

GX[®]

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

VOLUME TWO ISSUE ONE

TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS

278TH ON THE
MOVE IN IRAQ

BACK TO BASICS

MOBILIZATION &
DEMOBILIZATION TIPS

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- LTG H Steven Blum

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KNOWLEDGE IS POWER
THE GUARD'S EDUCATION BENEFITS



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WANT THE LATEST INTEL?

GX INTEL IS A FREE EMAIL-BASED SUPPLEMENT TO *GX: THE GUARD EXPERIENCE MAGAZINE* that keeps Guard members and their families up-to-date with news and encouragement. It's a quick, convenient way for the *GX* Team to communicate timely information to you; and we always benefit from your voluntary responses.

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LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

LTG ROGER C. SCHULTZ

“You will find plenty of evidence in this publication that real progress has been made with our incentive program.”



Fellow Soldiers and Families,

Let me say what a privilege it is to serve with each of you. From our families and our employers to the Soldiers in the ranks, you are special to us. I often remind others that the strength and yes, the character of the Guard, is grounded in the quality of our Soldiers and those who lead them. There is no doubt ours is a one-of-a-kind team and we need to continue to dedicate ourselves to one another as we support our community and Nation's priorities.

You will find plenty of evidence in this publication that real progress has been made with our incentive program. It is also true that we did not get every item supported on our list of priorities. So we will move on with the implementation of current authorizations and continue our support for the changes necessary to better balance our incentive program overall.

Of course our priorities go well beyond our support for the proper incentives for our Soldiers. Today we seek a balance that has an appropriate mix of active duty and time at home. We refer to the time not in a mobilized status as dwell time. In other words, this is the time between active duty rotations. For planning purposes, we have a model that outlines one year in six where our units will be prepared and available for deployment. Of course you know we have called units more often than that as we apply 15-month call ups to many of our units. We have been very careful recalling units a second time. So you can be assured as units return from missions today, you have our commitment to not call them again unless an emergency overrides every other option we have.

We continue to hear about equipment for our deployed units. You can be assured our deployed Soldiers and their units have the highest priority there is for equipment. For both individuals and vehicles, special attention has been given to provide state of the art equipment to our Soldiers. For sure, we have had units in our initial deployments that did not have the equipment our



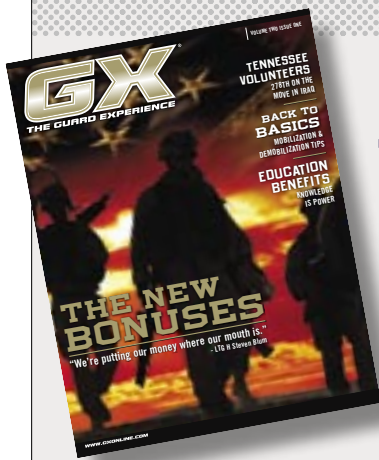
ABOVE: LTG Roger C. Schultz, Director, Army National Guard

units have today. Merely having the equipment is not enough. Unit leaders can certainly influence the discipline to ensure that Soldiers use their protective equipment all the time. Family members can help here also. As you write or talk with your Soldiers, remind them to wear their equipment. Sound fundamental? It is! The gear we have issued to our Soldiers today is designed to protect them. And it works!

Thanks again for sharing your lives with us and for serving our Nation with real class. Well done to be sure.

Sincerely,

Roger C. Schultz
Lieutenant General
Director, Army National Guard



WELCOME TO YEAR TWO OF GX

When we started *GX* a year ago, we thought we could teach the world a thing or two about the U.S. Army National Guard.

We found ourselves in the middle of the largest deployment since WWII, and every month, hundreds of Guard Soldiers were coming home, and hundreds more were being deployed. The Nation was leaning on the Army National Guard in ways unlike anything seen in our generation. And yet, wherever we looked in the media, it seemed as if no one was telling the Guard's story.

We decided there might be a place for a magazine designed exclusively for and about the Army National Guard.

Well, it's been a year, and every day stories come into our office about another school opening in Afghanistan that wouldn't have without the Army National Guard, or another town in Iraq that has clean water, or another city in Florida getting help recovering from a disaster.

Not only have the men and women of the Guard shouldered more than your share of the burden, you've done it with a grace and ease that has inspired every one of us.

We started out trying to teach everyone else about the Guard, and we ended up learning we didn't know half the story.

What we've learned is that the Army National Guard is an amazing family. Thank you for letting *GX* be a part of it.

NEW IN THIS ISSUE

In celebration of our first anniversary, we decided to make a few changes. You'll notice we've gone through a minor redesign. Still the same cool graphic style you've told us you love, but now we can fit more information than ever into the magazine. More stories, more photos, and thanks to you, more great stuff directly from the Soldiers.

Please keep the stories and photos coming. We look forward to many more years of proudly serving the Army National Guard.

PASS ALONG THE EXPERIENCE

If you like reading *GX*, then please pass it along to a buddy when you're finished. If you want to keep your copy, then send your buddy to www.GXonline.com where he or she can get their own subscription. Friends, family members and co-workers can help support *GX* by ordering themselves a paid subscription; also available online at www.GXonline.com.



MISSION: To celebrate and support the Soldiers and families of the National Guard. To provide today's Army National Guard member 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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GUARD ORIENTED

I am so glad to see a magazine that is Guard-oriented. This magazine has helped so many families which have had to prepare for deployments with the informative Web site and contact information that you include each issue. Thanks alot. – SGT Kennedy, KYARNG

MIGHT I SUGGEST ...

I was wondering if you accept contributions from family members of deployed Soldiers. Perhaps it could be a standard section of the magazine. I think that may be an effective way of connecting the two parties, and an entertaining way to communicate to those who are away! Thanks again! – Andrea

GX: The last couple of issues (and this one) include more and more contributions from Guard members and their families - we think it is a great idea, please keep us in mind.

GUARD GEAR FROM GX

I just wanted to [thank you and] say that it was so nice to get this magazine in the mail for our son who is in Iraq. We have never found any t-shirts or sweatshirts or anything like this [for] the National Guard. It is always just Army, Marines, or Navy. Needless to say, we bought all of us something showing the National Guard on it and may buy more. Again thank you and to all of you Happy Holidays!
– B. Pepper

“This magazine has helped so many families which have had to prepare for deployments ... Thanks a lot.”

SGT KENNEDY, KYARNG

Any chance of ever adding children's sizes for the *GX* shirts? Just a thought.
– Thanks, Lori

GX: It's a good thought and we'll have some Guard Kid Gear to debut this spring. Keep on the lookout.

A HEARTFELT THANKS

My husband was deployed to Iraq in December of 2003 and he is still serving there as we speak, I have been reading this magazine since he has been over there and I want to thank you for all the wonderful articles. Many of them have touched my heart in many ways. Keep up the GREAT JOB!!! Thanks ... Wife of a wonderful & BRAVE Soldier, SGT Carlson, WVARNG
– Melissa Carlson

GX: Thank you. Sharing the stories of the National Guard is telling the story of America - great stories come from great people.

I enjoy your magazine and look forward to each publication. Your contribution to the soldiers and the military is appreciated. I wish all of you success in the coming year and years ahead.
– CSM Wright, KSARNG

GX: We are honored to contribute to such a wonderful organization. Our ability to do this is a liberty provided to us by Soldier's such as yourself. Thank you.

MAILBOX CHEER

I think the *GX* magazine is great. It has a very good look, and there is a lot of information. I like how you spread the articles around with Soldiers and civilians who support the Guard. I really enjoy looking in the mail box and seeing the new issue. Keep up the good work! – SFC Johnson, USAREC

HOME OF THE FREE

I am someone, someone who is free, Be happy and generous as generous as you can be. We will fight strong and live strong, We can do no wrong. I live in a country where the skies are blue and the grass is green, But one part of America is what everyone has seen. The smoke, the ashes, the sirens rearing, Not one precious bird was searing. The people crying and these people dying, Their families who were moaning and sighing. We are America, we can fight, We are going to do what is right. We are at war, we will not play, We are fighting everyday. So remember we are America, the land who is beautiful and free, So fight, fight, fight America, fight for the land that is free.

By Jessica Blu Sanders, 13, daughter of CW3 Steven Sanders, RRHT 278th ACR now stationed at Camp Caldwell, Iraq, and SFC Barbara J. Sanders, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, TNARNG



FAMILY REUNION

Robin McMullen of Hazen, AR, welcomes her husband and son to Fort Hood, Texas, from a year-long deployment to Iraq. LTC Mark McMullen (left) is the commander of the 2nd Battalion, 114th Aviation Regiment, 35th Aviation Brigade of the Arkansas Army National Guard. His son, SPC Mathew McMullen (right) also deployed along with 56 other members of the unit, which provided air traffic control services in several Iraqi areas, including Baghdad, Balad, Mosul, Taji and Tikrit. The soldiers returned to Fort Hood Jan. 4, where they are being demobilized, and are expected to return to Arkansas Jan. 7.



