces.

OHIO: Ohio is one of 10 states participating in a new collaborative effort between the YMCA and the Department of Defense (DoD), aimed at helping deployed National Guard members and their families. The DoD has contracted with participating YMCAs throughout Ohio to provide free family memberships and childcare while National Guard Soldiers and Airmen are deployed for six or more months.

TEXAS: Since 2003, employees at Fort Worth-based First Command Financial Services have sent hundreds of packages to troops overseas on holidays throughout the year. Soldiers receive such items as snacks, lip balm, cards, hand wipes, books, puzzles and water guns, which are wrapped with good wishes of love and support.

VIRGINIA: The Virginia National Guard's Winchester-based 3rd Battalion, 116th Brigade Combat Team, received the Walter T. Kerwin Jr. Readiness Award for the Army's Most Outstanding National Guard Unit at the Association of the United States Army's (AUSA) Eisenhower Luncheon Oct. 7 in Washington, DC. "These Citizen-Soldiers have been chosen as the nation's best," said GEN [ret.] Gordon R. Sullivan, president of AUSA, as he read the plaque's inscription.

WYOMING: The Meritorious Unit Citation was awarded to the 1041st Engineer Company during a ceremony in September in Rock Springs. The 1041st Engineer Company received the award for their exceptionally honorable conduct and outstanding service while deployed in Iraq. The Wyoming Army National Guard unit was in Iraq from 2006 to 2007 and logged over 1.6 million miles in order to support more than 17,000 service members in the region.



ATTENTION
Soldiers from the U.S., Ukraine and 16 other countries present arms for the playing of the American and Ukrainian national anthems during the Rapid Trident opening ceremony.

Ukraine and U.S. Train Together for Peace

By PFC Joseph Woolls

UKRAINE—Soldiers from the California Army National Guard arrived at the Yavoriv Training Center in Ukraine in September for Rapid Trident, an annual training exercise that focuses on peacekeeping operations and multinational cooperation.

A Partnership for Peace project created under the guidance of NATO, the exercise trains participants to conduct multinational brigade and lower-level coalition operations.

This year, Rapid Trident consisted of two separate exercises—a computer-assisted simulation and a field training exercise. Soldiers trained under a fictitious scenario tasked with peace enforcement in a Kosovo-like country.

Morale and anticipation were high, and the Soldiers looked forward to the training.

"I'm excited about the mission," said SPC John Cunningham of Co. B, 1/18th Cavalry. "We come with our training, and we believe it's the best training in the world," he said. "So, hopefully we can show the

other countries how we do things. I'm sure we'll be learning stuff from them and hopefully teaching them some things, too."

Unsure of what to expect upon arriving in Ukraine, California Guard Soldiers said they were impressed by the host country's hospitality.

"We've been received with open arms," said 2LT Mark Phillips. "Everyone has been very helpful getting across the language barrier."

Phillips went on to express hope that the American and other countries' service members would form friendships during the period. He felt that would improve the quality of training.

"I'd like to see a lot of camaraderie between us and our counterparts," he mused. "We are all a part of the same human race, all fighting for the same goals of democracy and freedom." **EX**

"WE ARE ALL A PART OF THE SAME HUMAN RACE, ALL FIGHTING FOR THE SAME GOALS OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM."

>> 2LT Mark Phillips

PFC JOSEPH WOOLLS



PUTTING OUT FIRES
An LAARNG Soldier and New Orleans police officer respond to a vehicle fire in New Orleans' Lower 9th Ward. The Soldier is a member of Joint Task Force Gator, which helps the New Orleans Police Department provide security.

“IT BECAME A JOY SEEING THEM IN MY NEIGHBORHOOD.”

>> Beatrice C. Marconi,
New Orleans resident

Eastern New Orleans resident Kerry P. Wagener is one of the many people who put their trust in the Soldiers.

“Ever since they began patrolling, their presence has made me and my neighbors feel really comfortable about living in our Katrina-ravaged neighborhood,” Wagener said. “When I evacuated for Katrina in 2005, I left with the notion that my home would be robbed by looters. When I left for Gustav, I felt safe knowing that the Soldiers would be there to protect our little subdivision.”

Air Force Brig. Gen. John B. Soileau Jr., the task force’s commander, attributes its success to motivation.

“Since most of the Soldiers and Airmen live in New Orleans or surrounding areas, they feel a sense of pride knowing that they are protecting something dear to their hearts,” he explained. “When you have a group of people with that much pride, it tends to show in their job performance.”

After two years of working in the streets of New Orleans, the Soldiers have formed strong bonds with the city’s residents. Many residents think of the National Guard as a close friend.

“They are always walking around and talking with everyone,” said 72-year-old resident Gertrude Leblanc. “Like all of my good friends, I seriously hope that they never leave.” **GX**

Louisiana Guard Watches Over New Orleans

By SGT Michael L. Owens

NEW ORLEANS, LA—As Joint Task Force Gator continues to help with security in New Orleans, many of the city’s residents are growing comfortable with the attention the Soldiers and Airmen of the Louisiana National Guard have been giving them.

For more than two years, the task force has assisted the New Orleans Police Department and other law enforcement agencies by patrolling the streets and helping to keep the city safe. At first, many residents were nervous about the idea of having the military securing their city, but soon after seeing the Soldiers working in their neighborhoods, they began to embrace the new guys in town.

“When you hear that the military is coming to your city you tend to imagine mean Soldiers with big guns,” resident Beatrice C. Marconi said, “and that was the perception

that I had. As they began working, I saw that my previous views were not a reality. It became a joy seeing them in my neighborhood.”

As the city began evacuation operations for Hurricane Gustav last August, many of its citizens

remembered that after Hurricane Katrina, they returned home to see that all of their possessions were stolen. But during the Gustav evacuation, residents were at ease about leaving their belongings in the hands of the National Guard.



BUILDING TRUST An LAARNG Soldier talks with residents returning to eastern New Orleans after evacuating for Hurricane Gustav.

SGT MICHAEL L. OWENS



EASY DOES IT SSG Jon Waldron (left) and SGT Thomas Howell (right) of the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion download a concrete barrier from a palletized load system at a barrier holding yard in Sadr City, Iraq.

Concrete Support

LOUISIANA'S 165TH REINFORCE WALLS IN IRAQ

By SGT Aaron J. LeBlanc, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

CAMP TAJI, IRAQ—Sometimes the best offense is a good defense, and the Soldiers of the 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion of Bossier City, LA, are proving it.

The “weapon” of choice of the Louisiana National Guard’s 165th isn’t the M-2 .50-caliber machine gun. Nor is it the M-16 rifle or its little brother, the M-4 carbine. In fact, the anti-insurgent tool in their inventory that sees the heaviest use isn’t a weapon at all.

For the logistics-oriented unit, in a fight characterized by front lines that seem to exist everywhere and nowhere, the “weapon” is millions of pounds of good old-fashioned reinforced concrete.

Since their arrival in Iraq, one of the battalion’s major missions has been hauling concrete—in the form of massive rebar-laden barriers—all over the Baghdad area. The barriers are strategically

placed in order to form solid walls of concrete, forcing insurgents to engage coalition forces on preconditioned terms, or not at all.

“In an effort to reduce the possibility of IED attacks upon coalition forces, the 165th continues to conduct barrier transportation missions in support of emplacement operations,” said LTC Randall Bradford, commanding officer of the 165th and native of Alexandria, LA. Along with reducing the risk of IED attacks, the barriers serve to cut off exit avenues for criminals trying to stage attacks against coalition or Iraqi forces, and thus reduce casualties, he explained.

To date, the battalion has moved more than 20,000 barriers. At over 10,000 pounds per barrier, this means that the 165th has moved more than 200 million pounds of concrete down some of the most dangerous roads in the world.

“Every barrier we deliver provides more force protection for our brothers in arms, and safer neighborhoods for the people of Iraq.”

>> SFC David Miller, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion

“We have been able to reach this point through our incredible sense of cooperation and teamwork,” said MAJ Randy Green, the executive officer of the 165th and native of Bossier City.

“Although we are made up of several different companies, we are bound together as one solid team, centrally focused toward mission accomplishment. We are a family,” he said.

Responsibility for the coordination of this teamwork falls on the shoulders of the battalion support operations—or SPO—shop. The star logistician in the SPO shop is CPT Michael Stevens of Baton Rouge.

Stevens, along with SFC David Miller of Pineville, LA, puts in countless hours to ensure that all the pieces of the mission puzzle are put together. These include route clearance missions, battlespace owners (troops patrolling the areas to be traversed), barrier yards, transportation companies and convoy security elements.

Miller justifies his tireless dedication by noting that “every barrier we deliver provides more force protection for our brothers in arms, and safer neighborhoods for the people of Iraq.”

Both Stevens and Miller agreed that the support and never-give-up attitude of the 165th’s transport and gun truck companies have been the decisive factors in the successful delivery of more than 20,000 barriers.

Leesville, LA, native CSM Jerry Harvey, the 165th’s senior enlisted advisor stated, “Our Soldiers have overcome many obstacles, long nights and long hours helping to build combat outposts, joint security stations, entry control points and the walls in Iraq.”

Harvey, who has personally participated in many of the barrier missions, added, “They made it all happen no matter what it took, even in the face of roadblocks aimed at keeping them from their destination. The Soldiers of the 165th are the best of the best.” **GX**

UPLOADING Flatbed trailers of the 68th Transportation Company, 165th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, are loaded with 16,000-pound concrete barriers.



SGT AARON J. LEBLANC

New York, Afghans Team Up for the Kids

By LTC Paul Fanning

NYAFSHAR SCHOOL, KABUL, AFGHANISTAN—Donations from military families and friends at home are helping deployed New York Army National Guard (NYARNG) Soldiers in their mission to mentor and train the Afghan National Security Forces and support the Afghan people.

Hundreds of pounds of school supplies, children's clothing and shoes sent over from New York communities were delivered to boys and girls of the Afshar School in the suburbs of Kabul on Oct. 4 by members of the Afghan National Police (ANP).

Humanitarian assistance missions help ordinary Afghan families and build bonds of trust for the nation's developing Army and police

forces. Trainers and mentors from Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix (CJTF-Phoenix,) part of Combined Security transition Command-Afghanistan, guide and support ANP and Army units as they conduct local efforts.

Nearly 1,700 members of the New York National Guard's 27th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) deployed to serve on embedded training and police mentoring teams, security force units, logistics teams and in the task force headquarters.

Increasingly, military family members, friends, youth groups and civic organizations back in New York are taking an active role by sending donations to their deployed loved ones that are in turn used to help the Afghan people.



SPEECH OF THANKS

COL Zalmia speaks to students in a classroom of the Afshar School to let them know that his policemen are there to help.

"The Afghan National Police is the face of the Afghan government at the local level," said COL Gary Yaple, deputy commander of CJTF-Phoenix and the 27th IBCT. "Our intent is to place the Afghans first and in the lead, and we support [them]."

"This is their nation," Yaple continued. "These are their communities, families and children. The more support they provide, the more they build for their government. They still need our help, but much progress is being made."

The three-hour mission included 23 U.S. personnel assigned to a Police Mentoring Team with Afghan Regional Security Integration Command-Kabul and logistics task force troops. The team moved to the headquarters of Police District 5, where LT Faisal Reza, MSG Michael Molgaard, and SSG Deanna Bizette conferred with COL Zalmia, the police chief on the operation plan. Then, a dozen officers moved out with the CJTF-Phoenix team for the school.

They set up a security perimeter and U.S. and Afghan police unload-

ed three trailers of donations. These were placed in a faculty office and teachers began to distribute to the students.

"The donations came from various people in the Tompkins County area," said CPT Robert Romano from Ithaca, assigned to CJTF-Phoenix headquarters.

"My mother organized the drive with support from several local church groups," he said, adding that the mother of another deployed officer, Mrs. Linda Pasto, and a local chapter of The Red Hat Society also made significant contributions.

"Clothing was collected, inspected, packed and shipped by my mother, Marie Romano and my wife, Lana. The first load amounted to about 650 pounds," he continued. Another shipment weighing in at 1,100 pounds is already on the way.

Zalmia personally handed out school supplies, clothing and shoes. While he was doing this, he talked to the children. His message was simple: "People should not be afraid to come to the police to ask for help. The police are there for the people." **GX**

LENDING A HAND MSG Michael Molgaard helps an Afghan policeman unload boxes of donations at the Afshar School.



CPT ROBERT ROMANO



KOSOVO TOUR Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates joins a Liaison Monitoring Team's patrol of Gjilan, Kosovo, near Camp Montieth, Oct. 7.

NEW OUTLOOK Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates receives an aerial tour of Camps Bondsteel and Montieth in Kosovo, Oct. 7.



Gates Visits Guard Troops in Kosovo

By Jim Garamone

PRISTINA, KOSOVO—Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates visited with U.S. troops assigned to NATO's Kosovo Force here Oct. 7.

Gates—making the first visit to Kosovo by a defense secretary since 2001—said he wanted to thank the 1,400 American service members deployed here.

“We haven’t forgotten about them, and we know how important they are,” Gates said during a news conference with Pentagon reporters.

The Europeans and Kosovars depend on the American presence, Gates noted. “There has been a great concern that we might pull out, and what I have reassured our allies is that when the President said ‘in together, out together,’ [it] will continue to be our policy,” Gates said. “We will continue to fulfill our responsibilities there.”

The troops are National Guard members assigned to the 110th Maneuver Enhanced Brigade of the Missouri National Guard. The Kansas City-based unit also has Soldiers from Alabama, Illinois, South Dakota, California, Texas and

New Mexico. The unit arrived at Camp Bondsteel in June and will return to the United States in March. A unit from the California National Guard will take its place.

The unit works with other MTO units to ensure Kosovo remains safe and secure as the country works through its political issues, said command spokesman SFC Craig L. Collins. Task Force Sabre and Task Force Thunder—two units built around the 110th’s maneuver battalions—patrol various areas of



BREAK TIME Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates talks with Soldiers after having lunch with them on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Oct. 7.



PROVIDING SUPPORT Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates tours Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Oct. 7.

TECH. SGT. JERRY MORRISON



KOSOVO TOUR Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates joins a Liaison Monitoring Team's patrol of Gjilan, Kosovo, near Camp Montieih, Oct. 7.

Gates Promises Kosovo Continued U.S. Support

► **PRISTINA, KOSOVO**—Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates congratulated the citizens of Kosovo on their progress in establishing the newest nation on earth Oct. 7.

Kosovo President Fatmir Sejdiu thanked America for its support of the nation and thanked Gates for his efforts. Prime Minister Hashim Thaci also thanked the secretary following meetings at the airport and promised the country would do all it can to integrate Serbs and Kosovar Albanians in the new nation. Thaci promised that the Kosovo security force would be pro-Western and under civilian control.

"I'm pleased to be here to congratulate your leaders in person and to re-emphasize our commitment

"WE OFTEN HEAR ABOUT DEPLOYMENTS ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD, BUT I WANT TO PERSONALLY CONVEY TO THE MEMBERS OF THE KOSOVO FORCE THAT THEY ARE NEITHER FORGOTTEN NOR UNAPPRECIATED."

► Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates

to all of the citizens of Kosovo," Gates said. Gates said the discussions he had with Kosovo's leaders were productive. "We reiterated our commitment to maintain current U.S. troop levels under United Nations authority," he said. About 1,600 American troops are serving in Kosovo.

"I reaffirmed the pledge that President Bush made to the people of this region and our NATO partners: 'We came in together, and we go out together,'" Gates said. "We all look forward to the day when peace is self-sustaining."

Gates also is visiting U.S. troops. "I want to thank our troops who are stationed here," he said. "We often hear about deployments elsewhere in the world, but I want to personally convey to the members of the Kosovo Force that they are neither forgotten nor unappreciated—a point made abundantly clear in our meetings this morning."

The secretary said the dedication and professionalism of American troops is a bedrock in making NATO's Kosovo Force "the most trusted and respected institution in Kosovo."

"It has helped transform a once-troubled region into a peaceful place where all citizens have the opportunity to live in freedom," he said. **GX**

Hot and Cold

ECHO CO. TALKS REFUELING, DROPPING TEMPS

By Camille Breland

► **LAST TIME WE HEARD** from the Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's Echo Company, 3rd Battalion, 142nd Aviation, they were talking about Kuwait's heat, zeroing their rifles and the new challenges in Iraq.

We're following the Soldiers as they complete their mission of refueling Black Hawks and AH-64 Apache Helicopters in Logistical Support Area Striker near Baghdad International Airport, Iraq.

This month, we caught up with SGT Mark Lupiani on his day off.



HOT AND COLD MISSIONS

After training in Camp Buehring, Kuwait, for two weeks, the Soldiers have now been in Iraq for more than a month, refueling aircraft and manning a bulk fuel point. The Soldiers perform two types of refueling—hot and cold.

For cold fueling, Soldiers pump up to 13,000 gallons of fuel into the aircraft while its engines are shut off. The choppers call in before landing, alerting the Soldiers to whether the refueling status is routine or priority. While it normally takes about 10 minutes for the Soldiers to reach the aircraft, a priority status means they have to work as quickly as possible.

"You have to have good time management and communication with the crews who are on the ground," Lupiani said.

MOVIN' UP

Since June 4, Echo Co. reported that four Soldiers from have been promoted to sergeant, one to staff sergeant, and about nine to specialist.

Refueling a chopper "hot" means they're refueling while the engine is still running. About a dozen Echo Co. Soldiers are assisting the active-duty Soldiers in this sometimes dangerous mission.

The New York Soldiers also work the bulk fuel point, essentially a large-scale gas station, distributing up to 80,000 gallons of fuel each day—that's four times the volume of an average pool! These stations are manned 24/7, and Soldiers work in 12-hour shifts.

"We're not only pumping [the fuel] out in two different places, but we're also supplying it to two places," Lupiani remarked. "It's quite a big mission for the size of our company."

CHOW TIME AND DUST STORMS

Even though it's about two miles from his living trailer at Camp Striker, Lupiani said he usually eats breakfast, lunch and dinner at the airfield's larger dining facility, which makes theirs "look like a bedroom."

Buses run from Camp Striker to the airfield, but they're not always the fastest option. According to Lupiani, one specialist can beat the bus hands-down on his 10-minute bike ride. But with temperatures averaging between 90 and 100 degrees Fahrenheit, both routes end in a mixture of sweat and dust.

Speaking of dust, the Soldiers are getting used to Iraq's infamous dust storms, which occur almost every week. During these storms, the temperature can get down to about 75—freezing, in their terms. In fact, Lupiani said he was recently locked out of his living trailer at night, when the temperature was dropping.

"I forgot what cold felt like, and I wasn't liking it at all!" he recalled. "It is pretty amazing when it gets cold." **GX**

Education in Afghanistan

ARKANSAS SOLDIERS RENOVATE SCHOOL

Story and photos by
MAJ Craig Heathscott

BAGHDAD, IRAQ—Sunday morning is a typical school day for children in Iraq; however, the red ribbon stretched across the entryway of the Airport Village schoolhouse indicated this day was anything but typical. And as community leaders joined forces with COL Kendall Penn, commander of the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, in cutting the ceremonial ribbon, the action marked another successful event for the future of Iraq—the children.

Ms. Zahida, an enthusiastic principal of the Abaas Ibun Firmaas High School, addressed the crowd by first declaring, “Wa Allahu Wali Al-Taofeeq!” (victory by God). And while looking out into a crowd that included her nearly 400 students, she made a commitment to continue the progress at the school by finding new and creative ways to improve. The ceremony marked the dedication of the secondary and primary schools, as well as a newly constructed governance building that will be used for council meetings and other community functions.

Seven months earlier, the school didn’t have so much as a name. The classrooms were in disrepair, overcrowded and not conducive



READY TO LEARN A large crowd of students and Soldiers gather during the ceremonial opening of the new Airport Village schoolhouse in Baghdad.

to learning. The student population had seen substantial growth in recent years. The primary school, which was also refurbished, is home to more than 300 students.

As Penn addressed those in attendance, he complimented the working relationship he’s had with community leaders since the 39th arrived in the country last March.

“Everyone here who is a parent understands the importance of a quality education for their children,” he said. “It is the means by which our children’s future becomes brighter. I tell my fellow brigade commanders working here in Iraq that I have the best village in all of Baghdad to work with, due in large part to the leadership, as well as the citizens who understand the

importance of a quality education.”

In just a short time, the positive relationship Penn addressed has resulted in vast improvements in this community, including the creation of a youth soccer field, a fire station and several small businesses.

The most recent positive for the community was the groundbreaking for a new marketplace building, which will consolidate all the local businesses into one central location.

Penn continually gave much of the credit for the improvements and vision to the same people—Thabit Tahir Hassan, Airport Village Mayor; Sami Shamoan, Airport Village Director; Shebany Sabeeh, Director General of the Iraqi Civil Aviation Authority.

“These men have a genuine desire to improve the well-being of those living here in Airport Village. They are the true meaning of public servants, and they have been instrumental in making many good things happen here,” Penn said.

SONG OF SUCCESS

Following the ceremony, Penn was given a guided tour that allowed him the opportunity to meet with students in their new environment. The visit to the primary

school brought a smile to everyone’s face as the children lined the entryway and greeted their visitors with a song and clapping.

“Success can be measured in many ways, and after the tour, I can say with confidence that the measure of success for this project comes in the smiles on the faces of these children,” he said. “I’m convinced you can’t put a price tag on what I saw today.”

While Penn was touring the facilities, Soldiers from the U.S. Army’s 10th Mountain Division were going from classroom to classroom, giving backpacks and various school supplies to the students.

“The children are very happy and will remember this day for a long time,” predicted one of the teachers.

The backpacks were donated by the Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division and many of the donated supplies were provided by the First Baptist Church in Little Rock, AR.

TASK FORCE VIGILANT

The day-to-day civil military operations within Airport Village are maintained by Task Force Vigilant, made up of Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division. In working with community leaders, improvement projects are identified and submitted for approval. The funding for projects varies, but this particular project was I-CERP money. Basically, these are funds provided to the military by the Iraqi government for project improvements.

“Projects such as this help instill self-reliance in the Iraqi people. We want them to know that we are here to assist, but ultimately, this is their project—their future,” said CPT Raymond Wilson, civil military officer (CMO). “We consider the community leaders in Airport Village the glue between ... the contractors and the school administrators. It’s been a great working relationship.”

As the task force commander,



ARKANSAS INFLUENCE LTC Jim Foot, civil military officer for the 39th Brigade, works with three Arkansas schools in partnering with the Airport Village schools.

MAJ Hector Martinez said he is very optimistic about the future of this village. "This ceremony represents the culmination of seven months of intensive labor and coordination by Iraqi civilian leaders and our CMO team."

COMMITMENT TO THE FUTURE

As Zahida promised in her opening remarks, the leadership at the school will continue efforts to find creative ways for the children to learn.

One significant program currently under development is the School Partnership Program. The basic premise of this program is information-sharing between schools here and those in the States. It's hoped that these programs will have an impact long after the 39th ends their tour of duty in Iraq.

LTC Jim Foot, civil military officer for the brigade and a resident of Little Rock, AR—is currently working with three Arkansas schools in partnering with the Airport Village schools. The participating schools are Arkansas Baptist High School and Chenal Elementary School, both in Little Rock, and Pine Forest Elementary School in Maumelle.

"We didn't have a problem finding schools back home to participate in the program," said Foot. "There's a genuine interest and willingness to help—not to mention the fact that it's a great experience for the children in the schools at home, as well."

While the full extent of the partnership is yet to be determined, Foot hopes it will evolve into something very beneficial to all parties.

"We hope for student-to-student and teacher-to-teacher interaction, common studies between schools, and discussions about cultural differences," he explained. "The opportunities are endless, and with the use of Web cams and the Internet, I believe this can have a very positive impact. We've got a long way to go, but the environment is right for continued improvement." **GX**



By CW4 Mark Houdlette

▶ PORTLAND, ME—The Maine Army National Guard sponsored the Third Annual Maine Tribute March, a 26-mile march which coincided with the 17th Annual Peak Performance Maine Marathon in Portland.

More than 110 military members, representing each component of the Armed Forces, arrived at the Stevens Armory in Portland. With backpacks in tow, Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines alike arrived at 0445 ready to take on the challenge at hand: March 26 miles with a 30-pound backpack to honor military members from Maine who made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"This is not a race for us," said SSG Kameel Farag, co-coordinator of this year's event. "The whole idea is for this march to be a unity event."

"This is not a race for us. The whole idea is for this march to be a unity event."

>> SSG Kameel Farag

And unity was shown by military retirees participating in the march; Maine Family Program volunteers sponsored water points along the course and military medics marched to lend aid to those in need.

Prior to embarking on the march, Farag updated the participants on the status of CPT Grant Delaware, one of the founders of the Maine Tribute March and the event's most passionate supporter. "Captain Delaware is currently in Afghanistan, and he is doing the march with us today even though he is deployed," Farag said. "I think that's kinda neat."

MAINE EVENT Maine Marathon supporters applaud as military members march the 26-mile course as a tribute to fallen Soldiers. More than 110 Maine military members participated in the Third Annual Maine Tribute March held in Portland.

Each participant wore two race numbers. One number was their official event identification number. The other tag, a white number on purple background, was a single number provided by the organizers of the Maine Marathon and shared by each participating military member. That number was 39, the number of military members from Maine who have lost their lives in either Iraq or Afghanistan.

Out on the course, Maine Family Program youth members were ready to support the marchers with water and snacks.

"We're manning all of the rest stops along the course," said Maine Family Program Youth Coordinator Casey Kimball. "Our youth members are providing water, snacks and oranges; if they see someone injured, they get a medic who can help."

"It's fun to see the youth come out and support all the marchers," he said. Many of the youth and family members at the event marched the last two miles with the Soldiers.

At the end of the day, more than 70 Soldiers crossed the finish line at the 26-mile marker. Many of the Soldiers were sporting bandages and ankle wraps they didn't start the race with, but the determination to complete the mission was on the sweaty face of every Soldier who crossed the finish line. Their blisters will heal, but the reason they were here will remain etched in their memory.

Just ask CPT Delaware, the Soldier who marched on the roads of Afghanistan at the same time Maine Soldiers marched in the Maine Marathon, in order to stay connected to this event. Some of our Soldiers are gone, but they will never be forgotten. **GX**

90 Years of Exemplary Service and Counting

By Camille Breland and Christian Anderson

THE YEAR 2008 turned out to be an historic one for the Warrant Officer Corps. For the first time ever, all three missions of end strength, accession and losses were either met or surpassed. Meeting all three missions couldn't have come at a better time, since 2008 is also the 90th anniversary of the Warrant Officer Corps. Although Warrant Officers are still relatively new when considering the National Guard has been around for 371 years, they have proved invaluable. It's hard to think how the Guard would operate without them.

20TH CENTURY SOLDIER

While Warrant Officers (WOs) in the U.S. Army can be traced back to 1896, they weren't officially established until 1918—at the end of WWI. At first, WOs weren't officers; they were considered civilians. The Judge Advocate General later granted them military status and one rank, although additional ranks would be added throughout the years.

The first WOs served the Coast Artillery Corps as the Army Mine Planter Service. These Soldiers were mates, masters and engineers working to defend mine vessels at major ports.

Since then, the Army Warrant Officer Corps has steadily been progressing. The number of officers is at an all-time high, and the amount of ranks increased from one to five, which was added in 1992.

"Seamlessly, the Warrant Officer Corps has not wavered in accomplishing the mission amidst a changing environment," said CW3 Bonny Bell, head of Warrant Officer recruiting at National Guard Bureau.

One constant in the corps is the "Eagle Rising" insignia, which was approved in 1921. Although the insignia has since been removed from

WO uniforms, the symbol is still proudly used on recruiting material and promotional material, Bell said.

Just like the eagle has its wings spread and is flying high, the Warrant Officer Corps has only continued to rise and increase its role in the Armed Forces.

"The Corps has grown significantly and expanded to all branches," C W5 Sal Green noted. "Most importantly, Warrant Officers are leaders first and technical experts second. More and more, Warrant Officers are being called upon to function in command and staff positions previously held by officers."

A CRITICAL ROLE IN THE GUARD

It's no surprise that interest in Warrant Officers is on the rise: These highly specialized Soldiers are technical experts in their fields and officers rolled into one.

"It's the best of both worlds," replied CW5 James Gaddis, Command Chief Warrant Officer, Illinois National Guard. "It is truly the best rank in the Army due to the fact that you get to do what you love and get the respect and recognition for being the expert."

This year, Warrant Officer recruiting was at its top performance. But they didn't do it alone. Bell thanked the Army National Guard Command of LTG Clyde Vaughn and COL Michael Jones for providing the resources needed to recruit—and keep—the best Soldiers.

"Our recruiting efforts have been a team endeavor by many individuals working together," said CW5 Richard Ernest, a senior WO recruiter.

Warrant Officers are critical to the National Guard. From highly skilled engineers to foreign intelligence, it's a WO's job to keep commissioned officers informed and advised in their field.

"The Army National Guard has an advantage because warrants spend an entire career in a specialty and perform technically difficult tasks," Gaddis told GX. "They allow commissioned officers the ability to command and concentrate on staff functions."

For more on Warrant Officers, please visit: 1-800-GO-GUARD.com/explore/warrant **GX**



>> The official color of the Warrant Officer Corps, brown, originated from the brown burlap bags on the Mine Planter Service workers'—the first Warrant Officers—rank insignia.

For 2008, the Guard:

- > Increased the number of WO recruiters
- > Purchased more than \$1 million in WO recruiting items
- > Created incentives for recruiting WOs, including the RIPO and Mission Zone programs
- > Offered a \$10,000 Accession and Affiliation Bonus
- > Offered a \$20,000 Critical Skills Retention Bonus

Rocking Out for the Troops

TRACE ADKINS HONORS SOLDIERS



By Christian Anderson

FAIRFAX, VA—Less than two months after he got back from a USO tour, country music star Trace Adkins was up on stage, entertaining for the troops once again. On Oct. 25, Adkins sang his new song “Muddy Water,” and a few of his other hits live for thousands of troops including Army National Guard (ARNG) Soldiers, at the American Freedom Festival (AFF) concert in Fairfax, VA.

Started in 2004 by SMA (ret.) Jack L. Tilley, the concert has done a fantastic job of honoring our nation’s veterans and raising money and awareness for organizations that impact these veterans.

“The concert has a tremendous meaning to the National Guard. As the operational reserve force, the Guard has fought side by side with all military services,” boasted LTC Joseph B. Day, who represented the ARNG at the event. “We think it’s great to be recognized with the same appreciation as all other men and women in uniform.”

The goal of the AFF concert is to gain support and fulfill the

mission of the American Freedom Foundation, Inc. Featuring musicians, actors, athletes and dignitaries, the foundation hopes to raise money and awareness for veterans’ organizations.

“The AFF has done a tremendous job,” Day said. “It has placed special emphasis on welfare and educational issues facing those wounded in action, the disabled and families and children of veterans killed in action during Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.”

Trace Adkins is a patriot at heart and has made an effort to perform for the troops not just at the AFF concert, but also overseas on two USO tours. He does it not for fame or fortune, but because he feels it’s the right thing for someone in his position to do.

“I go because it’s the least that I can do,” Adkins explained to *GX*. “I believe there comes a point for an entertainer that when you profess your support for the military, you have to put your money where your mouth is, and you have to go support them.

“This year, we decided we were going to set aside some time so that we could go do that, because if we didn’t, we would turn around and the [schedule for the] year would be full, which is what happens a lot,” Adkins continued. “For me, it just felt like it was something I needed to do.”

Adkins downplays his efforts. In his mind, the Soldiers are the ones who deserve recognition, citing their incredible bravery and courage to serve, whether in America or on foreign soil.

“The men and women serving have incredible fortitude,”

he affirmed. “It is a very uplifting experience visiting the troops, because you come home and are just filled with this incredible pride.”

But Adkins believes that patriots do more than just wave a flag and shoot fireworks on the Fourth of July. According to Adkins, the real patriots are the individuals who go beyond the call of duty and dedicate their lives to making a difference.

“To steal a John McCain phrase,” he offered, “A patriot is one that puts country first. I think that simplifies it. I think a patriot puts his country before himself.”

Adkins offers advice to the Soldiers around the world bearing the brunt of the fight against our nation’s enemies. “That old cliché has always been true for me: ‘This too shall pass,’” Adkins offered. “Whatever hardship or whatever difficult situation you find yourself in, if you just apply dogged determination and an unwillingness to surrender, this too shall pass.” **GX**

For more on Trace Adkins, go to TraceAdkins.com.

For more on the AFF concert, go to AmericanFreedomFoundation.org.



PROUD PATRIOTS
Alan Jackson takes a moment to meet with CSM John Gipe during the AFF concert Oct. 25.

Day agreed with Adkins and feels Guard Soldiers go beyond the call of duty, leaving their family and jobs behind to defend America’s freedom.

“Members of the National Guard not only go and fight for their country when called upon, but they also rally to assist with domestic crises [hurricanes, fires, etc.], and hold civilian jobs in their communities,” Day said. “It is important to honor the Guard, because its Soldiers are true multitaskers who should be recognized for balancing family and career.”

Approximately 1,000 tickets were donated and distributed to National Guard Soldiers and their families residing in the National Capital Region, Maryland and Delaware, as well as to service members and their families at Walter Reed Army Medical Center and Bethesda Naval Medical Center. Donations for these tickets were presented to event founder SMA (ret.) Jack L. Tilley during the concert.



A NOBLE MISSION

PFC Alex Brody, a rifleman in Arizona's Bushmasters, guards the entrance to a security checkpoint in the Sabari District of the Khowst province, Afghanistan.

Weapons of Mass

A rizona's Bushmasters
rebuild Afghanistan
while pummeling the enemy



By SFC CLINT WOOD

RECON
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AS A SOLDIER WHO SERVED

with the Minnesota Army National Guard's 1st Brigade Combat Team (BCT) of the 34th "Red Bulls" Infantry Division, I'll always be proud of our Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) deployment ('06 – '07), the largest since WWII.

The Bulls were also the first U.S. unit deployed to Europe during WWII, and they spent more days in combat—and took more enemy-defended hills—than any other U.S. Army division in that war. So, we had quite a legacy to live up to.

And, thanks to our 125-day extension, we surpassed that—setting the record for "the longest continuous deployment of any United States ground combat military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom [OIF]."

So, when my editor tossed me my latest feature assignment, I was honored. I was to cover the proud combat legacy of Arizona's Bushmasters, focusing on their most recent action. The work of this fine group of Soldiers stands as a testimony for the might of the Army National Guard as whole, further obliterating any ancient notions of "weekend warriors."

The 600-strong Arizona Army National Guard's (AZARNG) 1st Battalion (BN), 158th Infantry Regiment (INF), better known as the Bushmasters, returned to the states in March 2008. It was the largest single deployment for an AZARNG unit since WWII.