AMERICAN IDOLS

My daughter, Jessamyn decided to join the California National Guard on 9/11 while she was a senior in high school. After her graduation from AIT in November of 2003, her deployment orders were awaiting her. She spent two weeks at Camp Parks in San Luis Obispo and then left on January 3, 2003 for Fort Hood, Texas.

While she was training, her identical twin sister, Marisa, was moving into the final 32 contestants on American Idol 2004. Unfortunately, Marisa did not advance on the show. But Marisa did tell the world in her interviews

that HER American Idol was her sister, National Guard Soldier, Jessamyn.

This past July 4th, Marisa was asked to sing "God Bless America" in front of over 10,000 people at the Sonoma County, CA, July 4th fireworks show. As she got up to sing, my cellphone rang. It was Jessamyn, calling from Iraq. It was announced that Jessamyn was Marisa's twin and that she was listening on a cellphone. The crowd roared! Marisa dedicated her song to her sister. Then she said she would sing it again and she wanted the crowd to join her as a thank-you to all the brave Soldiers serving overseas. Then she added, "I love you twinnie!" I struggled to sing through my tears.

Jessamyn said it was the only time she has cried in Iraq!

Marybeth SobECKi (and Skip Engle - proud Dad!)



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We want to make this a great magazine, and we need your help. You are the only ones who know what the Guard Experience really is. So tell us.

Send us photos of you and your service buddies – in action or just goofing off. Did we get something wrong (or right)? If so, let us hear about it.

IN THE LOOP

NEWS AND EVENTS IN THE GUARD EXPERIENCE



“AMERICA SUPPORTS YOU” LAUNCHED

On November 19th, the Department of Defense (DoD) launched a slick online database showcasing organizations that support our military.

“America Supports You’ is designed to gather information about the many activities ... Americans have launched to show support for the troops - and most importantly, to ensure they and their families know about it,” announced Charles Abell, Principal Deputy Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness.

The user-friendly site allows supporters to locate programs quickly, as well as read articles about program successes.



ABOVE: Country stars Amy Grant and Vince Gill pose wearing ASY dog tags
Photo courtesy of the Department of Defense

Previous “In The Loop” star, 15-year-old Shauna Fleming (GX4), has become an “America Supports You” celebrity, frequently appearing on the site. Her “A Million Thanks” program collected one million “thank you” letters from Americans across the country - and even Italy and Canada - then distributed the letters to Soldiers all over the world. On November 17th, Fleming presented her one-millionth letter to President Bush in the Oval Office. Following her visit with the President, she and her family hand-delivered letters to troops at Walter Reed Medical Center and the Fisher House, a guest house for injured Soldiers’ families.

Fleming, who is now seeking Valentines for troops (www.valentinesfortroops.com) and 400,000 additional “thank you” letters (www.amillionthanks.org) was present at the November “America Supports You” launch ceremony where she was presented with “America Supports You” dog tags.

Country music stars, Vince Gill and Amy Grant, also dog tag recipients, have recorded a promotional announcement for the program’s website. The couple is also launching their second annual tour, where they will display photos of deployed Soldiers and Soldiers’ families during the concerts.

ABOVE: President George W. Bush and Shauna Fleming pose with the one-millionth letter in the Oval Office on Nov. 17th.

White House photo by Eric Draper

“America is blessed because U.S. troops are serving us so proudly,” Gill said. “God bless, and come home soon.”

In a recent visit to Camp Pendleton, CA, President Bush encouraged all citizens to become involved with “America Supports You.” The President declared “the heart and souls” of supporters to be the “true strength of the country.”

“In this season of giving, let us stand with the men and women who stand up for America, our military,” said President Bush.

If you’re willing to answer the call, visit www.americasupportsyou.mil. Take part in one—or several—of the initiatives listed or start your own. “America Supports You” serves as a great starting point for kicking off your own support mission. Downloadable logos and imprints are available for printing on mugs, t-shirts, stickers, etc. **GX**

For more information, visit:
www.americasupportsyou.mil



SERBO-CROATIAN LANGUAGE GUIDE
Distributed to US Military by the War Department in November 1943.



"ZBOGOM, BOSNIA!"

U.S. FORCES SAY GOODBYE TO BOSNIA

US.-led Task Force Eagle (TF Eagle) celebrated the end of their service in Bosnia with a disestablishment ceremony in Tuzla on Nov. 24. National Guard Bureau Chief LTG H Steven Blum, who held a command position over the Multinational Division (North) Stabilization Force (SFOR), joined SFOR15 Soldiers in attendance. "I think that Bosnia is nothing less than a magnificent military success story," declared LTG Blum.

NATO launched the largest military operation in its history with the Implementation Force (IFOR) on December 16, 1995, to enforce the

"I think that Bosnia is ... a magnificent military success story."

- LTG H Steven Blum

Dayton Peace Accord. The Dayton Accord brought an end to four years of civil war, which erupted in 1992 when Bosnia and Herzegovina broke away from Yugoslavia. Orthodox Catholic Serbian rebels and Roman Catholic Croats began devastating campaigns of "ethnic cleansing" against Bosnia's Muslim population. Over 200,000 people were massacred and Bosnia was in ruins by the end of the war.



ABOVE: CSM Thomas Severe rolls the Task Force Eagle guidon during the disestablishment ceremony Nov. 24.

Photo by Jason Austin

On December 20, 1995, the U.N. Protection Force officially handed the job over to the U.S. Army's 1st Armored Division, which began the nine-year construction of a free Bosnia. This involved separation and disarmament of warring factions and establishing demilitarized zones between them. LTC Lee Baker of the INARNG's 38th Infantry Division admits initially being skeptical of U.S. involvement in Bosnia.

"I thought it was just another case of the U.S. getting involved in someone else's problem," said LTC Baker. "But since being here, I have seen how absolutely ignorant I was."

European Union Forces (EUFOR), a coalition of 33 countries, inherited control of Bosnia's progress from TF Eagle on December 2. However, 250 Guard Soldiers are staying on board in Tuzla and at NATO headquarters in Sarajevo.

Initially, 20,000 U.S. Soldiers were deployed in Bosnia. The final SFOR15 contained 900 ARNG Soldiers. Other Guard units that were among those that have held command or served are the 49th Armored Division of the TXARNG, the 29th Infantry Division of VAARNG, INARNG's 38th Infantry Division, GAARNG's 48th brigade, MNARNG's 34th Infantry Division, KSARNG's 35th Division, PAARNG's 28th Infantry Division, and KYARNG's 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. **GX**

TIGER BRIGADE FINDS INSURGENT SAFE-HOUSE

By PFC Matthew McLaughlin
10th Mountain Division Public Affairs

Soldiers from 1st Battalion, 156th Armor Regiment, LAARNG, discovered an insurgent safe-house in western Baghdad on their first day in a new area of operations on Dec. 13.

The Tiger Brigade was patrolling around farmland that once belonged to Saddam Hussein's son, Udai. They were passing an inconspicuous farmhouse when SSG Eric Lee, 156th AR, spotted an expensive vehicle he felt was out of place in the country surroundings. He stopped the convoy and had his Soldiers dismount for further investigation.

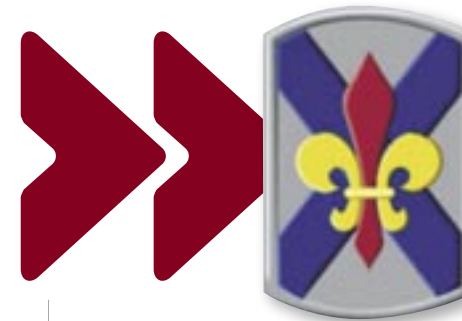
"That Soldier probably saved 50 lives with his attention to detail," said COL Mark Milley, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division commander.

When the Soldiers approached the house, several suspected insurgents fled in expensive automobiles. Two suspects were detained before they could escape.

Inside the house, vehicles contained approximately 1,000 lbs. of explosives, including an Italian-made anti-ship bomb, three 155mm artillery rounds and 300 lbs. of ammonium nitrate. Another anti-ship bomb lay in the safe-house, presumably to be used for another vehicle.

"The anti-ship bomb sits on the bottom of the ocean," said SSG Michael Stoddard, 2nd BCT. "The air bubble it creates makes ships rip apart. Those usually don't just wash up onto the field."

The 156th AR Soldiers also found a weapons cache of rockets, mortars and anti-tank weapons. Also confiscated was a cache of medical supplies and industrial chemicals. COL Milley said the keen awareness of the 156th AR Soldiers made a well-hidden enemy safe-house obsolete.