While there, the unit provided Security Forces (SECFOR) for

10 Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRTs) spread throughout the country, which is roughly the size of Texas.

Several of these Soldiers saw combat. They formed a maneuver force for the division support brigade for the 82nd Airborne Division, based in Bagram, which spent the first two months with an Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) from the 7th Special Forces Group (SFG).

"They did a standard infantry mission working the Tagab Valley and actually saw a lot of activity throughout their year there," said BN commander COL Alberto Gonzalez in a phone interview. "They probably had more than 200 contacts with the enemy in numerous operations, and participated in several large missions in support of [Task Force Gladius] in Tagab Valley."

A FIERCE HERITAGE

Contact with the enemy is nothing new for this regiment. Its lineage dates back to the Arizona Volunteer Infantry Regiment that patrolled the U.S. border with Mexico, where it helped thwart raids led by Pancho Villa. But its claim to fame is the then-158th Regimental Combat Team (RCT), which made a name for itself in the Southwest Pacific in WWII. GEN Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces, personally requested the RCT to serve in that theater.



DRIVE ON Vehicles from 2nd platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment travel through the Spera District of Khowst province, Afghanistan, May 17, 2007. The unit is the security force for the Khowst Provincial Team, which visited Spera to assess the area.



During WWII, the 158th RCT was federalized in December 1940 and didn't return until January 1946.

This unit had earned its nickname—Bushmasters—before stepping foot in the Southwest Pacific jungles. They earned this honor, and their shoulder patch, after serving in the jungles of Panama before the war. Lying in wait in this terrain was the indigenous bushmaster—the largest poisonous snake in America. Their patch shows a bushmaster coiled around a machete.

THE 158TH RCT BATTLED in multiple campaigns throughout WWII, including New Guinea and the Philippines. They were tapped to fight in Operation Olympic if the United States had invaded Japan, and would have invaded and occupied a small island 28 miles south of Kyushu,

from 1919 until 1922, told GX that the AZARNG has been pursuing an infantry battalion for many years but had to relinquish force structure in order to do it.

I bet the contemporary Bushmasters never complained about the length of their deployment. Gonzalez told his Soldiers that during WWII, the 158th RCT was federalized in December 1940 and didn't return until January 1946.

“[And] like all WWII Veterans,” Gonzalez explained, “they did not know how long they were going to be gone. They just went and did the job that needed to be done. So we take a lot of pride in what they did and the legacy that we have.”

The modern-day battalion also included more than 55 volunteers from the Hawaii Army National Guard's (HIARNG) C Troop, 1st Squadron, 299th Cavalry (CAV) and about 60 Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) Soldiers.

In order to best tell the story of the Bushmasters, I went straight to the source and had the honor of speaking with several 158th leaders, including Gonzalez, MAJ Mike Warren (Bushmasters operations officer), 1LT Dennis Chamberlain (platoon leader of the maneuver force at Bagram), SFC Douglas Rowe (squad leader for a SECFOR at FOB Asadabad) and SSG John Guiggey (squad leader for the Personal Security Detachment in the Nuristan Province).

THE BUSHMASTERS HAD TWO primary missions under Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan—to provide a 42-man SECFOR for 10 PRT teams and to provide security in the Laghman Province.

An Air Force lieutenant colonel or a Navy commander leads a PRT. There are Navy medics and engineers and Army Reserve Civil Affairs Soldiers in each PRT. Gonzalez said a PRT's focus is to assist the Afghan government with infrastructure development.

“So, they had the big pocketbook ... for projects,” Gonzalez said.

The province security mission fell on several of the Bushmasters, an active-duty Army MP platoon, a police mentor team, an ANA embedded training team and an active-duty Army Forward Support Company (FSC). This contingent was responsible for conducting all counterinsurgency and security operations in the province.

WELCOME TO AFGHANISTAN

The Bushmasters received a bit of a rude awakening upon touching ground in April '07. Gonzalez's advance party (ADVON) and the PRT were at FOB Mehtar Lam when a suicide bomber detonated his vehicle near the Afghan National Army (ANA) gate. Not long after, the same



ON PATROL SSG Shane Coleman, a Bushmaster, and his squad conduct a patrol in Laghman Province.

Japan. Their mission called for the Bushmasters to silence Japanese air warning stations south of Kyushu. In New Guinea, between May and June of 1944, the Bushmasters suffered 77 casualties while holding off 3,000 Japanese.

The RCT also was one of the most ethnically diverse regiments of the war, with numerous Arizona Latinos and Native Americans. About 30 percent were Hispanic, and 22 Native American tribes were represented.

IN 1967, THE RCT WAS CONVERTED and redesignated as the 1583rd Military Police (MP) BN, 258th MP Brigade (BDE). It was redesignated again in 1969 as the 157th MP BN. In 1976, the unit converted and redesignated as the 153rd Field Artillery (FA) Group, which was later redesignated as the 153rd FA BDE.

Gonzalez said the state basically converted a field artillery battalion into today's 158. The 158 federally activated Jan. 3, 2007. Gonzalez, whose grandfather joined the AZARNG at 18 and served with the 158th



group experienced a 6.2-magnitude earthquake. Like true Guard Soldiers, they sprang to action. Teaming up with local authorities, Connecticut's 1/102nd INF and the PRT, the Bushmasters provided relief to villagers stranded by floods from heavy rains, which hit during the quake.

The Bushmasters set up refugee camps for the villagers. SFC Graydon Griffin was awarded an Army Achievement Medal for participating in a rescue.

Warren described how Griffin and several Soldiers attempted to connect inner tubes with rope to reach the individuals, but due to the Afghans not understanding the concept, the Afghans ended up using inner tubes as rafts to ferry people back and forth.

Gonzalez described an important point. "[R]esponding to the floods fell right in line with what we normally do. But the other good thing was that the Afghan National Army ... used Afghan aircraft for the rescue. We coordinated with them but didn't use U.S. aircraft. We had the Afghan helicopters do the evacuation."

GONZALEZ, THE GOVERNOR, police chief and PRT commander teamed up for an aggressive counter-IED program in the province. The program included IED patrols and responses, as well as a series of billboards, radio messages and school handouts.

Gonzalez said that several times, the Afghans would dig up an IED and shoot it or bring it back to the police station. In time, he developed a great relationship with security forces and established a coordination center. It was here that the locals reported IEDs to Afghan authorities.

The Bushmasters started a small rewards buy-back program (SRP), where the locals would be paid for turning in weapons, ammunition or information leading to the discovery of IEDs.

"Unfortunately, it's a way of [making a] living for them. They would bring us a few weapons at a time, so we could pay them. Then they would come back [with more] when they needed more money."

"We tried to tell them, 'Take us to your cache, and we'll pay [you] a lump sum and be done with it.'"

Gonzalez made a point to find the people who provided this information and ensure that they received their monetary reward. Follow-through is ensured to the support mission. Without it, that precious confidence is lost.

Warren, operations officer for the 1/158, said that in the entire 173rd Airborne BCT Area of Operations (AO), the Bushmasters had more incidences of IEDs than any other battalion over the same period—more than 60 in 11 months. About two-thirds of the IEDs were

“By the time we left, we all worked together and [the Afghans] were always the lead in our responses.”

>>COL Alberto Gonzalez

Gonzalez relayed that in every visit with government officials or elders in the villages, the group always spoke of the threat of IEDs, and it was always done with an Afghan lead. "Meaning, we never went anywhere without the Afghan army or Afghan police with us," he explained. "We consistently ensured that we had the same talking points, but they were the lead in the discussions."

This demonstrated to civilians and citizens that, with the help of the United States, the Afghan government was taking charge. He said when the Bushmasters arrived at the province, its governor would call him and ask him to respond to events reported to him, including the discovery of an IED.

He said neither the Afghan police nor the Afghan army wanted to work together. Nor did the National Directorate of Security personnel. Most of this animosity was due to mutual lack of trust.

"By the time we left, we all worked together, and they were always the lead," he said.

Gonzalez added that a few times, the local forces would respond and not call him for assistance. If the governor did call, the police chief would get upset because the governor didn't call him first.

Building confidence among local factions takes great patience and care. The Bushmasters executed this perfectly, setting a new standard for units to follow. They even instituted an aggressive counter-IED training course for both the Army and police. This included classes on IED recognition and proper disposal methods.

discovered by the Bushmasters or turned in by Afghan locals.

Warren noted that despite the specialized equipment on the Humvees that prevented IED strikes, the enemy adapted their own countermeasures, however. "We were very successful in limiting their attacks," Warren told GX.

The Bushmasters would receive a call from the ANA or ANP about a report of an IED and the location. The ANP would go to the site and secure it—waiting for the PRT's Air Force Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) airmen to dispose of it.

He noted that the Afghan people have been at war—either externally or internally—for the last 30 years. Instead of looking toward the future, they are more worried about the present.

"We were willing to help them to see the long-range goal—the more professional you become, the more the people are going to trust you. Then you become more effective and living standards improve," Warren concluded.

AS A SQUAD LEADER FOR A SECFOR, Rowe said one of the more important pushes in his area—the Kunar Province—was building roads that would create access to remote villages and promote trade between neighboring communities. "And we would really see the villages start to flourish once we built [them]," Rowe shared.

When the roads were finished, they had to be inspected for adherence to standards by Navy engineers. This was a dangerous

FRIENDS OF AMERICA

Afghan children give thumbs-up to America as they pose with one of the Bushmasters.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AZARING



PHOTO BY SPC MIBAH CLARE

SERVE AND PROTECT SSG Abraham Boyd, a squad leader in 2nd platoon, Company B, 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, pulls security while a Civil Affairs Team talks to locals outside of a district center in Afghanistan, May 17, 2007. SSG Boyd is a native of Phoenix, AZ.

Fast Facts:

Patrols during deployment: **6,700**

Estimated enemy destroyed: **175 — 200**

Enemy detained: **60+**

IEDs discovered: **170**

Bronze Star Medals with valor (awarded or pending): **10**

Army Commendation Medals with valor (awarded or pending): **33**

Bronze Star Medals: **60**

Meritorious Service Medals: **23**

Army Commendation Medals: **410**



mission, as the only way to inspect them was by walking on them. As any Soldier who has served in Iraq or Afghanistan knows, roads and the shoulders are a haven for roadside bombs or land mines.

And this danger increased. Rowe's team arrived at the site and would either provide overwatch security or roll down the road with dismounted personnel.

Rowe noted that there were about 80 personnel in each PRT. He said the SECFOR's mission was to escort engineers and civil affairs Soldiers to villages to complete their assessments.

"We would basically go in, set up security, allow them to do what they needed to do and then bring them back safely," he explained. "We were in charge on the convoy out, the convoy back and then the security of whatever site we were at."

He explained that his PRT's main mission was road and bridge assessments, but the CA team collected "tons" of school supplies to distribute.

AFTER AN UPS WING IN A ATTACKS at Bagram Air Field, Chamberlain's maneuver force platoon assisted in protecting the Bagram Security Zone (BSZ). They had just finished conducting missions with the 7th SFG.

"We operated for about three months with relatively no contacts



ON WATCH 1LT Michael Keebaugh was a medical platoon leader for the Bushmasters.

after leaving the ODA," he said.

He explained that his platoon later augmented another unit to conduct a clearing operation in July '07.

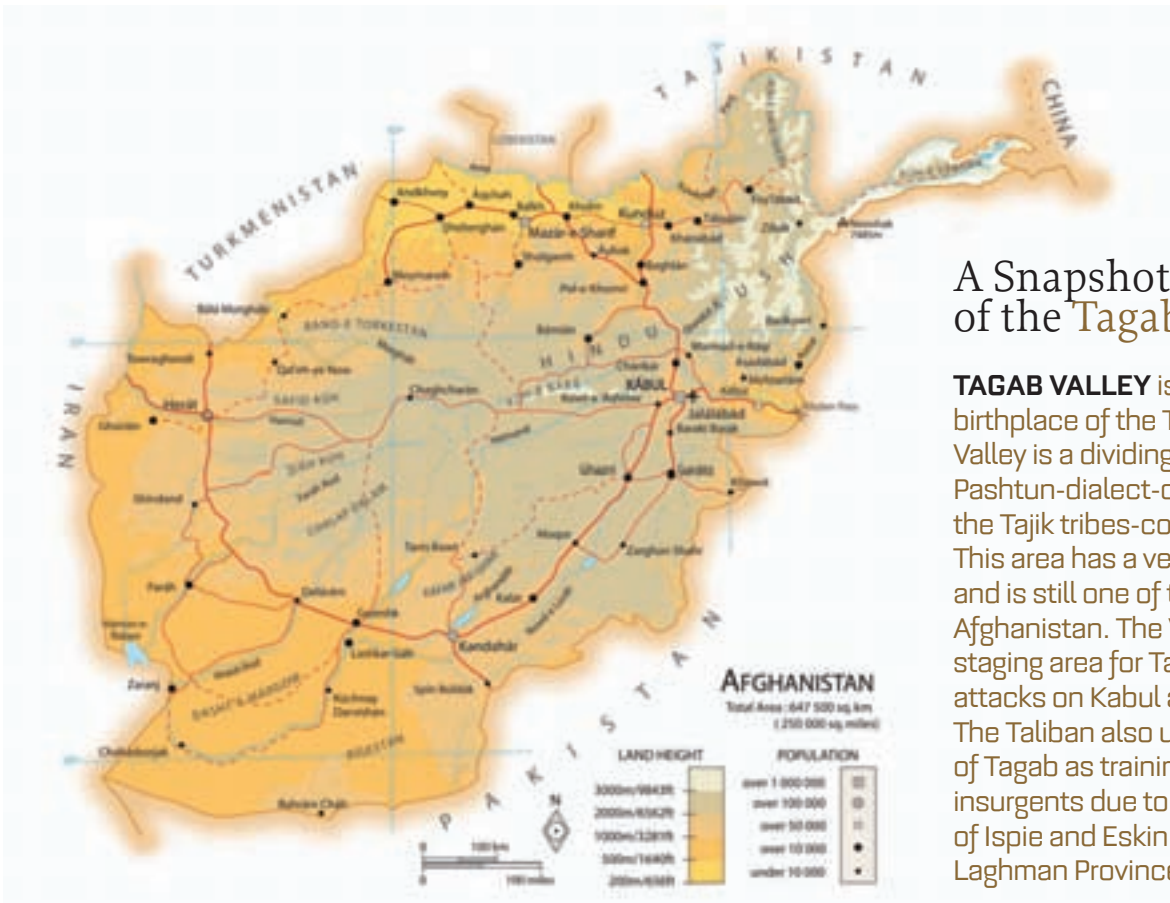
"We were selected to be the overall commander of [a section of] Tagab Valley during Operation N auroz Jhala since we were the most familiar with the area," he said. "We operated as a kinetic element conducting a joint ANP, ANA, cordon and clear."

During this mission, Chamberlain's platoon repeatedly battled the enemy, some fights running continuously for up to eight hours.

The rest of the deployment saw this element return to the BS Z, where it fought hard against Hezb-e-Islami Gulbuddin (HIB) and Taliban forces.

The platoon did return to the Tagab Valley for another joint mission with ANA commandos and five ODAs from the 10th SFG and 3rd SFG. The mission—Commando Fury—was aimed at specific high-value targets (HVTs).

The element returned to BSZ for about two weeks before returning to the Tagab Valley until they redeployed. While preparing to be relieved, they were called upon to rescue Senators John Kerry, Joseph Biden and Chuck Hagel, after the helicopter they were riding in went down in a snowstorm in the mountains (check out the story in GX 5.2).



A Snapshot of the Tagab Valley:

TAGAB VALLEY is thought to be the birthplace of the Taliban. Tagab Valley is a dividing line between the Pashtun-dialect-controlled area and the Tajik tribes-controlled North. This area has a very violent history and is still one of the hot spots in Afghanistan. The Valley is a major staging area for Taliban forces for attacks on Kabul and Bagram Air Field. The Taliban also uses the sub-valleys of Tagab as training areas for Taliban insurgents due to the rugged terrain of Ispie and Eskin valleys, near Laghman Province.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AZARNG



CREATING A BROTHERHOOD

I contacted SSG Jordan Guiggey after reading about a historic mission his Personal Security Detachment (PSD) was involved in at Paruns Valley. The commander of the PSD that provided security for the Nuristan Province—Navy CMDR Samuel Paparo—was part of the PRT's SECFOR.

History was made when 30 members of the Nuristan PRT, the Nuristan governor and every Provincial minister came together there to hold the first-ever Provincial District Council (PDC). The visit lasted four days.

Guiggey said that his PSD's mission included emplacing weapons that require more than one Soldier to operate around the area of the meeting. The PSD was assigned to protect higher-ranking officials during trips, including meetings discussing the provinces' needs and wants.

The SECFOR's missions not only included providing security for trips to villages for Medical Capability Assessment Programs (MEDCAPs), but some Soldiers were also tasked with a mind-numbing four hours of tower guard duty after each mission. The sergeants and above had to fulfill their duties as Sergeant of the Guard, which included walking from tower to tower to check on the Soldiers.

When the SECFOR first arrived at this FOB, they would go back to only tents. Guiggey added that there was one shower trailer, one latrine trailer, two slow computers and a hit-or-miss phone. Before he left, his team constructed wood huts with air conditioning.

Being stationed at this small FOB, he told me, his platoon "became brothers."

THIS BAND OF BUSHMASTERS

was also on call as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF). The QRFs, on a moment's notice, board helicopters for air assault missions to the Paruns Valley—an elevation of about 10,000 feet.