ABOVE: Tiger Brigade patch

ALARNG ENLISTS 21 NEW MEMBERS ON GUARD B-DAY



Photo by SGT Martin Dyson, ALARNG

Governor Bob Riley administered the oath of enlistment to 21 new members of the Alabama National Guard on Dec. 13, the National Guard's 368th birthday, at the state capitol in Montgomery. **GX**

GUARD LEADERS CELEBRATE GUARD BIRTHDAY

By MSG Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Active Army LTC Greg Rist was not about to let little things like a neck brace or a damp, foggy morning along the Potomac River keep him from taking part in a run and walk celebration for the National Guard's 368th birthday on Dec. 10 (actual Guard birthday is Dec. 13).

"It can be painful in weather like this, but we're all one team. That's why I came to this," said the 50-year-old LTC Rist after enduring some discomfort to join a couple of hundred National Guard Bureau members who walked or ran a mile or two at Fort Leslie J. McNair in Washington, D.C., to observe the occasion.

Rist explained he underwent surgery on Oct. 1 to have three discs removed from his spine.

LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, hosted the run and walk near his home at Fort McNair as well as a cake-cutting ceremony at the Army National Guard Readiness Center. **GX**



ABOVE: LTG H Steven Blum, in the blue cap, leads a Dec. 10 fun run at Fort McNair in Washington, D.C. in honor of the Guard's 368th birthday. CSM John Leonard Jr. is to the right of LTG Blum.

Photo by MSG Paul Cook, National Guard Bureau



CPT AWARDED MULTIPLE MEDALS

ABOVE: CPT Matthew Delk receives Purple Heart and the Army Commendation Medal with Valor Oct. 10. Photo by SPC Jessika Ross

CPT Matthew Delk, commander of the SCARNG 268th Engineer Detachment (Firefighters), received a Purple Heart and an Army Commendation Medal with Valor device during a ceremony held Oct. 10 in Mosul, Iraq, for his actions on April 20 when a roadside bomb hit his convoy.

CPT Delk's four-vehicle convoy was struck by an improvised explosive device, destroying the first vehicle and disabling two others that were subsequently engulfed in flames. CPT Delk helped remove casualties from the burning vehicles and conducted first aid. He instructed the other

Soldiers to set up security and fend off insurgents in a firefight that lasted more than an hour before reinforcements arrived.

CPT Delk suffered severe burns to his arms, face and chest during the attack. After four

“There is a purpose in everything.”

- CPT Matthew Delk, SCARNG 268th Engineer Detachment (Firefighters)

months of medical attention and physical therapy, CPT Delk returned to Iraq to finish his tour with the 268th.

“There is a purpose in everything. Everyone was a hero that day,” CPT Delk said. **GX**



ABOVE: Kentucky State CSM John Gipe, will become the 8th CSM of the Guard.

INTRODUCING... CSM GIPE

By MSG Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Arailroad man who has served as the Kentucky Army National Guard's state Command Sergeant Major since 2002 is preparing to become the eighth senior enlisted advisor for the entire Army National Guard.

“I've always liked a challenge, and this is about the biggest challenge I'll ever find,” said CSM Gipe.

“I picked him because of his Soldier focus and field time,” LTG Roger Schultz explained. “CSM Gipe has been seasoned by years of leading and training Guard Soldiers. We're not bringing in an unknown quantity here.”

“The fact that I've been a traditional Soldier for 20 of my 22 years in the Guard gives me a good perspective of what our Guard Soldiers go through, as far as their families and their jobs are concerned,” he observed.

CSM Gipe already anticipates that his biggest challenges will include improving the Guard's readiness and strength. “We also have to help our Soldiers' families and work with the employers,” he added. **GX**



ABOVE: President Bush working in the assembly line of Operation USO Care Package at Fort Belvoir.

Photo by Gerry J. Gilmore

“America appreciates your service for freedom and peace and her security.”

About 485,000 overseas troops have received Operation USO Care Packages, Bush noted, since the program was installed nationwide in September 2002.

PRESIDENT LENDS HAND TO USO VOLUNTEERS

By Gerry J. Gilmore
American Forces Press Service

On Dec. 10, President Bush and First Lady Laura Bush helped USO volunteers for about an hour inside a warehouse at Fort Belvoir, VA, filling Operation USO Care Packages alongside 90 civilian and military volunteers.

“You can't ever thank the troops enough,” President Bush asserted. Operation USO Care Package “is one way of saying,

DEPLOYED SOLDIERS CAN PURCHASE TRICARE



Did you know that Army National Guard Soldiers who are deployed in support of a contingency operation will soon be able to purchase TRICARE Standard coverage for themselves and their family members once their transitional health care coverage expires?

In fact, for every 90 days an ARNG soldier is deployed in support of a contingency operation, he or she can purchase one year of TRICARE Standard coverage while committing to continued service in the Guard. Soldiers who are called to federal active duty for more than 30 days are eligible for TRICARE, the same as active duty service members, as well as their families.

ARNG Soldiers

- ★ Are entitled to medical care in any Military Treatment Facility (MTF) for any injury, illness or disease incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.
- ★ Are covered under the TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote options.

When the Soldier is no longer on active duty orders, TRICARE eligibility ends; however, line-of-duty care may be received in an MTF for injuries or illnesses incurred while the soldier was on active duty. Soldiers ordered to active duty in support of a contingency operation and their family members are eligible for transitional health care for 180 days upon separation from active duty.

ARNG Family Members

- ★ Become eligible for TRICARE Extra and TRICARE Standard on the first day of the Soldier's 30+ day active duty.
- ★ Become eligible for the TRICARE Pharmacy Program

Eligible family members may also enroll in TRICARE Prime or TRICARE Prime Remote. There are no enrollment fees or co-payments, as long as MTFs or TRICARE Prime/Prime Remote network providers are used. **GX**

For more information, visit:

www.tricare.osd.mil

www.army.mil/ds3/About.html

DISABLED SOLDIER SUPPORT SYSTEM

The Disabled Soldier Support System (DS3) provides severely disabled Soldiers and their families with a system of advocacy, follow-up and personal support to assist our heroes as they transition from military service to the civilian community. See www.Army.mil/DS3 for more information.

NEW PAY COMING SOON

A new pay system called the Forward Compatible Payroll, promises far fewer errors, easy-to-understand Leave and Earning Statements for service members, and instantaneous adjustments to pay records.

Some major features for the reserve component Soldiers will include the following: capability to start, stop or change allotments, tax credits during the same month for combat zone tax exclusions, two LES instead of eight, net pay advice and several automated items of pay and allowances.

For more information and tax time tips, contact your Defense Military Pay Office, or visit the Defense Finance and Accounting Service web site at:

www.dfas.mil



ABOVE: Father and son SSG and PFC Alana Photo by SGT Jennifer S. Emmons

FATHER AND SON IN AFGHANISTAN

By SGT Jennifer S. Emmons, Defend America

At Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan, a young Soldier completes his work on the hydraulic line of an OH-58D Kiowa "Warrior" helicopter. He then calls the technical inspector to the shop to inspect the quality of his work.

"Hey, Dad," said PFC Glenn Alana, Company B, 193rd Aviation Regiment, hydraulic specialist. "Will you check out this line?"

"Sure, boy," replies SSG Allan Alana, Company B, 193rd Aviation, Regiment, technical inspector.

This father-son mechanical duo is deployed with their Hawaii National Guard unit. The Alanas' company is the Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Company for Task Force Diamondhead, the aviation task force in southern Afghanistan.

"Doing the best quality work is so important, because everyone who flies on the aircraft is trusting us with their safety," said PFC Alana. But most mechanics don't have their father serving as his or her technical inspector.

"He's been doing this for 30 years and knows so much. I learn something new every day ... coming here, I respect him in different ways. He's the inspector of my work ... But sometimes, I know something that he doesn't and he always listens to me," said PFC Alana. **GX**

BIG STARS HELP VETERANS ON ROAD TO RECOVERY



By Samantha L. Quigley
American Forces Press Service

Disabled veterans and their families gathered in Orlando, FL, for the Coalition to Salute America's Heroes: 1st Annual Road to Recovery Tribute and Conference. Attendees were treated to a night of entertainment on December 9th at an event dubbed the "Gala Gratitude Tribute to Veterans."

"Out of all the physical therapy I've been through ... I now feel better than I have in the last 12 months."

- SSG Sutherland, 25th Field Artillery Battalion

Irish Tenor Ronan Tynan - a world-class disabled athlete - kicked off the gala with an inspiring performance of "God Bless America." Country music stars LeeAnn Womack and Toby Keith received thunderous applause. Keith, in particular, who is known for his support songs like "American Soldier," stepped up to the plate and hit a home run with the veterans and their families.