Guiggey's squad, in addition, conducted several foot patrols, sometimes wearing an estimated 100 pounds of equipment, including their required ammunition as well as extra magazines and hand grenades. They sometimes hiked 10 kilometers.

"Good" times like that require serious dedication to the mission, one of those qualities instilled in our nation's finest. Also, required—a steadfast leader.

No matter what mission they were doing, Guiggey's Soldiers could count on him. This was his second deployment—he had served in OIF from '03-'04. When I asked him to compare the two deployments, he said this mission was tougher because the terrain dictated everything. He pointed out that the roads were barely wide enough for a Humvee, with steep mountains on one side and cliffs on the other.



HIGH HONOR SMA Kenneth O. Preston (left) poses after presenting an Army Commendation Medal to SSG Kurtis Hourscht, a squad leader from Bushmasters, attached to the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team at Forward Operating Base Chapman, Afghanistan.

Through the hard work of the unit, progress inched forward. Guiggey shared that after a school was built and a MEDCAP assisted the local doctors, the villagers routinely notified the SECFOR when Taliban were on their way to the area.

"There was a lot of progress made. And being out in the villages, the locals would come up and talk to us a lot," said Gonzalez of the Afghans' beginning to take back control of their country.

SAME MENU, DIFFERENT DAY

Unlike contractor-run dining facilities (DFAC) in Bosnia, Kosovo and the larger FOBs in Iraq, active-duty Army cooks manned his

FOB's DFAC. There were about 400 people living on this FOB.

"It was decent chow. The same menu every day [though]—you knew what you were getting just about every Friday and Monday," Gonzalez laughed.

I jokingly commented that this chow must have been better than MREs. He quipped back that sometimes, MREs would have been a nice change.

His Soldiers lived in tents with plywood dividers. The DFAC and the battalion's Tactical Operation Center (TOC) were hardstand (cement) buildings. There also was a latrine trailer and a shower trailer.

"As long as the generators kept running, we had hot water and electricity," he said.

Gonzalez also said some of the Soldiers manning a remote combat outpost near FOB Mehtar Lam lived in similar conditions, but they liked it. These conditions included living in tents, no hot water and no indoor plumbing.

But they had a freezer full of steaks and cooked their own food. From personal experience, I know it's nice to get away from "the flagpole"—battalion or BCT headquarters—sometimes.

Gonzalez noted that as he was leaving, funding had been approved for seven hardstand buildings for the Soldiers to live in.

And thanks to the Bushmasters' tireless hearts and bold courage, their replacements will reap the ben-

efits of this modern housing and enjoy better relationships with the Afghans.

One more step in the right direction. One more group of Army National Guard Soldiers taking the fight to the enemy, while extending a compassionate hand to the people. The classic tale of all Guard missions.

"All in all, the Afghans are great people," Gonzalez explained. "They just need assistance. And that is what we're trying to do." **GX**



PULLING SECURITY SPC Thomas May, a rifleman in Arizona's Bushmasters pulls security in preparation for a ceremony celebrating the opening of a new district center in Khowst province, Afghanistan, May 15, 2007.

G-RAP Spreads Its Wings

SUCCESSFUL MENTORING PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY EXPANDED



By Christian Anderson

THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP) is relaunching in January. The mentoring program has proven incredibly effective as a force multiplier.

Launched in December 2005, the success of G-RAP is directly attributed to the efforts of its current participants. Therefore, effective January 2009, G-RAP eligibility will be expanded to include Active Guard Reserve (AGR) enlisted Soldiers as well as members currently serving on Active Duty Operational Support (ADOS) and Military Technician (MIL) status. AGR Officers and members of the full-time recruiting force remain ineligible.

"We waited until the end of the calendar year so that all Guard members, whether they are active, part time or technicians, can have the same equal playing field," stated COL Michael Jones,

Chief, ARNG Recruiting and Retention, in a GX interview. "This is important so all Guard Soldiers can contribute to the success of G-RAP and be rewarded equally at the same time."

The relaunch of G-RAP couldn't have come at a better time, with the new year rounding the corner. Jones explained that the Army recently expanded their version of G-RAP, so the Guard waited a few months so that the two programs

would not be confused.

Every day, Guard Soldiers come into contact with people that a conventional recruiter may not, and that is exactly what sets the program apart from others. In it, Soldiers share their experiences with potential recruits and explain to them how the Guard has impacted their own lives, while rewarding these Soldiers, known as Recruiting Assistants (RAs), with \$2,000.

G-RAP Success (as of Nov. 21, 2008):

- Active RAs: 131,935
- Nominations: 113,390
- Enlistments: 78,473
 - Non-prior Service: 63,313
 - Prior Service: 16,287
- BCT Shippers: 44,758
- G-RAP Active First Accessions: 1,205

For more on Active First, go to 1-800-GO-GUARD.COM/ActiveFirst.

G-RAP Success (as of Nov. 21, 2008):

- RAs with G-RAP-O nominations: 4,617
- OCS (Officer Candidate School) appointments: 126
- WOCs (Warrant Officer Candidate School) appointments: 64
- Total Officer accessions: 543

Types:

- AMEDD (Army Medical Department): 105
- Basic Branch: 339
- Chaplain: 29
- JAG: 15
- Warrant Officer: 55

The RAs look for potential Soldiers and inform them of the many wonderful possibilities available through the Guard: tuition assistance, job experience, travel and more.

The Guard recognizes that RAs work hard, so the prize is a hefty sum of cash. For every quality recruit they refer who attends Basic Combat Training (BCT), the RA receives \$2,000. The entire dollar amount is received upon verification of a non-prior service enlistment.

But, it is not just new recruits G-RAP is looking for; they also seek prior service members. Officer accessions can earn an RA up to \$7,500 through G-RAP for Officers, known as G-RAP-O.

With their enrollment, RAs also gain access to Mission Zone, the Guard's one-stop online shop for Guard gear like hats, ACU backpacks and more.

A key advantage G-RAP has over conventional recruiting is that the program places RAs shoulder-to-shoulder with the general population. They don't have to go out to the mall and look for recruits—they're in direct contact with fellow students, coworkers, moms, dads, brothers, sisters, boyfriends and girlfriends. The sky really is the limit for an RA, since almost anyone they meet could be a potential Soldier.

"G-RAP is really the most common-sense thing we have ever done," said Jones. "It is basically letting Guard Soldiers share their personal experiences and rewarding them for telling the story of the National Guard to their friends, family and acquaintances."

RAs help choose and influence those with whom they will be serving in their community, which strengthens the Guard bond.

"The great thing about G-RAP is that the RAs are able to help recruit the people they want to serve with in their local unit," Jones affirmed.

LTG Clyde A. Vaughn, Director of the Army National Guard, echoes this sentiment by crediting

G-RAP's success to "strength from within," the director told *GX*. "It's about unit members building their teams to serve with them ... not for them. It is peer recruiting at its best on behalf of the State and Nation."

Eligible Guard members can sign up for G-RAP through a simple two-step process:

Step 1: Go to GuardRecruitingAssistant.com and complete an online G-RAP application.

Step 2: Once approved, the RA can log in to their account and complete a short training program online.

This is probably the easiest way to earn extra cash while making the Guard, and more

specifically the RA's individual unit, stronger.

After the training is complete, an RA can identify and nominate potential Soldiers in their G-RAP account. The RA should then coordinate a meeting with the potential Soldier and the local recruiter to discuss the benefits of joining the Guard. The RA will receive an initial \$1,000 once the new Soldier's contract is verified.

The RA will continue to mentor the potential/new Soldier in preparation for BCT. If the recruit ships to BCT within 365 days of the contract, the RA receives another \$1,000. **GX**

To start earning your \$2,000, go to:
GuardRecruitingAssistant.com.



G-RAP IS REALLY THE MOST COMMON-SENSE THING WE HAVE EVER DONE."

>> COL Michael Jones, Chief, ARNG Recruiting and Retention



G-RAP Launches New Hire Kit

Courtesy of Docupak

NEWS IS SPREADING FAST about the inclusion of AGR Enlisted Soldiers, Military Technicians and ADOS Guard members into the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP).

Every Guard Soldier, including those in G-RAP, will benefit from the welcomed expansion. To all current, new and future Recruiting Assistants (RAs)—start checking your mail for free recruiting materials that are sure to motivate eligible Guard members to register, and to remind those already familiar with the program about its personal and financial rewards.

Coinciding with the launch of the newly eligible RAs in 2009, G-RAP has designed a New Hire Kit that will be shipped directly to RAs upon training completion. Included in the kit will be an “Ask Me About the Guard” t-shirt, personalized business cards and a Mission Zone card that explains

how new RAs can access the Guard’s online promotional store and order additional free merchandise to assist in their recruiting efforts.

The intent is to get items into the hands of new RAs right away, to encourage them to start sharing their story about how the National Guard has personally affected their lives. The New Hire Kit is an exciting bonus on top of the 2,500 credits already being rewarded to newly trained RAs to use in Mission Zone.

As one of the most successful recruiting and retention programs launched in recent history, G-RAP continues to be an effective and gratifying means of promoting strength from within. **GX**

For more information, visit G-RAP online at GuardRecruitingAssistant.com or call (866) 566-2472.



As one of the most successful recruiting and retention programs launched in recent history, G-RAP continues to be an effective and gratifying means of promoting strength from within.

Quick Enrollment in G-RAP

» YOU'RE ONLY A CLICK AWAY

1. Go to GuardRecruitingAssistant.com.
Click on the Army National Guard logo.



2. Click on "Apply Now!"



3. Choose the status that best matches you.



4. Enter basic ID information.



5. You're all set!



6. Check your inbox! You will receive an email confirmation of your G-RAP account.





MY 5 TIPS with PFC Jessica Kemp

By Staff Sgt. Marcia Beene Dickerson

PFC Jessica Kemp, 19, has only been in the Guard two years and has already seen big rewards in her wallet. As of mid-November, Kemp had successfully generated three contracts into the Guard, which earned her \$6,000 as a G-RAP Recruiting Assistant (RA).

An Indiana Army National Guard Soldier, Kemp mentors young people who are interested in enlisting. “I enjoy helping others learn more about the Guard—especially all of the benefits.”

GX asked Kemp for five tips she would offer to anyone enrolling as an RA. Here’s her advice.



1. Know what you’re doing. It’s important to know all that the National Guard offers, so when you’re working with a possible recruit, you’re able to answer his or her questions truthfully.

2. You have to become a “student” of recruiting, which means you have to study every day and be prepared.

3. Put them in the atmosphere of a drill, so they can see and feel the camaraderie and see what it’s like to be with Soldiers.

4. I enjoy helping others get ‘squared away’ before they go to Basic Combat Training (BCT). I like to answer their questions and help alleviate any concerns before they leave.

5. I show my recruits things that will help them in Basic Combat Training (BCT). For example, Kemp teaches her nominees how to prep themselves for the “bag dump” on the first day of BCT.

“I want people in the Guard that I trust—that I would share a foxhole with.”

—PFC Jessica Kemp



▶ MY 5 TIPS

with SGT Justin Morris

FORMER RECRUITING ASSISTANT
SHARES KEYS TO G-RAP SUCCESS

By Staff Sgt. Marcia Beene Dickerson

AS A MEMBER OF THE Washington Army National Guard, SGT Justin Morris, 38, is not your typical recruit. He took his experience as a salesman and applied it to his job when he was a Recruiting Assistant in the Guard's Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP). His performance referring 17 individuals that enlisted, earning him \$34,000, was very impressive. In fact, it helped SGT Morris secure his current ADSW Recruiter position.

COURTESY OF SGT JUSTIN MORRIS

Morris offered *GX* these five tips for outstanding G-RAP success.

1. Don't take rejection personally.
2. Ask everyone you believe is qualified to join.
3. Believe in what you're offering, and tell prospective recruits why you are a member of the National Guard.
4. Be a "walking billboard," and wear your National Guard colors. People will ask, and you can tell them the "why and how" of joining the Guard.
5. Have a positive attitude, and be very enthusiastic about what you're doing.

It doesn't hurt to be outgoing—Morris has talked to 400 to 500 people, nominated 73 and enlisted 17. His success is clearly an example of the National Guard spirit of believing in yourself and accomplishing the mission. **GX**

“

Believe in what
you're doing.”

—SGT JUSTIN MORRIS



LIBERTY & INDEPENDENCE

Tracing the Roots of the
DELAWARE ARMY
NATIONAL GUARD



By Jason Hall

THE MOTTO OF THE STATE OF DELAWARE IS: “Liberty and Independence”—two virtues that have been exemplified for the state and the country for more than 350 years by the Delaware National Guard.

What would become the state of Delaware began as a Swedish colony known as the “Three Lower Counties” of the William Penn colony of Pennsylvania. In the early days, the Swedes relied entirely on professional, regular Soldiers to protect the colony. However, the threat of attack by Dutch forces necessitated the raising of a militia force to supplement the regular Soldiers.

The First Mobilization

The first mobilization of militia force in Delaware occurred on August 31, 1655. It was called to defend against the impending Dutch attack on Fort Christina, known today as Wilmington. Though the Dutch would succeed in defeating the Swedes, this marked the first occurrence of a militia in what is today the state of Delaware.

As time went on, “The Lower Counties” came under British control, though there were never any formal provisions for a militia. Even as pirates threatened the coastal towns on the Delaware River, opposition to military activities by the Quaker-dominated legislatures of Pennsylvania and Delaware prevented any action being taken. Thus, citizens took it upon themselves to provide for their own defense and formed a militia force that helped Delaware become an independent colony separate from Pennsylvania.

The Dover Hundred Company

In 1754, war broke out between Great Britain and France for control of the land known today as Canada. The British relied heavily on supplemental forces provided by the colonial militia.

One such militiaman from Delaware was Caesar Rodney. In 1756, Rodney joined COL John Vining’s regiment and was named captain of the Dover Hundred Company. Rodney’s

military service during the French and Indian War would lead to him being commissioned in September 1775 as brigadier general of the Delaware militia. However, instead of supporting British regular troops, his mission was to train the Delaware militia to fight the British in order to gain independence from Great Britain.

At the same time he was brigadier general of Delaware militia, Rodney was also one of three delegates for Delaware to the Continental Congress. In early July 1776, while the congress was debating the subject of independence, Rodney was in Sussex County, Delaware, attempting to thwart a possible uprising by citizens loyal to the British crown. One of his fellow congressional delegates, Thomas McKean, sent word to Rodney that the Congress was going to vote on July 2 to adopt a Declaration of Independence, but that the third Delaware delegate, George Read, was opposed to it.

A Difficult Journey

The fate of the declaration—and of the yet-to-be-born new nation—rested in Rodney's ability to go to Philadelphia in time to vote in favor of the motion. Thus, the 48-year-old Soldier traveled the 80 miles, through thunderstorms and mud, while suffering from cancer and severe asthma.

He arrived on the afternoon of July 2, just as the voting was occurring. Exhausted and dirty from his long journey, he exclaimed to the members of Congress, "As I believe the voice of my constituents and of all sensible and honest men is in favor of independence, my own judgment concurs with them. I vote for independence."

Making a Difference

Thanks to his vote, the Declaration of Independence was adopted, and a month later, on August 2, Rodney signed his name to the document that is now viewed by millions in the National Archives in Washington, DC. In honor of his noble ride for independence, Caesar Rodney was featured on the Delaware state quarter issued in January 1999.

The men of Delaware were prepared to se-

Delaware Guard Soldiers have participated, and continue to participate, in Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

cure independence for their new country with their lives. On August 27, 1776, the Delaware regiment prevented the annihilation of General George Washington's force in its retreat during the Battle of Long Island. Along with Maryland militia, the Delaware Regiment fought a fierce rear guard action, counterattacking the British six times, allowing the safe retreat of the American forces to the protection of fortifications on Brooklyn Heights.

What Brave Fellows!

Watching the troops from Maryland and Delaware fight so bravely to save the American Army, General Washington cried out, "Good God! What brave fellows I must this day lose!" Had it not been for these Delaware militiamen, the War for American Independence may have ended right then and there. Today, the men and women of the 198th Signal Battalion, Delaware Army National Guard, carry on the Regiment's legacy.

Following the American Revolution, an uneasy peace between the United States and Great Britain lasted until open conflict once again erupted in 1812. During the War of 1812, Delaware militia comprised the lion's share of the forces that repelled a British army at Lewes that was dispatched to gain control of the Delaware River.

The British forces were once again defeated, and the country enjoyed approximately 30 years of peace.

From the Halls of Montezuma

That peace would be shattered with the outbreak of the Mexican War in 1846. The militia forces of Delaware combined to form a composite unit that fought honorably during the battles of Churubusco, Molino del Ray and Chapultepec. The Battle of Chapultepec Castle, also known as the Halls of Montezuma, is forever ingrained in the hymn of the United States Marine Corps; however, there were nearly twice as many Delaware militiamen there as there were Marines.

Unfortunately, the next trial by fire for the militiamen of Delaware would not be against a foreign power, but rather with their fellow countrymen.



STANDING TALL AT LONG ISLAND

Under the command of COL John Haslet, the Delaware Regiment proved its bravery at the Battle of Long Island when, along with a regiment from Maryland, it held a much larger British force at bay long enough for other American troops to withdraw safely from the field.



In 1916, the name of all state militia units was changed to “THE NATIONAL GUARD.”

The Civil War

At the outbreak of the Civil War in 1861, some militiamen were so anxious to see combat that they did not wait for the formation of a Delaware Regiment. One such unit from Wilmington decided to join the 24th Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment. Those from Delaware that did wait served with distinction in the 1st Delaware Infantry Regiment at such epic battles as Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, Cold Harbor, Petersburg and Gettysburg.

At the height of the Battle of Gettysburg, July 3, 1863, during the climactic Pickett's Charge, the 1st Delaware counterattacked the Confederate forces at the “angle” in the stone wall known as the “high-water mark of the Confederacy.” The stalwart men from Delaware beat back the Confederate onslaught, thus helping to provide the major turning point in the war.

WWI and the Delaware National Guard

The dawn of a new century saw many changes for the country, the world and the militia. In 1916, the name of all state militia units was changed to “The National Guard,” and the president was given the authority to mobilize these state forces. That same year, President Woodrow Wilson mobilized the National Guard, including that of Delaware, to protect the American-Mexican border from insurgent forces under the command of Pancho Villa. This service provided critical in-the-field training for the Delaware Soldiers that they would put to good use in the ensuing entry of the United States into WWI.

The men of the 1st Delaware Regiment were given assurances that their unit would remain intact and be deployed together. However, in September 1917, the regiment was disbanded, and many of the Soldiers were assigned to the 114th Infantry Regiment of the 29th Division and would see service overseas with that unit.

Other members of the Delaware Guard were employed to create a new type of infantry unit: the 59th Pioneer Infantry Regiment. While participating in training at Fort Dix, NJ, the regiment

was commended for its role in testing a new model of the U.S. Army gas mask. The 59th was sent overseas, where it was utilized to construct roads and other important infrastructures, often under heavy fire from the enemy. The honors and awards of the 59th are carried today by the 198th Signal Battalion.

WWII and Korea

In WWII, as in WWI, the members of the Delaware Guard units did not see service with their own units, but rather they were scattered throughout other units that fought in both the European and Pacific Theaters. One such Delaware unit was the 261st Coast Artillery. The 261st was tasked with defending the Delaware Bay. Prior to its Soldiers being sent to other regiments to fight Germany and Japan, the men of the 261st had turned the temporary Camp Henlopen into a \$20,000,000 coast defense installation that was the most modern on the East Coast.

Similar to their service in WWII, during the Korean War, members of the Delaware National Guard served in combat units on an individual basis, not as a unit. This was due to the individual replacement policy during this time period. A new type of conflict, the Cold War, caused an immense amount of reorganization and consolidation for the Delaware Guard.

As they fulfilled their state mission in responding to natural disasters and civil disturbances, the Guard members also reacted to federal needs. An unlikely enemy, the economy, took its toll on the Delaware Guard in 1963 by necessitating a 10 percent reduction in force.

The Vietnam War

The changes to the Guard were occurring as the United States found itself embroiled in another war: Vietnam. The Delaware Army National Guard was not called to active duty for Vietnam; however, as in wars past, many individual Delaware Guard members volunteered to serve in the conflict. The Delaware Soldiers here at home played an impor-

tant role in the training of Army forces that were bound for Vietnam. The members of the 1st Battalion, 198th Artillery, volunteered for six months to train regular Army Soldiers at Fort Bliss, TX, on the workings of the M-42 “Duster” 40 mm self-propelled anti-aircraft gun.

Engineers in the Gulf

The Gulf War of 1990 saw units deployed as intact Guard units. The 249th Engineer Detachment, Delaware Army National Guard, deployed to participate in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. The 249th consisted of 70 Soldiers, who were masons, carpenters and electricians. The unit built and repaired base facilities and roadways. A notable contribution of the 249th was completely rebuilding an abandoned recreation center, providing thousands of Soldiers with a place for rest and relaxation.

The Soldiers of the Delaware Guard were destined to return to the Middle East, following the attacks of 9/11. Men and women of the Delaware Army National Guard have participated, and continue to participate, in Operations Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

On November 1, 2006, the state welcomed home the 30 members of the 160th Engineer Company from their service in Iraq. Some of these Soldiers had received the Purple Heart during their many convoy security missions.

“We are truly blessed that each and every member of this platoon returned home safely,” stated MG Frank Vavala, adjutant general of Delaware.

Formation on the Green

On October 3, 2008, 110 Soldiers of the 261st Signal Brigade gathered on Legislative Mall in Dover, the state capital, for a send-off prior to their deployment to Iraq. The ceremony evoked the memories of those members of the Delaware militia who formed only a few hundred yards away on the Green in response to beginning of the Revolutionary War. **GX**

Fast Facts

- Delaware's militia was formed after a horseman rode the length of the colony calling for volunteers
- After defending GEN Washington's Long Island retreat, the First Regiment fought in every battle with him except Princeton
- Delaware was the first state admitted to the Union on December 7, 1787
- After the Revolution, many militiamen bought their own uniforms, rifles and artillery pieces.

Rev Up Your Resilience

Gaining the Emotional Tough Stuff You Need for Deployment

By Martin Binks, Ph.D.

When Soldiers deploy, building up emotional resilience is essential—for both Soldiers and their families.

The military is there to help with deployment resources, including a special program called Battlemind found at Hooah4Health.com/mind/default.htm. Using the tools on this site, Soldiers can develop confidence, the will to persevere and “inner strength to face adversity, fear and hardship during combat with courage.”

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), resilience is “the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or even significant sources of stress.”

Revvng up resilience involves individual training and a well-thought-out plan to ensure that the Soldier’s affairs are in order and that his or her family is taken care of. Such a plan makes it much easier for Soldiers to focus on the task at hand without distraction. While our Soldiers and families do this extremely well most of the time, it becomes much more important during deployment and redeployment. When mobilization becomes a part of daily life, loved ones are placed in stressful circumstances.

One way to improve resilience is to make changes in the way you handle adversity and adapt to difficult circumstances.

Here are a few key tools for building resilience:

- >> Healthy stress management and coping skills
- >> Good problem-solving skills
- >> Staying connected with family and friends
- >> Talking about your situation with loved ones
- >> Spirituality
- >> Seeing yourself as a survivor—not a victim
- >> Helping others
- >> Finding positive meaning in the situation
- >> Having social support available and seeking it out when in need
- >> Knowing you can manage your feelings and emotions

Managing our emotions helps us stay focused on the task at hand. But that doesn’t mean you should deny negative emotions or “put on a happy face.” Emotional health requires us to recognize our negative emotions, including fear, sadness, anxiety and loss—the point is to not let those emotions overwhelm us.

So how do you learn to do this? The same way you prepare for every other aspect of deployment: train in advance.

Studies examining emotional responses to terrorist attacks, including those during 9/11, report that people who were able to experience positive emotions during and after these events endured fewer depressive symptoms and displayed healthier adjustment. Those helpful emotions include a sense of fellowship, camaraderie, hope and gratitude for being alive.

Experts have studied this topic for decades and have coined a term for the skills it takes to lead others while taking care of yourself: emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is a blend of:

Self-awareness: the ability to interpret your own emotions and to read the emotions of others.

Self-confidence: awareness of and trust in your capabilities.

Self-management: being able to control your emotions and impulses, and adapt to change skillfully.

Social awareness: the ability to sense, understand and adapt your responses to the emotions of those around you; also, the ability to judge how your reactions influence others.

Relationship management: the ability to inspire and influence others.

Pulling these emotional intelligence skills together in tandem with a solid action plan for handling deployment can help you and your family lead a healthier life, even in the face of deployment cycles and uncertain times.

So take advantage of your resources to rev up resilience and get emotionally ready to face any challenge. **GX**



For more about building resilience, read about the Battlemind program at Hooah4Health.com and the APA’s “Road to Resilience” at APAHelpCenter.org. **Don’t wait until you are in trouble to seek help.** Get a head start on being emotionally prepared for any challenge.

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www.decadeofhealth.com





Turn Holiday Spending Into A Merry Money Lesson

Many families will use the power of plastic to make cash registers ring this holiday season. But that might bring bad tidings after the first of the year, according to a recent USAA survey that asked teens how they learn about money. And unfortunately, racking up holiday debt may be another way parents are teaching bad money management skills to teens.

According to the survey results, nearly three out of four high school teens say they learn “a lot” or “a decent amount” about money management from their parents. But it doesn’t come from lectures—it’s from watching how their parents spend.

“Parents are raising a generation of big and possibly irresponsible spenders,” explained USAA Certified Financial Planner practitioner J.J. Montanaro. “Nearly half of the parents surveyed confessed that their money management habits range from ‘OK’ to ‘horrible.’”

There’s still hope for the upcoming holiday season, though. Montanaro offers these four suggestions for how parents can turn holiday shopping moments into life-long money lessons:

Put Holiday Budgets on a Diet

Just as splurging on extra holiday dessert can add up around your waistline, the same applies to holiday overspending, which can fatten up your debt. With more than 40 percent of parents in the survey admitting they don’t have a household budget, many teens aren’t subject to the financial discipline they need. Turn this statistic around and sit down with the whole family to develop a spending budget for each family member for the holidays. This will help teens develop the financial discipline they’ll need in the future, while still allowing them the opportunity to do some holiday shopping.

Making the Most of the Christmas Credit Crunch

For many revelers, the holidays may seem like

a bottomless bowl of treats with no long-lasting consequences. The same goes for teens who don’t realize that abuse of an ATM or credit card can cause just as much long-term damage to their financial health.

Start by encouraging teens to avoid the “invisible money” of the ATM until they have the skills to manage it effectively. Have them state what they want to spend so they can see a direct connec-

tion between their budget and their spending. Also don’t be afraid to get out the credit card bill and outline how payments, interest and expenses add up to the number on the bottom line. Show your teen how interest can build up when credit cards are used irresponsibly and the balance isn’t paid in full.

Give the Gift of the Hard-Earned Dollar

It can be difficult to get teens to understand the value of the hard work parents put in so they can buy Christmas presents. “Many teens may be missing out on the real value of the dollars they’re spending, because they aren’t making a connection with the effort that was put in to make that money,” Montanaro said.

With almost half of teens not working for their “fun money,” according to the USAA survey results, a holiday season job could be just the ticket to learning the value of a dollar. Encourage your teens to get their own job so they can see their hard work turn into the cold cash they’ll spend on their friends and family during the holidays.

Stuff Stockings with Savings?


Also, remember that there’s no better way to teach teens to be accountable for their spending than by empowering them to manage their money.

Set up an online savings account and debit card for them, and show them how to manage and monitor their spending on the Web. When teens can see how their debit card takes money from their savings account, they’ll better understand how that piece of plastic isn’t an endless supply of spending power.

Using the holidays to teach teens good money management habits may make you feel more like Scrooge than Santa Claus, but learning to be financially savvy is a priceless gift. Visit USAA.com for more information about teaching your children ways to develop good money management skills. **GX**



There’s no better way to teach teens to be accountable for their spending than by empowering them to manage their money.



Encourage your teens to get their own job so they can see their hard work turn into the cold cash they'll spend on their friends and family during the holidays.

4 WAYS TO PAY FOR COLLEGE

GUARD PROGRAMS CAN HELP FOOT THE BILL FOR YOUR EDUCATION

By Johanna Altland, Grantham University





a Guard Soldier, you have a myriad of options when it comes to paying for college. From the Tuition Assistance program to scholarships and grants, you can find a way to make earning your degree affordable.

Below you will find a little bit of information about some of your financial aid choices. For more information go to 1-800-GO-GUARD.com.

1. Military Tuition Assistance: The Tuition Assistance (TA) program provides funding for service members' continuing education and is available to all eligible Soldiers (officers, warrant officers, enlisted) on active duty, as well as Army National Guard and Army Reserve members. For most service members, TA pays up to \$250 per credit hour, not to exceed the fiscal year cap. Army National Guard and Reserve members who are not currently on active duty should check with their Education Office to determine availability of TA funds. Each military branch has its own eligibility requirements, application process and fiscal year caps.

2. Montgomery G.I. Bill: The Montgomery G.I. Bill (MGIB) provides up to 36 months of educational assistance for a variety of training, including an undergraduate or graduate degree at a college or university or a cooperative training program. Veterans can use their MGIB benefits for up to 10 years from the date of their last discharge or release from active duty; for Selected Reserve, your benefits end 14 years from the date of your eligibility or on the day you leave the Selected Reserve. More information on eligibility requirements is available at www.GIBill.com.

3. G.I. Bill Top-up: If you are eligible for the Montgomery G.I. Bill and are using Tuition Assistance, you may qualify for Top-up. If tuition and expenses at your university exceed \$250 per credit hour, a service member eligible for the MGIB can elect to receive MGIB benefits for all or a part of the remaining expenses. For more information on eligibility and how this program works, visit: www.GIBill.com/topup.cfm.

4. Scholarships and Grants: Many scholarships and grants are available for military service members through local service organizations like the American Legion or through scholarship search Web sites. Are you thinking that you 'll never win a scholarship, so why bother applying? The fact is that someone has to win; why couldn't it be you? You should also check with the college or university that you plan to attend because it may offer tuition grants and scholarships for military service members, Veterans and military family members. Below are some sites where you can begin your search to find money for college:

Peterson's Scholarship Search

Start planning early to secure financial aid for college. Peterson's Scholarship Search connects you with more than 1.8 million scholarships, grants and awards valued at \$7.9 billion. For more information, visit: Petersons.com.

Scholarship Resource Network Express

Scholarship Resource Network Express (SRNExpress) contains a database of more than 8,000 programs with more than 150,000 awards for undergraduate and postgraduate students. For more information, visit: SRNExpress.com/index.cfm.

Military Spouse Resource Center

The Military Spouse Resource Center offers a variety of resources designed for military service members and their families. Using a search engine, you can look for scholarship opportunities and find out more information about military-friendly schools. For more information, visit: MilSpouse.org.

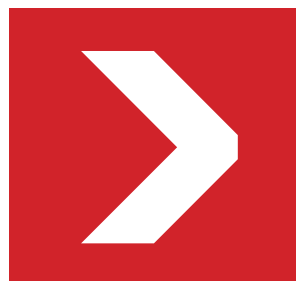
Scholarships.com

Scholarships.com is a free resource for college scholarships and financial aid information. Its database is updated regularly, and you can search for scholarships by deadline, dollar amount and relevancy.

CollegeBoard.com

CollegeBoard.com created this online tool to help you locate scholarships, internships, grants and loans that match your education level, talents and background. Complete the brief questionnaire and its Scholarship Search will find potential opportunities from the database of more than 2,300 sources of college funding. For more information, visit: CollegeBoard.com.

In addition to the funding options and scholarship opportunities listed above, go to 1-800-GO-GUARD.com for info on National Guard scholarships in your home state. **GX**

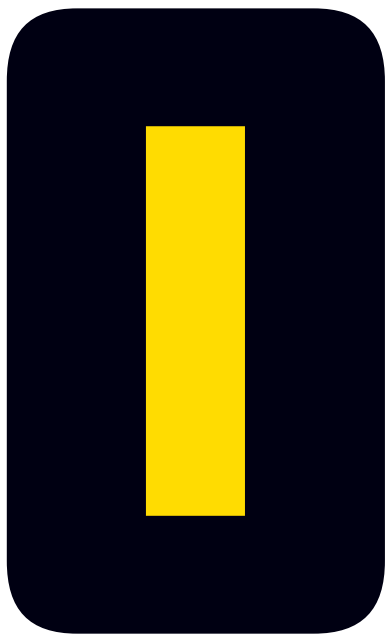


MANY SCHOLARSHIPS AND GRANTS ARE AVAILABLE FOR MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS THROUGH LOCAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS LIKE THE AMERICAN LEGION OR THROUGH SCHOLARSHIP SEARCH WEB SITES.

COMBATIVES GROWS UP

GUARD HOLDS FIRST CHAMPIONSHIP COMPETITION

Story and photos by SFC Clint Wood



One of the last times I saw CPT Andrew Heymann was in Iraq in 2007, in the conference room of the Arizona Army National Guard's (AZARNG) 258th Rear Area Operations Center (RAOC) at Logistical Support Area (LSA) Adder.

Heymann, the Morale, Welfare and Recreation officer-in-charge and installation anti-terrorism/force protection officer, was leading a briefing on the possible visit of Gina Nortrica, BandShe and Chely Wright to the LSA.

I remember Heymann, then a Level Three Combatives instructor, discussing starting Combatives classes there with some of the attendees. I didn't know it at the time, but one of his last tasks as an active-duty Army Soldier, before being honorably discharged and joining the AZARNG, was at the U.S. Army Combatives School (USACS) at Fort Benning, GA. He was the school's special projects officer.

I met him again for the first time since Iraq during the Best Warrior competition Aug. 12, 2008, at the fort. Heymann is the assistant operations officer for the ARNG's Warrior Training Center (WTC).

His other qualification, though, would play a huge role four days later, in a first for the ARNG. Heymann, now a Level Four Combatives instructor, was instrumental in organizing the first ARNG Combatives Championship Aug. 16–17 at Briant Wells Fieldhouse on the fort. CSM John Gipe of the ARNG tasked Heymann with the competition.

The event pitted 14 Soldiers from 13 states in the very tough Combatives contest. There were seven weight classes—flyweight, lightweight, welterweight, middleweight, cruiserweight, light heavyweight and heavy-

weight. The finals were conducted under advanced Combatives rules that allowed closed-fist strikes, kicks, throws, ground strikes and submissions.

The two-day competition had 53 Soldiers from as far away as Alaska and Rhode Island. The Illinois team won overall. Six Illinois ARNG Soldiers also competed in the final bouts; two won. Medals were awarded to the first, second- and third-place finishers.

This competition meant a lot to Heymann. He's passionate about Combatives, and it was another way to inform Soldiers about it. He's very glad that the Guard is embracing the program.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

The championships started with a history-making experience—the first Army Combatives bout between a male and female Soldier. SGT Joshua Crawford of the Illinois ARNG, who stands only 5-foot-2, defeated a taller SSG Wendy Johnson, also of Illinois, by submission.