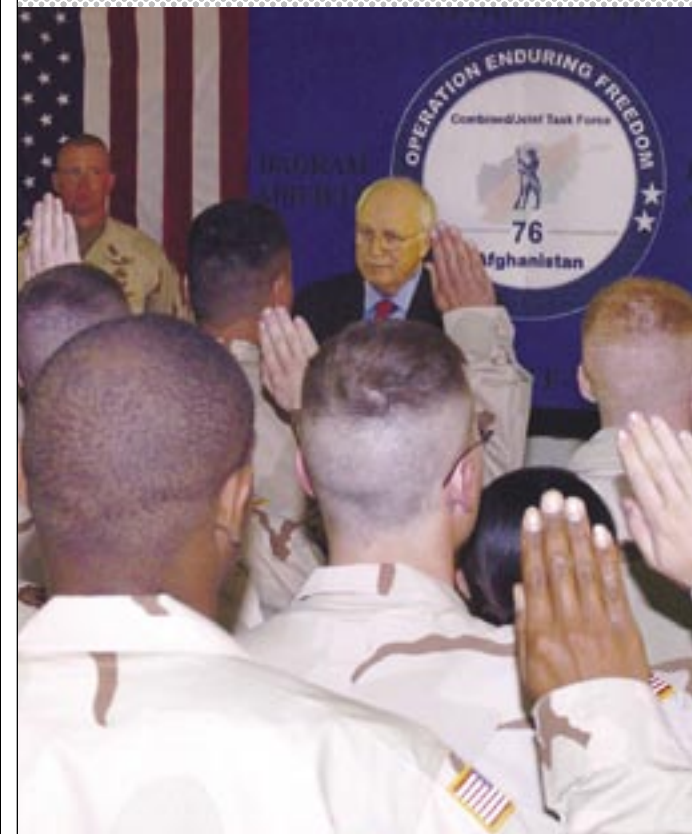
ABOVE: Country singer Toby Keith plays for Veterans in Orlando, FL, Dec. 9th. His appearance earned him a jacket from the coalition with the patches of every unit that has served in Iraq.

Photo by Samantha L. Quigley

"Fantastic," said SFC Loren Sturm, 1st Battalion, 162nd Infantry, Oregon National Guard. "Words can't express the feelings that we have for these wonderful people who can sit here and give back to these (disabled veterans)."

The conference came to a close on the night of the 11th with another star-studded concert by actor Gary Sinise's LT Dan Band and singer Chely Wright. Sinise's first trip to visit troops in Iraq came in June of 2003 with the USO. His respect for American servicemembers inspired his band's name, lifted from the character "LT Dan," whom he portrayed in the 1994 hit movie "Forrest Gump." Most of the LT Dan Band's performances are for servicemembers.

Based on the reactions of servicemembers, the tribute appeared to have met its objective of raising the spirits of the veterans and their families. "I now feel better than I have in the last 12 months," said SSG Sutherland, a member of the 25th Field Artillery Battalion, who was injured by an improvised explosive device outside of Baghdad.



CHENEY RE-ENLISTS SOLDIERS

ABOVE: Vice President Dick Cheney reenlists 30 service members at Bagram Airfield on Dec. 7.

U.S. Army photo by MSG Terry Anderson

"Your children and my grandchildren will live in freedom tomorrow because of what you're doing today."

- Vice President Dick Cheney

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The Home Front Heroes (HFH) program has been established so you can show your appreciation to those individuals and employers who are supporting your decision to serve. The HFH web site will allow you to submit the names of these Heroes so they may receive some small portion of the thanks and respect that they so richly deserve.

EACH INDIVIDUAL SALUTE PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- » Custom-Designed Presentation Envelope
- » Personalized Letter from Army National Guard Leadership
- » Home Front Heroes Bumper Sticker
- » Home Front Heroes Engraved Lapel Pin (not shown to scale)

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- » 2 Home Front Heroes Bumper Stickers
- » 2 Home Front Heroes Engraved Lapel Pins (not shown to scale)

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INARNG UNIT MAKES NEW SOLDIERS FEEL AT HOME

By SFC Doug Sample
American Forces Press Service

When CSM Richard Smith was asked by a visitor if he could send for a couple of Soldiers from the 844th Engineer (Combat Heavy) Battalion to talk about their pending deployment to Iraq, the entire Charlie Company knocked on his door. It was if they all had something they wanted to say about this unit.

"We are all family in this room," said CSM Smith while introducing the Soldiers.

[M]any of the Soldiers who have come to this Indiana National Guard Training Center awaiting possible deployment to Iraq are like distant cousins meeting for the first time: The 844th is made up of nearly 200 Soldiers who came from other units.

"It's like being a father and this is my family. You want the best for them."

- CSM Richard Smith, 844th Engineer (Combat Heavy) Battalion

Most of the Soldiers in Charlie Company never knew each other or trained together before arriving here just seven weeks ago.

Despite being together for such a short time, 844th leaders here have built a family that has bonded like no other. Like many Guard and Reserve units suffering personnel shortages, LTC Donato Dinello, the 844th commander, said his unit had to be pieced together with Soldiers from other units. It's a practice the Reserve calls "cross-leveling," in which Soldiers are borrowed from other units to fill vacancies. Other voids are filled with Individual Ready Reserve members.



ABOVE: CSM Richard Smith of the 844th Engineer (Combat Heavy) Battalion talks with members of Charlie Company at Camp Atterbury, IN.
Photo by SFC Doug Sample

To maintain cohesion and to ensure that new Soldiers felt a part of the unit, LTC Dinello [instructed his Soldiers], "Bring them in here, treat them like they've always been here."

LTC Dinello said that when the 844th got orders to mobilize, it was without nearly 170 of its Soldiers and some of its best leaders. Many of those leaders already had deployed or had just returned after filling vacancies in other Reserve units during the first two rotations of Iraqi Freedom.

Knowing he would need those veterans to carry the unit on its mission, LTC Dinello asked many of those who had returned after serving as many as 14 months to go back, "And each and every one of them said, 'Yes,'" says LTC Dinello.

It is that kind of dedicated service that the newcomers to Charlie Company respect most. [T]hey express confidence in the experienced leadership, which makes them feel more secure about their mission.

"From squad leader, to platoon sergeant, to the first sergeant and commander, we take care of each other. It's like being a father, and this is my family. You want the best for them," said CSM Smith. **GX**

KOSOVO MAKING PROGRESS

By Jim Garamone
American Forces Press Service



ABOVE: GEN Peter Pace, U.S. Marine Corps
DoD photo by Lisa D. Luse'

Clear signs of progress both in the southern Yugoslav province of Kosovo as well as in other countries, are encouraging troops and residents in Kosovo, said officials who traveled to the region recently with Marine

GEN Peter Pace, vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

GEN Pace observed a huge difference in Kosovo from his last visit a year ago. "The general remarked that the last time he was in Pristina (the capital of the province) most of the houses had those U.N. blue tarps in place, because the roofs were missing," said a defense official who traveled with the general. "Now most of the houses have roofs."

There are 17,500 NATO troops in Kosovo with about 1,800 American troops including National Guard Soldiers from the 38th Infantry Division based in Indianapolis. The unit, which has been in Kosovo since September, has had no firefights or other confrontations. They are handling police missions.

The end of the Stabilization Force mission in neighboring Bosnia (see page 12) has encouraged the troops, as have the elections in Afghanistan. Soldiers are able to use that as an example to the people of Kosovo. "It shows there are other parts of the world in a bad situation – places that have no history of democratic processes – and they are models that show it can be done," the defense official said. **GX**



RECRUIT SUSTAINMENT PROGRAMS COMBATING TRAINING PIPELINE LOSS (TPL)

Every year the Guard loses over 25% of its recruits before their feet ever get into boots. These Training Pipeline Losses (TPLs) account for nearly three brigades (9,700 Soldiers per year) and cost the Guard over \$700 million per year in marketing, recruiting, and training costs. However, the greatest loss may be in terms of intangibles like unit morale, cohesion and readiness. The Guard needs your help to prevent these losses. Start or contribute to the effectiveness of a Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) in your unit.

There can be a variety of factors that will cause a recruit to drop out (see *Top Five list to the right*). Simply addressing the issues openly with new recruits can decrease TPLs. By ensuring that recruits know what's expected of them, you can help reduce their fear of the unknown and allow them to prepare mentally and physically for the challenges of BT/AIT.

TOP FIVE CAUSES FOR RECRUIT LOSS:

- LACK OF PHYSICAL READINESS
- ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS
- ATTITUDE PROBLEMS
- MOMENT-OF-TRUTH ISSUES
- "WHAT HAVE I GOTTEN MYSELF INTO?" ISSUES

FIND OUT HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR RSP!