For Matthew Larsen, director of the Modern Army Combatives Program (MACP) and

**“YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO
GET CLOSE WITH THE ENEMY.”**

>> SFC (ret.) Matthew Larsen, director of the Modern Army Combatives Program



SCHOOL'S IN SESSION The U.S. Army Combatives School at Fort Benning, GA, moved into the Briant Wells Field House in January.

commander of the USACS at the fort, this bout symbolized what Combatives is all about.

"Would you have any doubts about going through the door with [Johnson]?" asked Larsen, who retired from the active-duty Army in 2005 as a sergeant first class. "You know for sure she would be there. Every one of these Soldiers would be. Because that's what Combatives reinforces in people."

Crawford said being a good wrestler in high school assisted him in his victory. He wrestled in high school at 112 pounds for four years, qualifying for the state tournament twice. He said his strength in takedowns and his speed accounted for his success in the Combatives championship.

"I knew she wanted to [fight standing up], and I have zero stand-up, so I just wanted to go to the ground," Crawford said. "And I did."

When I asked him what it was like fighting a female Soldier, he said it was hard for two reasons. One—they were on the same team. Two—she intimidated him.

"I didn't want to hurt her, and she didn't want to hurt me," he explained. "It was tough, because I didn't know how aggressive to be."

Johnson, 31, who was certified in Level One Combatives in March, used her boxing training in the bout. "I got to apply the [eight weeks of] boxing experience I have. I got at least one punch in the beginning, so that felt good," she affirmed.

Crawford agreed that Johnson did "... hit me good."



HISTORY IS MADE The flyweight bout between SGT Joshua Crawford and SSG Wendy Johnson made history as the first one between a male and a female.

Johnson, a triathlete and 12-year Guard member, only had three weeks to train for the competition. Personal issues had stopped her from joining the team in March. Her training before this competition included a couple of Jiu Jitsu classes.

When I asked her how it felt being the first female to compete in this competition, she replied, "I just try to hold my own the best I can. I don't want anybody to say, 'What is she doing out there?' I don't want to be a wimp."

EYES ON THE PRIZE

Larsen, a former Marine grunt who later served in the 75th Ranger Regiment for more than 12 years, shared his view of the importance of Combatives. "The first thing is the purpose behind it," he began. "It's a motivational tool."

The Soldiers wouldn't spend their time and energy becoming proficient in the sport, he continued, if it was of no benefit to them.

"So the truth is, in the beginning, nobody really did concentrate on [Combatives]," he said. "Everybody in the Army can tell you

that it was seen as just a fringe thing. The way we made it mainstream [was by creating] the competitions.”

The champions this day were Illinois’ SGT Joshua Crawford in flyweight (125 pounds), Oklahoma’s SFC Michael Hannan in lightweight (140 pounds), Illinois’ SPC Adam Therriault in welterweight (155 pounds), New Mexico’s 1LT Adam Moralez in middleweight (170 pounds), Arizona’s SGT David Stefl in cruiserweight (180 pounds), Illinois’ SSG Tony Genovese in light heavyweight (205 pounds) and Minnesota’s SGT Jesse Curry in heavyweight (more than 205 pounds).

Hannan, a 33-year-old Modern Army Combatives Course Manager for Oklahoma, defeated 2LT Thomas Robideau of Illinois by submission. When Robideau turned his back on Hannan, he climbed his back and choked him out.

Therriault’s match with teammate CPT Justin Towell ended in a decision based on points. Therriault, who lost more than 70 pounds while training in martial arts, described the bout as a “flip of the coin.”

“We both just stood up and banged pretty much the whole fight,” he said. “I tried to keep him off the ground because I knew he was a better wrestler.”

Therriault, who competed in the All-Army Combatives championship last year, took Towell down in the second round.

Moralez, who started boxing in the sixth grade, defeated SPC Matthew Campbell of Alaska by submission. Similar to his other victories in Combatives, he used a guillotine chokehold for his win.

Moralez, who has been competing in Combatives since he joined the Guard, is a green belt in judo and Jiu Jitsu and has competed in tournaments in both.

Stefl, an Apache crew chief, former high school wrestler and 13-year Judo veteran, defeated SPC Eric Huntley of Illinois by submission. In the Guard less than four years, his experience lies in his pre-deployment training.

He defeated Huntley because he was able to throw him down, and his wrestling experience took over from there. That experience didn’t land him in a state tournament, though. In the 152-pound weight class, he always had to wrestle a four-time state champion, and in the 142-pound weight class, he always had to wrestle the state-champion runner-up.

Genovese, who defeated SGT Jeremy Stimac of Illinois by submission, is also a former high



NEAR MISS SPC Adam Therriault (left) blocks a kick to his face by CPT Justin Towell during the championships.

school wrestler. He described his wrestling as “mediocre,” though.

This was the third time the two teammates had fought each other. Because of this, Genovese knew Stimac was experienced in Jiu Jitsu, so he would want to stand up.

GOING FOR THE GUILLOTINE

“He came in and threw a couple of punches,” Genovese said. “He let his head down, and I went for the guillotine [chokehold], sunk it in and ended it quick. [The hold] wasn’t perfect, so I squeezed and pulled as hard as I could.”

Genovese pointed out that as a high school wrestler, an athlete obtains experiences that can’t be taught. “It is just experience, the way you move your body. You feel somebody’s weight on one spot so you move the other way ... it’s just one of those things you learn over time from repetition.”

The finale pitted two former Minnesota high school wrestlers against each other. Curry, a former 189-pound wrestler, defeated SSG Brian Friedrichs by a referee stop.

Because Curry knew Friedrichs was a wrestler too, his intent was to stay on his feet. When

Friedrichs tried to take him down, Curry backed to the ropes and pushed Friedrichs into him and then separated.

Curry waited for Friedrichs to swing at him. When Friedrichs missed, Curry countered with a right hook and hit Friedrichs twice. The bout was over.

Curry has been in Combatives for three years and trained at the Minnesota Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) Academy in Brooklyn Center, MN.

HOW IT ALL BEGAN

Army Combatives started in 1995, when Larsen, a staff sergeant, was ordered by the commander of the 2nd Ranger Battalion to start Combatives training.

“We did the old Combatives stuff and realized it was baloney,” Larsen said. “So we set out looking for a better way to do it. Basically, I was a squad leader at the time, and I started training my guys. Because it was successful, pretty soon it was happening at the platoon level, and then at the company level, then battalions and the entire Ranger regiment. That slowly drew to be the whole Army, based upon [increasing] success.”

With actual combat experience as a guide, Larsen designed a system using Brazilian Jiu Jitsu as a technical base, but oriented it to the needs of the Rangers. He also published Field

Fast Facts

- >>COMBATIVES is required at every Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) and Officer Education System (OES) school.
- >>COMBATIVES training is required for every Army unit.
- >>COMBATIVES training must be scheduled on all company and platoon training calendars.



He has since helped rewrite the Combatives curriculum for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center, which includes, among other things, the Special Forces Qualification Course. He's also training the Air Force. "So—[that's] 1.6 million students," he smiled.

There are four levels of instructor certification: Level One, Level Two, Level Three and Level Four. Levels Three and Four instructors can teach the first two levels and are trained at Fort Benning.

Larsen added that the WTC is going to be available to train Guard Soldiers as Level One and Level Two instructors.

"The good thing about the Guard is, once you train somebody, they're probably going to be there for a long time," he said. "So it doesn't take much for us to really get a program going," he said.

Larsen also has seen Combatives tournaments get bigger each year. Four years ago, the Army Combatives Championship had only about 50 competitors. Last year, there were more than 195.

"So over the course of next several years," he explained, "we'll get to where this is a normal part of Soldiering. And everybody will expect a Soldier to be able to be a good fighter."

THE SPIRIT OF A WARRIOR

The Guard and Reserve are big priorities both for him personally and for the school. "They make more than half the force," Larsen said. If he had to choose one thing that makes a Warrior, he added, it would be Combatives.

"You have to be willing to get close with the enemy," he explained. "It's pretty much the trait that makes somebody a Warrior. If they're not

CONNECTING SGT David Stefl (left) and SPC Eric Huntley exchange blows in the Combatives Championships.



THE CHAMPIONS

> FLYWEIGHT

- 1ST PLACE: SGT Joshua Crawford (IL)
- 2ND PLACE: SSG Wendy Johnson (IL)

> LIGHTWEIGHT

- 1ST PLACE: SFC Michael Hannan (OK)
- 2ND PLACE: 2LT Thomas Robideau (IL)

> WELTERWEIGHT

- 1ST PLACE: SPC Adam Therriault (IL)
- 2ND PLACE: CPT Justin Towell (IL)

> MIDDLEWEIGHT

- 1ST PLACE: 1LT Adam Morales (NM)
- 2ND PLACE: SPC Matthew Campbell (AK)

> CRUISERWEIGHT

- 1ST PLACE: SGT David Stefl (AZ)
- 2ND PLACE: SPC Eric Huntley (IL)

> LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT

- 1ST PLACE: SSG Tony Genovese (IL)
- 2ND PLACE: SGT Jerry Stimac (IL)

> HEAVYWEIGHT

- 1ST PLACE: SGT Jesse Curry (MN)
- 2ND PLACE: SSG Brian Friedrichs (MN)

willing to go through that door, they're not a Warrior. It's that simple.

"How do we teach [Citizen-Soldiers] to be willing to go through that door? [How do we] inculcate the Warrior Spirit and the Warrior Ethos into them?" Larsen asked. "[Combatives] is the best tool we have, in my opinion."

Tournaments like this will only improve Soldiers' proficiency in the sport. "They drive the level of competition higher," he noted.

In the end, the Combatives Championship received rave reviews, and Heymann is scheduled meet with Gipe in late 2008 to discuss next year's competition. **GX**

"HE LET HIS HEAD DOWN, AND I WENT FOR THE GUILLOTINE, SUNK IT IN AND ENDED IT QUICK."

>> SSG Tony Genovese

Fighting Spirit

▶ SHARP AND STRONG





Fast Focus

Dale Jr. speeds down the track during the Pep Boys Auto 500 at the Atlanta Motor Speedway Oct. 26, 2008.

SPORTS

Dale Jr.'s pit crew coach discusses his team's training; the Guard scores Dan Wheldon as its new Indy car driver; and more.

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FITNESS

Practice strength and suspension training with SGT Ken's Operation Hang Time.

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Learn about the M4 rifle—a Soldier's weapon of choice.

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Life in the Fast Lane

>> **GX Chats With No. 88 Pit Crew Coach**



OVER THE WALL The National Guard No. 88 left front tire-changer and left front tire-carrier complete a pit stop during the All-State 400. Each tire weighs about 25 pounds.

By *SFC Clint Wood*

THEY SAY **PRACTICE** MAKES PERFECT.

This is very true when it comes to the seven-man pit crew team for the National Guard No. 88 NASCAR

Sprint Cup car driven by Dale Earnhardt Jr. Several times a week, the members practice numerous half-hour pit stop sessions on a mock pit wall.

And with this routine comes an intense four-day physical training period at Hendrick Motorsports' 1,500 square-foot workout facility located in the company's 12-

building complex in Charlotte, NC. If it's hard to picture 1,500 square feet, imagine four semi-trailers side-by-side. The team, along with the other Hendrick racing teams, has this workout covered like Dale Jr.'s face in a full helmet during a race.

Each of the tires on Dale Jr.'s car weighs about 25 pounds, and a full gas can weighs about 90 pounds. So

this team—the only ones allowed “over the wall” during a race—has to be in shape.

To find out what they do for their four-day physical training, *GX* interviewed pit-crew coach, D.J. Richardson. He's the rear tire-changer for the No. 88 car and has been a tire-changer at Hendrick Motorsports since 2006.



GX: What do you focus on during this four-day training?

DJR: We concentrate on injury prevention, cardio, strength and conditioning in the gym. For pit stop practice, we focus on fundamentals and consistency.

GX: What kind of equipment is in this gym?

DJR: We have free-weights, full-range motion equipment, Hammer Strength and cardio—treadmills, elliptical, bikes.

GX: Does the team wear their fire suits and helmets during the pit-stop practice?

DJR: We wear our helmets, but not fire suits. We do 12 to 15 stops per session, to be reviewed by video after each one.

GX: How long are the pit-stop practice sessions?

DJR: Thirty minutes.

GX: What does the pit crew do after race day?

DJR: Most rest. Others work in the shop. Monday is light—the guys usually work out, but no pit-stop practice.

GX: What are some of the exercises the pit crewmen do for their full-body high intensity regimen, and how long do they last?

DJR: We do circuit training, outdoor heat training and obstacle courses. The sessions last one-and-a-half hours.

GX: Tuesdays you do cardio and quick-feet drills. What do they consist of, and how long do they last?

DJR: Indoors, we do cardio on treadmill, bike or elliptical. Outside work includes sprints, hills and 300-meter shuttle runs.

GX: What type of exercises do you do

on Wednesdays and Thursdays? How long do they go for?

DJR: On those days, we do cardio and weights.

GX: What other tasks does the team do before each race?

DJR: We fly to the track on Sunday mornings, set up the pits and then relax and eat before the race.

GX: Do the team members compete against each other in company-wide competitions?

DJR: We do individually but nothing on record or paper. [Laughs]

GX: What is the record for lifts in bench press, dead lift and squats?

DJR: We don't have one officially, but there is one guy on the DuPont No. 24 team who definitely has the record hands down. He used to be a professional wrestler. **GX**



Keep up with Dale Jr. at
www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/GuardRacing/DaleJr

« **D.J. RICHARDSON HAS BEEN THE TEAM'S PIT CREW COACH AND REAR TIRE CHANGER FOR THE NO. 88 CAR SINCE JANUARY 2008, AND A TIRE CHANGER AT HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS SINCE 2006.**

Fast Facts

THE 7-MEMBER PIT CREW CONSISTS OF:

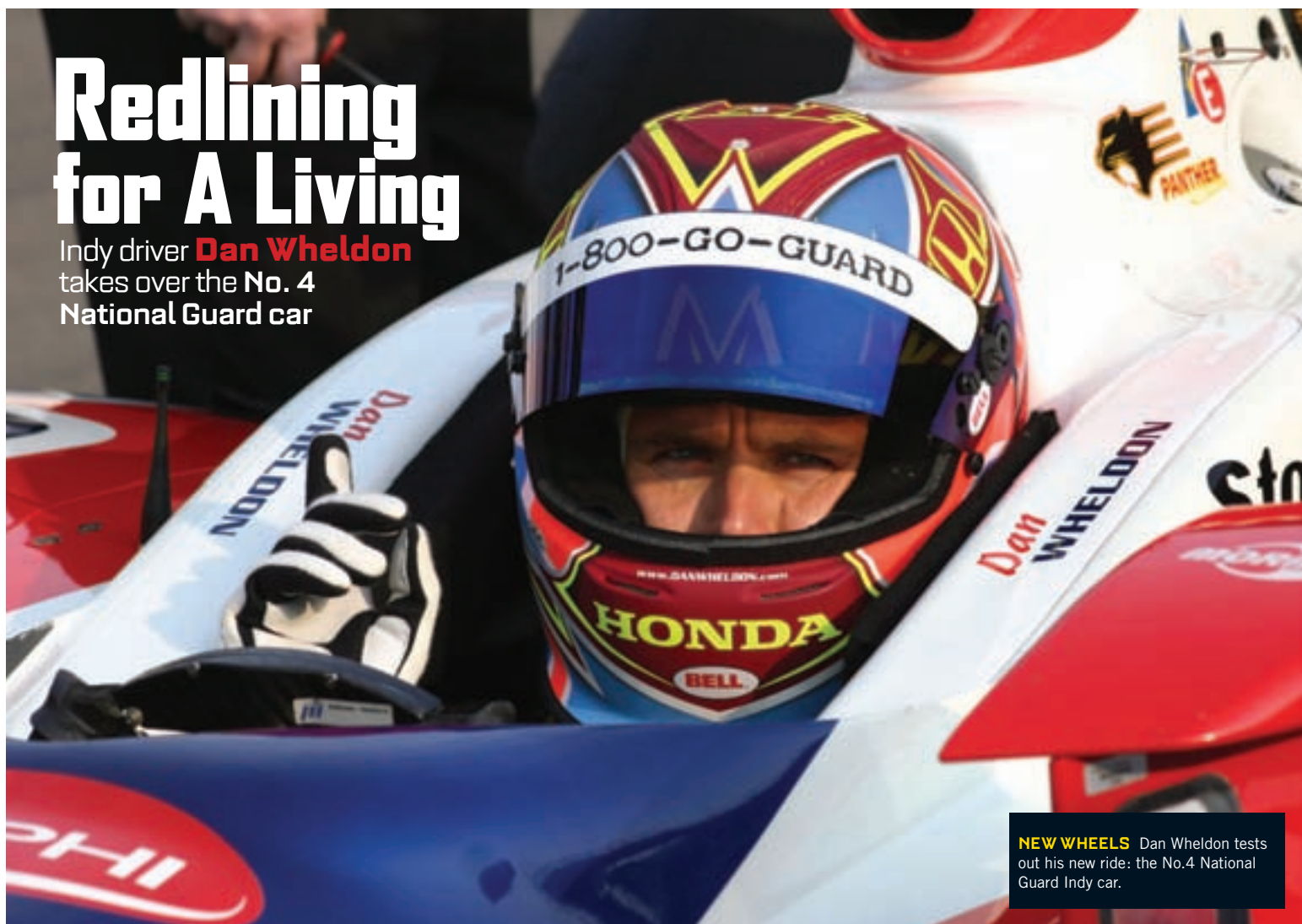
- >> Two Tire Changers
- >> One Gasman
- >> Two Tire Carriers
- >> One Catch-Can Man (the catch can weighs 5 pounds)
- >> One Jackman



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS

Redlining for A Living

Indy driver **Dan Wheldon** takes over the No. 4 National Guard car



NEW WHEELS Dan Wheldon tests out his new ride: the No. 4 National Guard Indy car.

By Christian Anderson

In a move that proved to be one of the Indy Racing League's (IRL) hottest deals, Panther Racing reclaimed one of its own: Dan Wheldon.

Wheldon, who was born in Emberton, England, got involved in racing at the age of four and has kept his foot on the accelerator ever since. After racing various circuits in England and then America, Wheldon made the jump to Indy car in 2002, when Panther Racing picked him up. After changing teams several times in the past five years, Wheldon's resume is incredibly impressive.

Winner of the 2005 Indianapolis 500 and the 2005 Indy series

championship, Wheldon's excited to be with Panther Racing once more. And he's after one thing: to win it again.

Being such a successful racer, it's no surprise Wheldon is very focused on winning. He puts all his passion into the sport and expects everyone else on his team to do the same.

GX caught up with Wheldon shortly after a test run with Panther Racing on the super-fast Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

GX: How was the test run at Indy?

DW: We were just kind of getting ready for the race in Australia. Obviously, getting to know everybody at Panther Racing and how they work was a big thing. We had a real successful first testing in Indianapolis, where we are very competitive. Things have started off very well—we just have to maintain that level and make sure we are winning.

GX: What was it like to practice there with a new team?

DW: The good thing is, at a relatively early point in our relationship, we were able to get a feel for how the team works. The pit crew got a feel for me, and I got a feel for them. We are going to really use the off-season to kind of gel with one another and

make sure that we are very competitive next year.

GX: What is it like to race at prestigious tracks like Indianapolis?

DW: When you grow up wanting to be a racing driver, you dream of the Indy 500. The Indy 500 is the biggest sporting event in the world, and for me to have actually won it at such an early stage in my career is something I'm very proud of. To perform well there is so rewarding because it's the hardest race in the world.

GX: What was it like to kiss the yard of bricks when you won the Indy 500 in 2005?

DW: That's something I've worked for my entire life, and to win it was an amazing accomplishment. It

COURTESY OF PANTHER RACING

changes your life. As soon as you tell someone you won the Indy 500, it changes their perception of you. I feel very glad that I was able to achieve my goals as well as the goals of everyone who supported me. It's an amazing event, and it's an event that I have focused on every year.

GX: How do you handle your fame and fortune when people come up to you for autographs?

DW: The biggest thing is not everybody in life gets to do what they love. I believe that my parents raised me very well, and something they always said is, always remember where you came from. If somebody asks something of you, just remember how fortunate you are to do what you are doing. I've grown up with that instilled in me.

I very much enjoyed my interaction with the fans. It's nice to have that camaraderie with them. The more that happens, the better, because that means you are more successful. The day that stops is probably the day I should retire.

GX: What are some of your goals for the 2009 season?

DW: I joined Panther because I believe they can win right away. My expectations are simply to win as quickly as possible. Our primary goal is to win the Indianapolis 500 and hopefully with that as many races as possible, and then we will see where that puts us in the championship fight at the end of the season.

GX: How do you stay fit and prepared for each race?

DW: It has actually changed a little bit in recent years because of Danica Patrick's influence on the sport. When Danica came to Indy racing, it was very apparent that being as light as possible is, without question, an advantage. I run a lot and try to do some core and functional fitness.

GX: It's rumored you like to Jet Ski.

DW: I live on the water in Florida with my wife, and I love Jet Skiing. But I try to be careful, because obviously I don't want to be injured. I also like to do a lot of go-kart racing.

the stories and some of the courage these Soldiers have, it is phenomenal. It's truly a privilege to represent them, and we are going to get them in victory lane.

"OUR PRIMARY GOAL IS TO WIN THE INDIANAPOLIS 500 AND HOPEFULLY WITH THAT AS MANY RACES AS POSSIBLE."

>>DAN WHELDON

I'm one of those guys that has to be active. I can't really sit around and do nothing because I get antsy. Anything I do has to have a competitive level—otherwise, it's not very interesting or appealing to me.

GX: Does your wife like to watch you race?

DW: Susie comes to all the races. She's been involved with the sport before so she's very familiar with all aspects of my racing. I don't think I would be as successful without her there—no doubt in my mind.

GX: What is it like to represent the National Guard in the IRL?

DW: It really is an honor to represent the troops, when you consider what they do to keep everybody safe, whether at war or in a natural disaster. When you hear some of

To have them in victory lane at Indianapolis would be unbelievable. I think that would be a great gift

GX: What was the main goal for the race in Australia?

DW: Basically, we are just trying to get up to speed with one another and understand what each party wants from the other in order to be competitive.

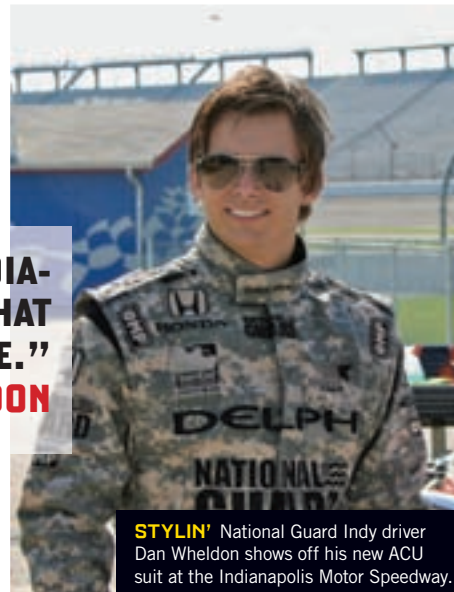
The biggest thing is for us to learn as much as possible at this race. We've got to make sure we do whatever it takes to give us the best preparation for next year.

But for me, I want to go into this event obviously wanting to win it, but I really want to put myself in a position with the team to start off strong. That's the most important thing to me.

GX: How important is your pit crew on your journey into victory lane?

DW: The pit crew is incredibly important. They are very instrumental. When you consider the races are sometimes won by a hundredth of a second, and you can gain close to a second in the pits, it really just goes to show how important they are.

But like I say, this is very much a team sport, and so everybody on the team has to be focused on working in the same direction. And that's toward winning. If everybody is doing that at Panther Racing, we will definitely get the National Guard car in victory lane. **GX**



STYLIN' National Guard Indy driver Dan Wheldon shows off his new ACU suit at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.



CITIZEN-SOLDIERS Dan Wheldon poses with National Guard Soldiers at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway.

Michael Jordan and the Guard

A SUPERTeam FOR SUPERBIKES

By SFC Clint Wood

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD (ARNG) Soldiers will have an even better reason to watch the heart-pounding, gravity-defying American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) Superbike Series next season.

Michael Jordan Motorsports Suzuki announced that the team would be partnering with the ARNG to field a second Superbike team in 2009. This announcement was made at a presentation October 9 at the Caribe Royale Orlando Resort in Orlando, FL, in front of more than 2,000 Guard members.

In an October 13 press release, Jordan, a six-time NBA Champion,

"I'VE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO REPRESENT OUR COUNTRY TWICE AS AN OLYMPIAN, BUT YOU GET TO REPRESENT OUR COUNTRY EVERY DAY."

>> Michael Jordan

told the troops, "I've had the opportunity to represent our country twice as an Olympian, but you get to represent our country every day."

Jordan's 2008 Superbike team of Aaron Yates and Geoff May, both from Georgia and piloting Carolina Tar Heels baby blue Suzuki GSXR-1000 motorcycles, did well in the series this season. Yates captured the team's first AMA Superstock championship in its five-year history with five wins, and May finished second in the class with two victories.



SEALING THE DEAL Michael Jordan, left, shakes hands with LTG Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard (ARNG), during a conference where Jordan announced that his Michael Jordan Motorsports Suzuki team would be partnering to field a second superbike team in 2009.

In the Superbike class, 35-year-old Yates finished ninth in the Superbike class with one podium finish (first through third). The 28-year-old May and 2003 AMA Superbike Rookie of the Year, who had 14 top-10 finishes, ended 10th.

Jordan formed his motorsports team in 2004 as a result of his passion for motorcycle racing. His racer at the time, Montez Stewart, was quoted in the *Brainerd Daily Dispatch* in 2004, saying that Jordan is "absolutely in love with road racing. He's a motorhead." **GX**

Fast Facts

- The 2009 American Motorcyclist Association Superbike Series opens its race season March 4-6 at Daytona International Raceway. The season finale is Sept. 4-6 at New Jersey Motor-sports Park (pending Rider Safety Committee evaluation).
- Factory Superbike, American Superbike and Daytona Superbike are the classes in the series.
- Factory Superbike will be run on 1,000 cc four-cylinder engines and 1,200 cc twin-cylinder engines.
- American Superbike will be 1,000 cc four-cylinder bikes with limited modifications running on slick racing tires.
- Daytona Superbike will be 600 cc four-cylinder motorcycles up to 1,200 cc twins.



Armed and Ready: Escaping from the Armbar

Story and Photos by SGT Michael Kerkhoff

Last month I went over escaping the Guillotine Choke. The best defense to a submission is to avoid being put in a vulnerable position.

Something we stress at CATC any time we train inexperienced Soldiers in Combatives is, “You

must be in the proper position to execute a submission.” That also applies when you are defending.

The escapes we’re going over aren’t the only ones out there and may not work for you, so keep an open mind when training. This month we’ll go over escaping the straight armbar.

Let’s roll! **GX**

Escape straight armbar from the mount:

We start with my opponent attempting a straight armbar from the mount.

As he swings around to lock in the armbar, immediately I get my heels close to my butt, and I explode, pushing my hips up, turning into him.

I continue turning into him in an “alligator roll” motion, bringing my knees under me.

I finish the escape controlling him in side control, where I can begin to set up submissions of my own.



Escape straight armbar from the guard:

My opponent has me in the closed-guard position.

He passes his leg over my head to sink in the armbar; I recognize this and with the arm he has trapped, I grab the bicep of my free arm. *Note:* Do not posture or you will assist your opponent in locking in the armbar!

Keeping my body and head close to my opponent, I take my free arm and wrap it around his thigh that is over my neck. As I wrap up his leg, I push my weight forward on him, lifting his hips off the ground.

I take my foot that is on the same side as my trapped arm and post it under his lower back to control his hips. I continue to stack him by pushing off the foot I posted, placing all my weight on his upper back and neck.

I continue to stack him, keeping my head close to his until my elbow is below his crotch. When this happens, I pull my trapped arm free.

Once my arm is free, I place it across his throat. Keeping my chest heavy and hips flat on him, I rotate my body perpendicular to finish in side control.



OPERATION HANG TIME

Strength and Suspension Training

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert, with Chris Frankel, M.S.



HANG TEN SGT Ken performs the TRX Suspended Push-up at the Smyrna Army National Guard Training Center in Tennessee.

GX Readers:

It was one of those demanding days where I had more work to do than time available to complete it. A few hours later, I was finally finished with my task list and ready to dash from the office. I glanced at my watch and realized that I had no time to drive to the gym. Fortunately, near my desk stood several fitness items that Stephanie and I were testing for potential Fitness Field Kit (FITKIT) additions for future Operation Fit to Fight missions. It was the perfect opportunity to try something new and to share the information with GX readers all over the world! For this issue, I grabbed the TRX, a body weight suspension training system.

In the next few issues of GX, and also on www.1800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness, we will be highlighting workouts that can be performed anywhere with little or no equipment. In fact, if the exercise equipment cannot fit in a small bag, it won't make it in the FITKIT.

HOOAH!

—SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert



WARM-UP PHASE

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

Stretching (5 minutes)

“Patience and perseverance have a magical effect before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish.”

—John Quincy Adams

MUSCLE TARGET PHASE ONE:

Upper Body and Core

Half Sit-ups, Crunches

START: Lie down on your back with both 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 and return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached.

Warning: Do not pull on your neck with your hands. Keep your elbows wide and your chin pointing toward the sky during the entire exercise.

Basic: 1–30 repetitions

Intermediate: 31–60 repetitions

Advanced: 61–90 repetitions

TRX ATOMIC PUSH-UP WITH PIKE



TRX Atomic Push-up with Pike

START: Lengthen the TRX until the foot cradles are 8–12 inches off the ground. Place your feet into the foot cradles, toes down, and feet under the anchor point. Assume a normal-grip push-up position by balancing your body on your hands with your back forming a straight line, hands directly under your shoulders. Look forward and keep your feet together.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, drop your body straight down by bending both elbows. Return to the start position and perform a pike by lifting your hips upward, keeping your knees and elbows straight. Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached.

+ Fit Tip: The TRX Suspended Push-up is the Atomic Push-up without the Pike movements. This exercise is suggested as a substitution for those who cannot perform pike movements, or you can use this exercise to Superset the program by performing it immediately after the Atomic Push-up.

Male standards:

Basic: 1–5 repetitions

Intermediate: 6–12 repetitions

Advanced: 13–24 repetitions

Female standards:

Basic: 1–2 repetitions

Intermediate: 3–6 repetitions

Advanced: 7–12 repetitions

TRX TRICEPS PRESS



TRX Triceps Press

START: Stand facing away from the anchor with your feet together, or up to 12 inches apart, hold the handles with arms fully extended overhead, palms forward. Position your feet behind your hands.

Note: The steeper you set the angle, the more difficult the movement will be to perform.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, tilt your body forward by bending both elbows until your hands are behind your head, maintaining alignment with your shoulders, hips and legs.

Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached.

+ Fit Tip: You can step forward with one leg into an offset foot position for more stability.

Male standards:

Basic: 1–5 repetitions

Intermediate: 6–12 repetitions

Advanced: 13–20 repetitions

Female standards:

Basic: 1–3 repetitions

Intermediate: 4–8 repetitions

Advanced: 9–15 repetitions

TRX Chest Press

START: Stand facing away from the anchor with your feet together, or up to 12 inches apart, holding the handles shoulder level, palms down. Position your feet behind your hands.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, tilt your body forward by bending both elbows until your chest is level with your hands, maintaining alignment with your shoulders, hips and legs. Return to start position and con-

tinue until your goal is reached.

Warning: Keep your hands slightly above shoulder level to prevent the TRX from rubbing your arms or shoulders.

Male standards:

Basic: 1–12 repetitions

Intermediate: 13–25 repetitions

Advanced: 26–50 repetitions

Female standards:

Basic: 1–6 repetitions

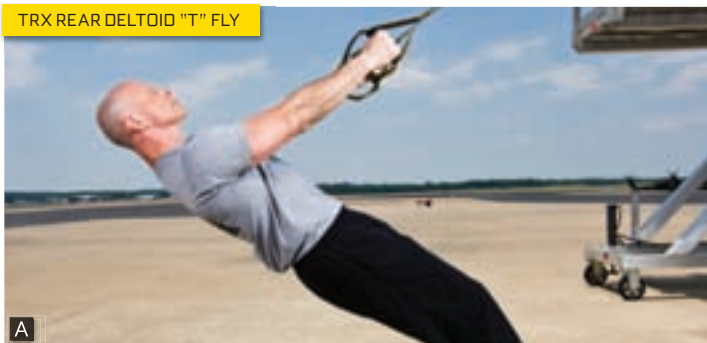
Intermediate: 7–15 repetitions

Advanced: 16–25 repetitions

TRX CHEST PRESS



TRX REAR DELTOID "T" FLY



A

TRX Rear Deltoid "T" Fly

START: Stand facing the anchor with your feet together, or up to 12 inches apart, holding the handles shoulder level, palms inward. Position your feet in front of your hands. Lean back and fully extend arms, maintaining a slight bend in your elbows.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, squeeze your shoulder blades together and pull your arms out to the sides at shoulder level. Keep tension on the TRX and maintain

alignment with your shoulders, hips and legs. Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached.

Male standards:

Basic: 1-5 repetitions

Intermediate: 6-12 repetitions

Advanced: 13-20 repetitions

Female standards:

Basic: 1-2 repetitions

Intermediate: 3-6 repetitions

Advanced: 7-12 repetitions



B

TRX BICEPS CURL



A

TRX Biceps Curl

START: Stand facing the anchor with your feet together, or up to 12 inches apart, holding the handles at shoulder level, palms upward. Position your feet in front of your hands. Lean back and fully extend arms, maintaining a slight bend in your elbows.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight and your elbows at shoulder level, bring your hands to your head by bending both elbows. Do not let your hips bend or shoulders elevate toward your ears. Maintain alignment with your



B

shoulders, hips and legs. Return to start position and continue until you reach your goal.

Note: Keep your elbows pointing forward and do not let them drop toward the ground during the exercise.

Male standards:

Basic: 1-8 repetitions

Intermediate: 9-19 repetitions

Advanced: 20-30 repetitions

Female standards:

Basic: 1-4 repetitions

Intermediate: 5-9 repetitions

Advanced: 10-20 repetitions

TRX BACK ROW



TRX Back Row

START: Stand facing the anchor with your feet together, or up to 12 inches apart, holding the handles shoulder level, palms inward. Position your feet in front of your hands. Lean back and fully extend arms, maintaining a

slight bend in your elbows.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, pull your body toward the anchor by bending both elbows. Keep tension on the TRX and maintain alignment with your shoulders, hips and legs. Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached.