Contact your state Recruiting and Retention Manager, the NGB-ASM Retention/Attrition Branch below or visit:

www.virtualarmory.com/sear/

Retention/Attrition Branch Chief MAJ Gregg Bliss: Gregg.Bliss@ngb.army.mil

RSP Program Manager SFC Darius W. Perry: Darius.Perry@ngb.army.mil (703) 607-3571

SNAP SHOTS



SPC Chris Hughes, from the 76th Infantry Brigade, Indiana National Guard, lets an Afghan youngster from Gardez try on his helmet. This photo appeared on www.army.mil. Photo by SPC Johnny R. Aragon



Six members of the Columbia, SC, Army National Guard-based 1st Battalion, 151st Aviation Regiment, served in Vietnam and currently are serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Pictured from left to right: CWO Jack Dalton, MSG Eugene Mitchell, SGT Ken Simpson, SGM John Brown, WO David Sexton and SGT Fred Anderson. Photo by SPC Autumn Grimsley



SCOUT PROJECT PROVIDES SUPPLIES TO IRAQI KIDS

By SSG Susan German
122nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

As packages from home poured into Iraq, destined to make 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers' holidays a little brighter, so did the generosity extended to the Iraqi people. The sources of goodwill are extensive; family-readiness groups, churches, friends and relatives are common donors. Soldiers from Task Force 3-8 Cavalry delivered boxes filled with school supplies, toys and food to the Al A'ila Primary School, in the Salhiya neighborhood of the Karkh District on December 8. Soldiers from Company B, 1st Battalion, 161st Infantry Regiment, the "Bushmasters," from Kent, WA, are primarily responsible for the security within the International Zone, according to CPT Jonathan Beddall, from Davenport, WA, Company B commander, 1-161 INF.

CPT Beddall's nephew, Matthew Beddall, a 17-year-old high school senior from Mount Laurel, NJ, organized the donation of school supplies, food and cash to pay for the shipping as part of an Eagle Scout project. For three months, they collected items based on a list of suggested items provided to them. Community donations

resulted in 36 boxes being sent. Another 36 boxes were sent to a unit in southern Iraq. "We are thankful for the families that sent this gift for the Iraqi kids because they make the kids happy," said Salhia Neighborhood Council Chairman Dhia Hussain Ali Mobarak.

"If we get the media, talking to kids, talking to us, when they come out here and show that we're not just killing people, that we're actually trying to help a little bit, that's a big thing," CPT Beddall said. [CBS had filmed the Soldiers delivering gifts]

"We delivered desks and some other furniture supplies here about four months ago and we also have a renovation project starting here, so we're trying to get a complete package," said CPT Alexander Rasmussen, the civil military operations officer for Task Force 3-8 Cavalry. **GX**

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Wear it with pride, as a member or supporter. This poly-cotton, pre-shrunk fleece hoodie with athletic rib knit cuffs and pouch pocket bears a distressed National Guard design, reflecting all the rugged, tried and true strength of the Guard itself. S,M,L,XL,XXL Navy or Red \$29.50



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"Go Guard!" T-Shirts (Apache or Abrams) Heavyweight, poly-cotton t-shirt with ribbed crew neck collar. S,M,L,XL,XXL Olive (Apache) Maroon (Abrams) \$15.50

"Proud to Support American Soldier" Long Sleeve T-Shirts (Sabers, Rifles, or Soldier) Heavyweight poly-cotton long-sleeve shirt with ribbed crew neck collar and cuffs. S,M,L,XL,XXL Oxford Gray ("Proud to Support" Soldier) Navy ("Proud to Support" Sabers, "Proud to Support" Rifles) \$19.50

Home and Away Team Sweatshirts Poly-cotton, pre-shrunk fleece sweatshirts (with 2x1 athletic rib knit cuffs and collar). S,M,L,XL,XXL Ash Gray (Home Team) Navy (Away Team) \$24.50

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ARMY ADDRESSES WEAPONS CONCERNS



By Dr. Paul D. Brown, Deputy Chief, Army Logistics Division

Equipping units from the Army National Guard for deployment into Iraq and Afghanistan has been in the news for many months. Soldiers, Congress and families have raised concerns that Army National Guard units may not be equipped as well as their active component counterparts. This, if true, would be especially troubling because the Army National Guard is playing a major role in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Historically, as the active component modernized, the Army National Guard received the older generation equipment.

Also, because full mobilization was not envisioned, the Army National Guard was not equipped at 100% of requirement. In

Armor for tactical vehicles ... was a more difficult challenge.

peacetime, with the emphasis on training and disaster relief, older equipment at a lower rate of fill was sufficient for the

Guard to perform its missions. The Global War on Terrorism and Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom changed all of that.

Early on during the conflict, the Army was faced with severe shortages of armored tactical vehicles, Interceptor Body Armor (IBA), Soldier equipment, and modernized individual weapons. LTG Schultz, Director of the Army National Guard, decided that all Army National Guard units deploying into theater should have the most up-to-date equipment in the National Guard inventory. This decision caused the Guard to reprioritize purchases from the National Guard and Reserve Equipment account to provide items that could be delivered very



“[T]he Chief of Staff of the Army directed that RFI should be fielded to deploying Guard units first and then to deploying active component Soldiers.”

- Dr. Paul D. Brown, Deputy Chief, Army Logistics Division

LEFT: GEN Peter Schoomaker became the 35th Chief of Staff, United States Army, on August 1, 2003. Prior to his current assignment, General Schoomaker spent 31 years in a variety of command and staff assignments with both conventional and special operations forces. He participated in numerous deployment operations, including DESERT ONE in Iran, URGENT FURY in Grenada, JUST CAUSE in Panama, DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM in Southwest Asia, UPHOLD DEMOCRACY in Haiti, and supported various worldwide joint contingency operations, including those in the Balkans.

quickly and issued to deploying units, such as M4 rifles, M240 machine guns, and PVS-14 night vision devices (see *Relevant & Ready Gear*). Although the Guard did not have enough money to outfit everyone, this redirection of procurement enabled the Brigade Combat Teams to have leading edge capability.

Meanwhile, the Army G8 directed the Army procurement system to increase production of Interceptor Body Armor and Soldier equipment (commonly known as

It is the policy ... that no vehicle can leave a compound unless it has been armored.

Rapid Fielding Initiative). Instead of issuing this equipment to the active component and then fielding to the reserves, the Chief of Staff of the Army (see sidebar) directed that RFI should be fielded to deploying Guard units first and then to deploying active component Soldiers. The IBA was delivered to Kuwait so that deployed Soldiers would have the equipment prior

to entering Iraq. Once the theater shortage was satisfied, IBA was issued to Soldiers at the mobilization station as they were readying for deployment.

Armor for tactical vehicles such as HMMWVs was a more difficult challenge. The Army was concerned that hanging untested steel plates on vehicles might make them more dangerous due to increased shrapnel if the vehicle was hit. DA directed intensive testing of armor plating and awarded contracts to several vendors. The resulting armor has gone through ballistic testing and met all the standards for adequate protection. Production of the armor was increased and the plating was shipped to theater for installation on vehicles. It is the policy of the theater commander that no vehicle can leave a compound unless it has been armored.

The Global War on Terrorism and Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom have put stress on the Army including the Army National Guard. Ensuring that Soldiers deploy with up-to-date equipment and sufficient firepower has been the number one priority for the Army and the Army National Guard. The Guard will continue to work with Army to maintain a capable, lethal force that can perform both federal and state missions as needed. **GX**

RELEVANT & READY GEAR



► M4 COMMANDO

Quick Facts:

- Muzzle Velocity - 2,611 ft./sec.
- Effective Range - 500m
- Cyclic Rate of Fire - 700-1000 rpm



► M240

Quick Facts:

- Muzzle Velocity - 2,800 ft./sec.
- Effective Range - 3,725m
- Cyclic Rate of Fire - 750-950 rpm



► PVS-14 NIGHT VISION

Quick Facts:

- Field of View (degrees) - 40, 1x Monocular, 11.6, 3x Afocal, 7.7, 5x Afocal
- Weight - 420 grams
- Features - Gen III image intensifier, Infrared light emitting diode, Auto brightness protection, Variable gain control knob, Low battery indicator
- Power Source - 2 AA batteries
- Immersion Capability - 1m for 30 minutes

For a massive gear reference, visit:

globalsecurity.org/military/systems/

TAX TIME TIPS

FROM JACKSON HEWITT TAX SERVICE®

As a proud associate sponsor of the #16 Army National Guard NASCAR Nextel Cup Ford Taurus Car driven by Greg Biffle, Jackson Hewitt is pleased to provide these tax time tips for Guard members and their families.

Did you contribute to the baby boom?

When budgeting for your new baby, also consider the tax benefits your new bundle of joy can bring. You may qualify to receive a Child Tax Credit of up to \$1,000 for each child. If this credit is limited because your tax is low or because of other credits you receive, you may qualify to receive the Additional Child Tax Credit. Unlike the Child Tax Credit which is subtracted from your tax, the Additional Child Tax Credit is a refundable credit. This means that the Additional Child Tax Credit changes the bottom line on your tax return. If you are receiving a refund, the Additional Child Tax Credit increases that refund amount. See also "Budgeting for Baby", p. 67.

Do you qualify for Earned Income Credit?

If your wages are under \$30,338 and you have one child or under \$34,458 and you have two or more children, you may qualify

to receive the Earned Income Credit (EIC). EIC is also a refundable credit, which may mean more money in your pocket. The credit can be as much as \$2,604 if you have one child and \$4,300 if you have two or more children.

Even if you don't have any children, you may qualify for a credit of up to \$390 if your wages are under \$11,490. You may qualify for EIC with higher wages if you are married and filing a return with your spouse. If you receive nontaxable combat pay, you can choose to include that combat pay when calculating EIC. Your EIC should be calculated both ways, including combat pay and not including it, to determine which way gives you the higher credit.

Paying for a Babysitter?

You may qualify to take a credit for the amount you pay a babysitter or a day care center to take care of your child while you work. If the Guard gives you dependent care benefits to pay them, up to \$5,000 of those benefits are not taxable.

Going to school?

While expanding your mind, you may be able to expand your wallet. Up to \$5,250 of educational expenses paid for by the

Guard for undergraduate and graduate courses may not be taxable. You may be able to take a deduction or credit for some of your out-of-pocket educational expenses, including tuition and related fees.

Saving for the future?

That money you put away for a future day may benefit you now. If you participate in the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) or make an IRA contribution during the year, you may qualify to receive the Retirement Savings Contributions Credit. If you contribute to an IRA while participating in the TSP and your income is \$45,000 or less, you can deduct your IRA contributions in full. If you are married and filing a return with your spouse, you can take the full deduction if your income is \$65,000 or less.

On the road again?

You may be able to take a deduction for doing your duty. Armed Forces reservists, including Guard members, who travel more than 100 miles away from home to perform reserves service can take a deduction for travel-related expenses. Allowable expenses include expenses for overnight transportation, meals, and lodging. The amount of the allowable expenses cannot exceed the amount the federal government pays its employees for travel expenses.



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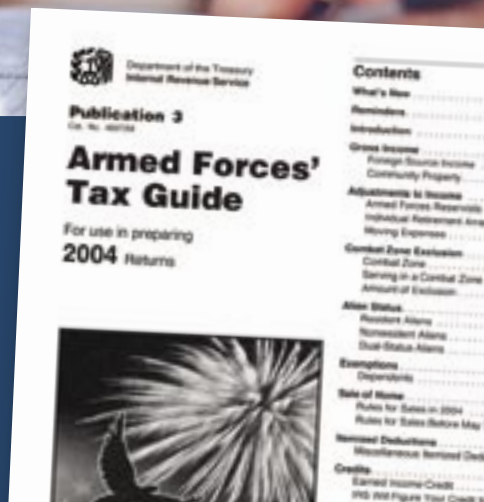
You've got questions. We've got answers.

Guard members, especially those serving in combat zones, face some special tax situations and are entitled to some special tax benefits. The IRS has a special resource just for you.

Log on to www.irs.gov/individuals/military

There's a ton of helpful links and even a downloadable Armed Forces' Tax Guide.

Contact your unit tax advisor for more specific information on Earned Income Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, or other tax issues.





SITELINES

Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

SGT Peter Okerchiri, with 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Regiment, NJARNG, fires an M-60 machine gun as part of live fire training during a Joint Training Exercise at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba.

Photo by Chief Journalist Dave Fliesen, U.S. Navy.



Guantanamo Bay, CUBA

DISTANCE FROM NEW JERSEY TO GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA: 6588 MILES



GATHERING STRENGTH Iraq

Men and women of the 278th RCT, TNARNG gather for a briefing in Iraq. The 278th is the only enhanced cavalry brigade in the Army National Guard. (see profile on page 80)

Photo by SSG Russell Lee Klika



DISTANCE FROM KNOXVILLE, TN TO BAGHDAD, IRAQ: 6819 MILES

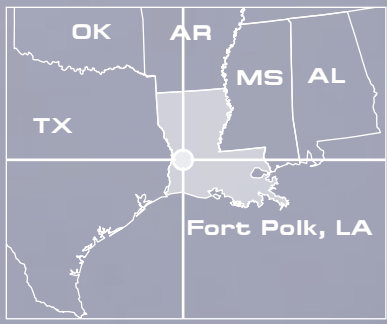


THROUGH THE SMOKE

Fort Polk, LA

A team of medics emerges from the haze with wounded in tow, during advanced trauma training exercises at the JRTC. These members of the 56th BCT, 36th INF out of Ft. Hood, TX are preparing to deploy to Iraq.

Photo provided by 56th BCT Public Affairs Office



DISTANCE FROM FORT HOOD, TX TO FORT POLK, LA: 343 MILES



WELCOME HOME
Fort Bragg, North Carolina

Soldiers of the 30th Heavy Separate Brigade reunite with their families on December 31st after a 10-month deployment in Iraq.

Photo: TSG Brian Christiansen, NCARNG Public Affairs



DISTANCE FROM FORT BRAGG, NC TO BAGHDAD, IRAQ: 6472 MILES



Knowledge is POWER

THE GUARD'S EDUCATION BENEFITS



One of the most empowering opportunities in a person's life is education. With desire and knowledge, there will be few goals you cannot achieve. Your commitment to Guard service shows that you have the drive necessary to succeed. This same dedication has earned you the opportunity to obtain the knowledge you need to fulfill your potential as both a Citizen and a Soldier.

Hopefully, the following pages will serve to remind you of all of the educational resources that are available through the Guard. More importantly, the words of your fellow Guard Warriors should motivate you to exhaust these resources in pursuit of bettering yourself through learning. The more you know, the better you will be able to serve yourself, your family and your nation.

"NEXT IN IMPORTANCE TO FREEDOM AND JUSTICE IS POPULAR EDUCATION, WITHOUT WHICH NEITHER FREEDOM NOR JUSTICE CAN BE PERMANENTLY MAINTAINED."
▶ JAMES A. GARFIELD (20TH PRESIDENT), BG OHIO MILITIA

Illustrations by Keith Kawasaki



100% TUITION ASSISTANCE

➤ The National Guard has recently expanded its educational benefits to include 100% Federal Tuition Assistance up to \$250 per semester hour and \$4500 per person per fiscal year (01 October-30 September).



ABOVE: SSG Fawn J. Archuleta receives her 2nd place award in the Recruiter of the Year Competition (2004) from LTG Roger C. Schultz.

Now that I am done [with my degree], I am proud that I can tell my two little boys, by example, when they grow up that mommy did it and so can they.

SSG Fawn J. Archuleta
AZARNG

Avoid THE PITFALLS

Apply for ARNG Federal TA prior to course start date online at www.virtualarmory.com under the "education" tab.

Verify that the school you are planning to attend is accredited by an agency recognized by the US Dept of Education for TA purposes.

I am a senior at Shenandoah high school in Middletown, Indiana. I am doing the split-option program. Due to the discipline that the Army National Guard has taught me, I am now breezing through high school. I am getting good grades in school and I am able to go to college.

I am planning on going to Ivy Tech State College to study criminal justice thanks to the Army National Guard's 100% Tuition Assistance. I am also eligible for the GI Bill after my freshman year and I plan on transferring to Purdue University. Once there, I want to become part of their ROTC program to get commissioned and major in criminal justice/law enforcement.

I give credit to basic training for the discipline to help me through high school and I give the Army National Guard's 100% Tuition Assistance thanks for making college an option for me.

PVT Kenneth Hancock
Middletown, Indiana

"I didn't have to sacrifice study time to make money ... if I could do it all over again, I would in a minute."

- SFC Timothy C. Talbot, WIARNG

I listened to my friends with all of their financial problems. It was fun to go into my college's financial office, wait ten minutes for my voucher, and know that my college tuition was paid for the next semester.

SFC Darryl E. Gulling

It is never too late for a person to learn and being 44 years old, attending college was an experience. Now, 10 years later, I plan on taking advantage of the Guard's new 100% Tuition Assistance and getting a BS in Management.

CSM Steve Boatwright
ALARNG

I didn't attend a public college, so I didn't necessarily have to receive 100% of my tuition. The National Guard does pay for private colleges though, as well. The tuition at my school happened to be less than the amount of the scholarship so I received a free ride through school, plus the GI Bill, plus other scholarships and grants.

I ended up having all of my books, school, rent, all of it paid for just by filling out the FAFSA and putting on a pair of boots.

SPC Justin Singleton
OHARNG

Montgomery GI BILL

➤ The Montgomery GI Bill, Select Reserve (MGIB-SR) is available to Guard Soldiers to help with college expenses. You can receive up to \$288 per month for full-time enrollment, up to \$10,368 over 36 months. The best part: this money is available above and beyond State and Federal Tuition Assistance and it comes straight to you.