Male standards:

Basic: 1-10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11-25 repetitions

Advanced: 26-50 repetitions

Female standards:

Basic: 1-6 repetitions

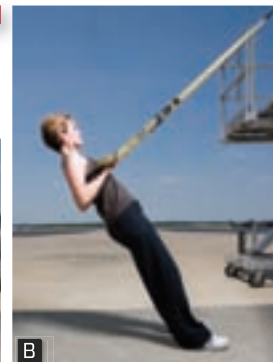
Intermediate: 7-15 repetitions

Advanced: 16-25 repetitions

+ Fit Tip: You can add a rotational component to the exercise by turning your palms upward as you perform the row.



A



B

“You’re not obligated to win. You’re obligated to keep trying to do the best you can every day.”

—Marian Wright Edelman

MUSCLE TARGET PHASE TWO:

Lower Body and Core

“The secret of success is constancy to purpose.”
—Benjamin Disraeli

TRX SUSPENDED LUNGE



A



B

TRX Suspended Lunge

START: Lengthen the TRX until the foot cradles are 8–12 inches off the ground. Facing away from the anchor point, hold both handles in your right hand and place your left foot into both foot cradles behind you. Position yourself about 3 feet in front of the anchor point, balancing

on your right foot, with hands on hips.

ACTIONS: Keeping the weight in your heel, bend your right knee and push your left leg back while lowering into a lunge position. Do not allow your knee to collapse inward. Return to start position and continue until your goal is reached.

Switch legs and continue.

Note: Keep your shoulders stacked over your hips.

Basic: 1–4 repetitions (each leg)

Intermediate: 5–9 repetitions (each leg)

Advanced: 10–15 repetitions (each leg)

Flutter Kicks

START: Lie on your back with your palms on the ground and your hands against your sides. While keeping your legs straight, raise them to at least 6 inches off the ground.

ACTIONS: Flutter kicks are a four-count exercise where you will raise the left leg to a 45-degree angle for position one while keeping the right

leg stationary. Next, raise the right leg off the ground to a 45-degree angle while, at the same time, moving the left leg to the start position. Counts three and four are repetitions of the same movements.

+ 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 higher. Keep your feet flexed at all times.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions

Squats

START: Stand with your feet hip-width apart, with toes pointing forward.

ACTIONS: Lower your body into a squat by bending both knees until you reach a 90-degree angle, or until you lose the natural arch in your back. Return to the start position and continue until your goal is reached.

Warning: Your knees should not exceed your toe line while down and should not be locked while up.

Basic: 1–15 repetitions

Intermediate: 16–30 repetitions

Advanced: 31–60 repetitions

COOLDOWN PHASE

Stretching (5 minutes)

STAMINA STOPWATCH

1 full set = approximately 40 minutes

Equipment Needed:
TRX Suspension Trainer®
by Fitness Anywhere®



EVAN BAINES

SSG KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT

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.

Chris Frankel, M.S., is the Director of Programming for Fitness Anywhere and is completing his doctorate in physical education, sport and exercise sciences.



For more health and fitness information, go to 1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness, or email sgtken@GXonline.com.

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.

The Weapon of Choice

EXPLORING THE M4 RIFLE

BY CHRISTIAN ANDERSON

THE M4 is certainly one of the baddest, most versatile firearms in the Guard, capable of spitting out 950 rounds per minute of scorching hot lead. This weapon is heavily relied upon by Guard Soldiers around the globe, particularly those fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq. Introduced in 1993, the M4 has been bringing the fight to the enemy worldwide, one trigger pull at a time.

The M4, basically a shortened M16, was made to excel in urban environments, and provide Soldiers in Humvees and armored vehicles a more compact—but just as devastating—weapon. The M4 is loosely based on the old XM-177 Colt Commando version of the M16, which was praised heavily by the troops on the ground fighting in dense jungle. The M4 is everything the Colt Commando was and then some.

Equipped with a 14.5-inch barrel (the M16 had a 20-inch barrel), Sol-

diers are able to clear a building or jump out of a vehicle much easier. One of the big differences between the M4 and the M16 that Soldiers particularly enjoy is the collapsible butt stock. With the introduction of IBA (Interceptor Body Armor), which is about 2 inches thick, the sights of the M16 are pushed farther away, making it more difficult for the Soldier to fire accurately. With the M4, Soldiers can adjust the distance of their sights from their eyes regardless of their arm length, clothing or equipment.

Firing a 5.56 x 45 mm round, the M4 is effective up to 600 meters. It can be outfitted with all kinds of bells and whistles that make it deadly in any environment. Many modifications can be made to the M4. Optics systems, handrails systems to mount flashlights, laser finders, M203 grenade launchers and silencers are just a few of the accessories that can advance its ca-

pabilities. But like any weapon, the bells and whistles make no difference if it's not worthy of battle at the core. The M4 is indeed battle-proven; therefore, the Guard provides it to many of its troops.

GX got a chance to see how M4s are made when we visited Sabre Defence Industries in Nashville, TN. Founded in the United States in 2002, Sabre manufactures Browning M2 .50 caliber machine guns, barrels, precision engineered AR15 rifles and assemblies for the commercial, law enforcement and military markets. Although Colt makes the M4s for the Guard, Sabre makes Mil-spec (Military Specification) M4s, M16s and M2 .50 caliber machine guns, and its reputation for quality and precision is exceptional.

Sabre recently was awarded a contract for a minimum of 4,952 M16A3 and 702 M16A4 rifles to support the U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps. This contract made Sabre only the third company in the 45-year M16 history to supply a Mil-spec M16 to the U.S. government. Colt and FN are the other two.

Although much of the process is classified, the M4 is developed by forging steel and aluminum—kind of like how Basic Combat Training turns a fresh recruit into a top-notch Warrior.

After a tedious process of testing the barrel for proper strength, it's drilled and then rifled. Each barrel is measured to a precise fit, making the M4 an all-around tough and reliable weapon. After the housing has been built and the rifle is assembled, each one is tested again. This process makes an outstanding weapon that will serve National Guard Soldiers for many more decades. **GX**

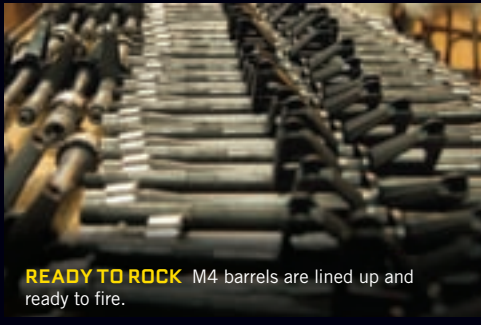


TRIGGER TIME SGT Jose Molina of the 1-160 IN (Light) California National Guard aims down the barrel of his modified M4 during training at Camp Shelby, MS.



WATERPROOF The reliable and sturdy M4 rifle has become the weapon of choice for Guard Soldiers worldwide, including Special Forces.

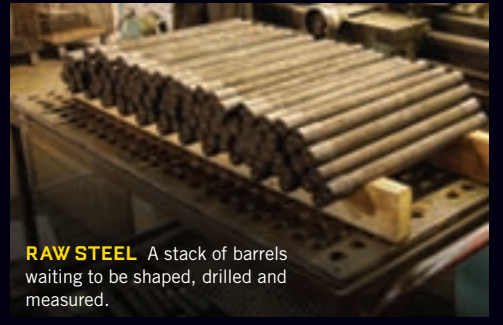
PHOTOS BY CHRISTIAN ANDERSON



READY TO ROCK M4 barrels are lined up and ready to fire.



THREE-STEP PROCESS From raw steel to the finished product, the M4 rifle barrel is carefully measured and treated to ensure nothing but the best product.



RAW STEEL A stack of barrels waiting to be shaped, drilled and measured.

INTRODUCED IN 1993,
THE M4 HAS BEEN BRINGING
THE FIGHT TO THE ENEMY
WORLDWIDE,
ONE TRIGGER PULL AT A TIME.



PHOTO BY KEITH KAWASAKI



THINK
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TAKES?!

Your best workout could put you next to SGT Ken!

Show off your fitness creativity, and you could win *GX* magazine's first **Operation Battle the Bulge™**! Put together a full-body workout using the template provided by Master Fitness Trainer and *GX* Fitness columnist, SGT Ken™, and we'll publish your workout

in a future issue of *GX*! One winner will be chosen by an expert panel of judges, based on technical merit, creativity and overall effectiveness.

All participants must be current ARNG members and at least 18 years of age. For a full list of contest rules, guidelines and more contest information, visit:

www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com/fitness/contest





The Price of Peace

[Alyssa and Cassy Gaddis sing for military families]

Story and photos by
Christian Anderson

Deployment ceremonies are never easy. Emotions can be overwhelming as families and friends gather together for their good-byes.

Twelve-year-old Alyssa Gaddis and her 16-year-old sister Cassy Gaddis, of Springfield, IL, know this firsthand. They've been to many such events because their father, CW5 Jim Gaddis, is the command chief warrant officer of the Illinois Army National Guard. They've felt the power of families being torn apart.

These experiences inspired Alyssa to write a song—a song to lift the spirits of those enduring deployment, a song to inspire courage and hope. Alyssa titled her song, “The Price of Peace.”

Thinking positive

“I went to a deployment ceremony where kids were clutching to their dad's neck crying,” Alyssa recalls, “and it just broke my heart. [Cassy and I] have it so easy right now with our dad at home. There are dads out there [with] loved ones going off to war.”

Cassy agreed, adding, “That particular ceremony was probably the saddest one I have ever been to because there were so many families there. I think that some people don't really understand because they haven't seen it with their own eyes.”

When Alyssa started writing her song, she knew there were other songs out there with similar themes. But many of them had sad endings. She wanted hers to be unique—by being positive. She wanted it to have a happy ending.

Cassy had the same idea. “I think that a lot of people want to focus on the negative,” she shared. “And [it's] there ... but I always think there's a silver lining to everything.”

Alyssa felt her original point of view could make the song stand out. “I wanted to write it from a girl's perspective—‘My dad's going off to war,’” she explained. “There aren't any songs about younger kids with dads going off to war.”

“Hopefully this song will allow people to focus on the good. [Yes], it is hard when he's gone, but he is coming home.”



“I FEEL PROUD FOR DOING THIS. CASSY AND I ARE VERY GRATEFUL FOR WHAT WE HAVE NOW, AND KNOWING THAT OUR WORK WILL GO TO A GOOD CAUSE.”

>>ALYSSA GADDIS

Love for the Soldier

The Gaddis girls' compassion extends beyond the families to the deploying Soldiers.

“I definitely respect [them] for their courage and strength, and their sacrifice,” Cassy stated. “I think in today's society, especially now, people just want the war to end so much that they kind of forget what these Soldiers and their families face.

“I know what they go through. Their sacrifice for us is just jaw-dropping. [While] we sit here, they are over there training and fighting to help us. I think self-sacrifice is the definition of ... a Soldier.”

State Farm was there

Alyssa's crafting of the tune was only the beginning of this project. The next question was how to get it “out there.”

Enter an unexpected ally—State Farm Insurance. Its Adopt-a-Soldier program was created to thank and support deployed troops by sending them care packages and has received national accolades. State Farm was also recently awarded the highest employer honor bestowed by the Department of Defense—the Freedom Award—for recognition of its support of employees serving in the Guard and Reserves.

Jim Gaddis ran into a State Farm rep at a Family Readiness meeting in Springfield and told the rep about his daughters' song. The two discussed the possibilities, and State Farm offered to help pay for the recording studio time in Nashville, TN.

The Gaddis family also set up the Web site ThePriceofPeace.org, which promotes and sells downloads of the song. Profits from the song will be going to Illinois' Family Readiness Groups and local VFWs.

“This is another effort to raise money for the Illinois Family Readiness groups, so they can support the troops,” said Bill Hrabik, President—Military Affinity Group at State Farm. “The goal is to raise money for the group, and awareness of the separation issues of deploying Soldiers and their families.”

The man with the plan

People often make the mistake of assuming it is not that hard to record a song.

Well, it entails a little bit more than just singing into a microphone. You need producers to handle the project. They have to know the ins and outs of music. And they have to be passionate about achieving top quality.

Hart Steen fit that bill for the Gaddis girls. A young musician in Nashville, Steen's love of music radiates from him. A chance meeting hooked him up with the Gaddis girls. Jim and his wife Annette were visiting Nashville and went to the Commodore, a popular music venue. Steen happened to be onstage and the Gaddis' took a liking to

his music. After the show, the three talked about Alyssa's song, and Steen liked the concept.

Steen and the Gaddis' kept in touch, and shared ideas. After much discussion, the girls were on their way to Nashville to record their song with Steen as their producer.

"They have been awesome," Steen declared. "[I]t's been a joy to have them in my life."

Steen has his own investment in the concept of this song. A few years ago, his younger brother enlisted in the Air Force. Steen took notice of his brother's transformation during an emotional graduation at Lackland AFB in Texas. "It was very powerful," Steen recalled. "He had changed into a man."

Trip to Music City

So the Gaddis family packed their bags and hit the road, aiming for the global hub of country music.

Cassy and Alyssa were ecstatic to be able to go, not because they got out of school for a few days, but because they were going to a place that

is rich in musical history. For nearly half a century, countless country artists have traveled to "Music City" to see if they have what it takes.

"When I got there, I thought about how amazing it was to be doing this," Alyssa said, smiling. "I felt proud."

Being in the big leagues, so to speak, made the girls step up their game. Working with professionals in a recording studio was a big step forward. But the girls adjusted.

It was an especially powerful experience for Alyssa—barely in 7th grade.

"Her maturity just skyrocketed when we were in Nashville," Cassy revealed. "The fact that she wrote the song and took on all this responsibility—it made me really open my eyes. It made me look up to her. Even though she is my little sister."

The girls took their time behind the mic to let loose and give it their all. With so much riding on their shoulders, this was no time to goof off. They worked hard—but enjoyed every minute.

"It was a really good experience. It was amazing—and surreal," Alyssa shared. "I have never really done that before. I have gone

A GROUP EFFORT

CW5 Jim Gaddis and his daughter Cassy celebrate and relax after a hard day at work in the recording studio.



--Excerpt from "Price of Peace"

*The price of peace is paid by the families on their knees
praying tonight*

*By a Soldier's feet on some foreign street just trying to
save a life*

*By a daughter's tears as she sees her hero do what he
thinks is right*

The loss may run deep but if it's love we leave

Well that's the price of peace



You can download
"The Price of Peace" at
www.ThePriceofPeace.org.

to studios locally in Springfield, but this was different. I felt like I was a superstar."

"My wife and I are so proud of Alyssa and Cassy for what they have done to support the deploying Soldiers' families," Jim declared. "They genuinely care and want to make a difference in these people's lives."

The waiting is the hardest part

Returning home from Nashville, the girls left their song—and trust—with Steen. The process of mixing and editing music can take a long time, and the girls tried to be patient.

After anxiously waiting for several weeks, the finished piece was finally delivered, and the Gaddis family gathered at their Springfield home to listen.

"When we heard the rough version, it brought tears to my mom's eyes," Alyssa marveled. "It's amazing knowing that Cassy and I did that together."

Looking back on the experience, Alyssa shares, "People think that singers have it easy. They think all they have to do is sing. The day after the recording, I wanted to pull my hair out."

But that was only the beginning. "Now we get to do the really fun part of the process—send the message," Cassy shared. "To me, that's the most important part—talking to people and hopefully inspiring them the way [we've been inspired]."

Reaching out

The Gaddis' are invested in the success of the song not because of the chance to make it big but to help others.

"Hopefully, it will touch people deeply," Cassy said.

And, Alyssa adds, "It's for a good cause. All of the money made off of this is [being donated] to the military families."

It has been said that a picture is worth a thousand words. In the same way, a deployment is worth a thousand emotions. Maybe "The Price of Peace" will be worth a thousand smiles. **GX**

GOOD TIMES The Gaddis Girls take to time to laugh and have fun during their recording session in Nashville, TN.





"All of the money being made off of this is going to the military families."

>> Alyssa Gaddis



HERO OF NORMANDY

1944, NORMANDY, FRANCE—AFTER LANDING ON OMAHA BEACH DURING THE D-DAY INVASION, TSGT. FRANK PEREGORY OF COMPANY K, 116TH INFANTRY (VA), 29TH INFANTRY DIVISION AND HIS MEN MOVE INTO NORMANDY TO ENGAGE THE GERMAN DEFENSES.



ON THEIR WAY TO RELIEVE THE 2ND RANGER BATTALION AT POINT DU HOC, PEREGORY AND HIS MEN ENCOUNTER A GERMAN TRENCH THAT IS BLOCKING THEIR ADVANCE. PEREGORY KNEW SOMETHING HAD TO HAPPEN FAST BEFORE THE FIGHTING INTENSIFIED.



WITH HIS MEN PROVIDING A STEADY BASE OF COVERING FIRE, PEREGORY SPRINTS THROUGH THE DEVASTATING GERMAN FIRE ACROSS A FIELD AND ENTERS THE ENEMY TRENCH UNSEEN.



PEREGORY FOUGHT HIS WAY VICIOUSLY THROUGH THE TRENCH USING ONLY HIS M-1 RIFLE, BAYONET AND A COUPLE OF GRENADES. AFTER THE TRENCH WAS CLEARED, PEREGORY HAD SINGLE-HANDEPLY KILLED AND CAPTURED MORE THAN 20 GERMANS.



FOR HIS SELFLESS ACTIONS AND COURAGEOUS FIGHTING, TSGT. FRANK PEREGORY WAS AWARDED THE MEDAL OF HONOR.

END

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