The MGIB-SR Kicker is a bonus incentive designed to encourage soldiers to enlist and remain in certain occupational specialties. Soldiers taking on these jobs can apply for up to an additional \$200 per month while enrolled. If you to qualify to receive these funds, it's more money in your pocket.

"You have to use it to make it a benefit."

- SFC Don Fleming, WVARNG

I ETS'd out of the Marine Corps after serving 13 1/2 years. While in the Corps, I attempted many times to attend college. I ended up with five credits.

When I came home, I signed up for classes at my local college. I figured that the GI Bill would cover everything. It just put a dent in the bill. I was going to have to use Pell Grants, including loans, to pay for my tuition and books. The first two semesters were rough. Between work, classes, studying and homework, it about killed me.

During my first Spring Break, I ran into the local National Guard Recruiter. He explained how the Guard would pay 100% of my tuition. I went home and thought about my options. I went back to the Guard Recruiter the next morning, raised the ol' right hand and swore in.

The fall semester was smooth. The WVARNG paid 100% of my tuition. I used my Pell Grant to pay for my books and the normal expenses that a college student has. Here was the best part: I pocketed my GI Bill money every month.

Four years later, I have an Associates Degree in Criminal Justice and a Bachelor's Degree in Human Resources Business Management. I plan on starting my Master's Degree in 2005.

I wish all of the Soldiers would take the same advantage that I did. Excuses are excuses, but you are only hurting yourself by not utilizing the benefits that the Guard has to offer. Remember, it is only a feature. You have to use it to make it a benefit.

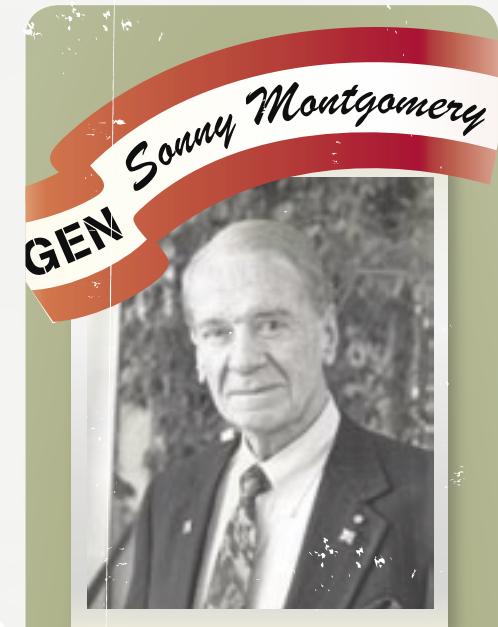
SFC Don Fleming
WVARNG

Avoid THE PITFALLS

GI Bill benefits are not "just for college." GI Bill benefits may be used for on-the-job training, apprenticeships, work-study, certifications, licenses, etc. Truck drivers, mechanics, plumbers, cooks, or other trade workers may be able to receive GI Bill benefits for that job versus going to college.

The Dept. of Veteran Affairs, who makes payments for Reserve GI Bill and Kicker, retroactively pays benefits for those who qualified prior, if you work with them.

Officers can sign a military obligation for 6 years and get the Reserve GI Bill (free). Prior active duty Soldiers can get the Reserve GI Bill in addition to their Active Duty GI Bill (may only use one at a time though).



The Veteran's CHAMPION



Born in Meridian, MS on August 5, 1920, G. V. "Sonny" Montgomery made veteran advocacy the focus of his political career. His tireless support of and affection for U.S. Soldiers grew out of his own military experience.

In 1945, while serving as a lieutenant in the 12th Armored Division in Europe, he received the Bronze Star for his part in the capture of a German machine gun nest. After the war, he returned home to Mississippi and joined the National Guard. He was recalled to active duty during the Korean conflict in 1951 with the 31st Dixie Division.

Although elected to the Mississippi legislature in 1956, he first drew national attention in 1962 as the commander of a detachment of Guard Soldiers who protected Dr. Martin Luther King's "Freedom Ride". He retired from the Mississippi Guard with the state rank of Major General.

First elected to the House of Representatives in 1966, he would eventually serve 15 terms under seven different presidents. He built an impressive legislative record but says his most outstanding achievement was gathering the votes needed to pass the reform bill which bears his name: The Montgomery GI Bill. Formalized by Congress in 1987, the bill gave service members important enlistment and education benefits.

Montgomery retired from Congress in 1996 holding a place as one of the greatest legislative supporters of the military, and the Guard in particular, in our Nation's history.

Student LOAN REPAYMENT

➔ If you already have student loans when you enlist or extend your enlistment for six or eight years, this program may pay up to \$20,000 to get you out of that debt.

“The Guard provides you with opportunities, benefits, and satisfactions no other employer can offer.”

- SSG Jessica Lantz, WVARNG

Growing up, I always knew I was going to college, I just never knew how. The idea of the Guard was presented to me at the beginning of my junior year in high school. At first, I was hesitant and scared. After a while, I decided it was the right career direction for me.

I signed up with the Guard in February of 1997, just three months after I had turned 17. My parents were scared to death for me, but they have always been supportive.

My tuition was paid every semester, and it was so nice knowing I would not be in a world of debt once I graduated. I also

received the Montgomery GI Bill every month. This included the GI Bill Kicker which is \$200.00 extra a month for scoring well on my ASVAB. That was a great benefit because my fellow students would have to work a part-time job to support themselves. I never had to do that because I had a steady monthly check coming in plus what I was being paid to attend drill once a month.

I even reenlisted in the Guard for an additional 6 years, and the college loans I did have for things like room and board, were all paid back through the Student Loan Repayment Program.

The Guard provides you with opportunities, benefits, and satisfactions no other employer can offer. The Guard has provided me, not with just a job, but with

a way of life. Where else can you find a job with all these awesome benefits, and still retire in 20 years? I am convinced that joining the Guard was one of the best decisions I have ever made in my life

SSG Jessica Lantz
WVARNG

“You need to take advantage of what is available, not only yourself, but for your family, or even your future family.”

- SSG Hugh Haines



ABOVE: SGT James W. Covey (right, p. 41) with Retired SMA Jack Tilley

GUARANTEED RESERVE FORCES DUTY SCHOLARSHIP

Two, two and a half, and three-year ROTC Scholarships are available that guarantee Reserve Forces duty in the Guard upon commissioning. Scholarships pay 100% of tuition and applicable fees or tuition and board (up to \$20,000 annually) at any college or university that offers ROTC. Recipients also receive a \$900 annual book allowance. Submit your applications for the 2005/2006 school year to the Professor of Military Science at a local ROTC department prior to the April 1st deadline. Deployed Soldiers may submit applications at any time. For more information, visit: www.rotc.usaac.army.mil/command/ng/grfd.html

Go to: ROTC.USAAC.ARMY.MIL

Avoid THE PITFALLS

Members can use Student Loan Repayment Program, in addition to TA and GI Bill and kicker; i.e. get student loans for living expenses, travel expenses, etc. and then have the ARNG pay off these loans through the SLRP. Thus, use all three programs. SLRP is one of the least used benefits, yet one of the easiest to qualify for and receive.

Begin Investing in Your Future.

Military Scholarships for Active, Guard, Reserve, Veteran and Military Family Members



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Founded in 1951, Grantham University believes every service member should have the opportunity to get a college degree. Here at Grantham service members can earn a “no cost” college degree, only a high school diploma or GED is required. And with our online programs, you can earn your degree from virtually anywhere.

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www.grantham.edu/arng.htm

1.800.955.2527

Education SUPPORT CENTER

➤ Often overlooked, the Army National Guard Education Support Center can save Soldiers thousands of dollars and countless study hours by helping them choose the right educational program, plan their degree and even turn their military training into college credit (average transfer credits: 20+ college semester hours). Whether a Soldier's personal academic goals include vocational training and/or certification, an Associate or Bachelors degree, the Education Support Center is a valuable, cost-free tool for all Guard Soldiers.

➤ The center serves as a virtual counseling and information center for Soldiers and their spouses. Members can take advantage of every opportunity to complete their degree, by maximizing non-traditional academic options to supplement traditional classes or courses. Distance education alternatives to classrooms are also available.



ABOVE: CSM Steve Boatwright in Mosul, Iraq (p. 32)



INDEPENDENT *Study*

➤ Guard Soldiers are able to pursue college and university independent study courses through Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES) at no cost. Through this program, members have free access to CLEP, DSST, and ECE tests which can translate directly into college credit, saving Soldiers time and money. This program also offers free access to GED, SAT, ACT and GMAT tests.

I came to this country in 1977... I did not even have a high school diploma... Because of my immigration status, however, I had to be enrolled in college full-time [but could not afford it]... I enlisted and completed my

Bachelor's degree. I will retire in 2007, after 24 successful years of service and by then I hope to have my Master's degree.

SFC Maria A. Levine
ILARNG

“Where public education let me down - the Military lifted me up and challenged me.”

- CPT August T. Murray, AG, ARNG

As a high school student, I had a solid “C” average. I was discouraged from pursuing an education. After a standardized test, I was advised my ideal career choices would be installing modular homes, or working as a logger. The lack of encouragement in

the public education system was countered by the exceptional leadership and caring shown to me by great NCOs and Officers through key stages in my life.

As a result, I was the freshman of the year at Norwich, the second ranking cadet my graduating year, the 2002 “Outstanding Graduate” at Franklin Pierce College, and a 4.0 doctoral student. I am also a proud member of American Mensa. Where public education let me down - the Military lifted me up and challenged me. Military education benefits fueled the dreams of a poor kid from Vermont.

Almost every day I get a chance to talk with young men and women about joining the Guard and taking advantage of the diverse education packages available. My greatest accomplishment in life has always been providing encouragement to our newest soldiers and cadets to pursue higher education while achieving their military goals.

CPT August T. Murray
AG, ARNG

I was twelve credits short of my BS in Criminal Justice when I enlisted in the ARNG. A senior audit revealed that I needed three 100 level classes. I took the free CLEP and DANTES tests provided by the National Guard and was able to graduate the following semester.

SSG Shane Toupal
SDARNG

“All 142 college-level credits came from my military experience ... in the Army National Guard.”

- SSG Russell Nakahara, HIARNG

I grew up in a blue-collar family in an industrial New England city. I am the only one in my family to earn a college degree. I probably could not have done it without the money and the drive and discipline I learned from the ARNG... All of my post-secondary education [B.S., M.Ed] has been paid close to 100% by the Guard... I plan on using [my MGIB-SR] to obtain a second masters or help fund a doctoral level degree.

CPT Bill Maynard
MAARNG

At age 41, I started the process of completing my degree. It cost approximately \$15,000. In May 2003 at age 42, I graduated with a 3.8 GPA and thanks, to the Guard, walked away completely debt-free.

SFC David R. Bambenek
MNARNG



ABOVE: LTC Mike Bridges with his callsign (Eagle Six) namesake (p. 41)

That was one thing that allowed me to leave the regular Army, knowing that I was going to be able to go to college and it would be paid for.

2LT William B. Mattingly
MIARNG

ABOVE: SFC Maria (Riet) Levine



RIGHT: SSG Shane Toupal in the Green Zone in Baghdad, Iraq (p.39)

DISTANCE *Learning*

Deployments and distance from traditional brick-and-mortar learning institutions no longer have to be an impediment to completing your degree. You can apply much of the education funding that you receive from the Guard to courses taken online. A number of well respected, fully accredited colleges and universities are now making special efforts to work with Soldiers to ensure they receive the education they have earned by serving their nation.

The National Guard educational benefits are incredible. I used the 50 percent tuition benefit when I was an enlisted SDARNG Soldier to complete my Bachelor's degree. My drill pay check covered my rent during the same time period.

Two years ago, I used the then 75% tuition benefit with a matching 25% tuition benefit to pay 100% of the cost of my Masters in Business Administration degree. The course was through Touro University International (TUI), and all of the courses were on-line. I was able to pursue my

degree at my own pace without having to attend a traditional brick-and-mortar class.

Currently, I am using money from the Montgomery GI Bill to cover the majority of my tuition and expenses for a Doctorate in the Philosophy of Business degree from TUI.

The National Guard education benefits are priceless, and have provided me with

unlimited opportunities for educational growth. There are many ways to grow and learn using your educational benefits. Your determination and willingness to learn are the only limits to your educational pursuits with all of the options the Guard provides.

Very respectfully, the well educated,

MAJ Robert F. Markovetz, Jr.
SDARNG

“The National Guard benefits are priceless, and have provided me with unlimited opportunities...”

- MAJ Robert F. Markovetz, Jr., SDARNG

ACTIVATION AND EDUCATION

If you have been called to duty while enrolled in a college or other learning institution, the Servicemembers Opportunity College (SOC) can help. Their website provides an education/mobilization checklist and sample letters that you can use to notify your school and lending institution as well as an array of information on Guard-friendly schools. In addition, the SOC can work with you and your school to help you receive a refund of tuition and other fees if you are forced to withdraw due to activation. Go to www.soc.aascu.org and follow the Guard links.

Go to: SOC.AASCU.ORG

Guard-Friendly UNIVERSITIES

These institutions are not endorsed by the Army National Guard or GX magazine. Specific Guard Soldiers shared their positive experiences with us and we wanted to pass them on. You deserve the same respect and generous treatment from your school that these Warriors received from theirs.

IVY TECH STATE COLLEGE

The educational benefits are awesome and easy to take advantage of. There is even a VA counselor at Ivy Tech named Jennifer Morningstar; she helps all the students at Ivy Tech taking advantage of the benefits.

SPC Mandi Jones
INARNG

VINCENNES UNIVERSITY

I am attending Vincennes University for computers. I just finished attending the Active Army's 91W AIT, for which the university will award additional credits. Vincennes offers a great program for the military. For my past MOS's (MP and Recruiter), I have been awarded 62 Credit Hours, and only need to take the required Core classes to receive my Associates Degree, (using the FREE Dante's test when I can)

SSG Hugh K Haines
MIARNG

WAYLAND BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

Wayland Baptist University's Anchorage Campus Extension gave me full credits for my military courses and experience,

“The educational benefits are awesome and easy to take advantage of.”

- SPC Mandi Jones, INARNG

accepted all my UAA credits and lined me up for CLEP and DANTES exams (via the Ft. Richardson Education Center). Twelve successful CLEP/DANTES exams and two years (with a six month TDY to Armor Officer Advance and Cavalry Leader at Ft. Knox) later: I graduated from Wayland with a Bachelor's of Science in Occupational Education. (I earned a four-year degree at night, in four years)

LTC Mike Bridges
AKARNG

RIO SALADO COMMUNITY COLLEGE

I recently started taking classes online with Rio Salado Community College. The 100% TA has allowed me to take classes with no out-of-pocket expense. The school understands our mission as soldiers and does whatever it takes to give us the opportunity to complete the assignments.

SSG Efrain Hernandez
WAARNG

OTTAWA UNIVERSITY

I continued my education at Ottawa University - Kansas City. I chose this school

WHERE CAN I FIND A GUARD-FRIENDLY UNIVERSITY?

If you are looking for a Guard-friendly school, Military.com can help. The site offers, free of charge, an excellent search engine which will allow you to search for the perfect school based on the type of degree you want to earn, what subjects you want to study, geographic location, and availability of online courses. Go to www.military.com and follow the School Finder link under Education.

Go to: MILITARY.COM



for two reasons primarily: 1. they gave me credit for all of the previous classes I had taken and it didn't matter what school those credits came from, and 2. the university awarded me over thirty semester hours for military training and experience. I was now well on my way to finally completing a degree.

MSG Kirk Harding
MOARNG

CENTRAL TEXAS COLLEGE

I am now attending Central Texas College for free. I am receiving 100% tuition, my books are paid for, and I also received a free laptop with free internet access. Another great thing about this program is that I don't have to submit any Tuition Assistance forms. Once you are set up in the program, they do everything for you. It is great!

SGT James W Covey
TNARNG



HOMELAND SECURITY FUNDING

By MSG Bob Haskell, National Guard Bureau

The 54 states and territories do not have to use their allotment of National Guard appropriations to pay their National Guard troops who perform homeland defense missions considered "necessary and appropriate" by the Secretary of Defense.

The federal government would provide those additional funds for troops called up to protect the citizens or the infrastructures, such as bridges, railroad facilities and power plants, in the states and territories. Furthermore, those troops would remain under the command of their governors.

That is a significant provision for the National Guard in the 2005 National Defense Authorization Act that President George W. Bush signed into law on Oct. 28.

The law allows governors, through their adjutants general, to maintain command and control of their Guard forces performing homeland defense activities even though they are being paid with federal funds.

National Guard troops will be able to serve under this provision for up to 180 days, but the governors may extend their tours one time for an additional 90 days "to meet extraordinary circumstances," with the Secretary of Defense's approval.

"We needed a clear, unambiguous law so that the National Guard could legally perform operational missions at home

funded by federal funds but in the command of the governors and the adjutants general. Now we have it," LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, recently told Guard Bureau staff members.

"It is not fair for the states to have to pay for their National Guard members to perform national security events," LTG Blum added. "This is a huge arrow in the quiver of the Secretary of Defense."

The law makes it possible for Guard members to perform, in Title 32 status, homeland defense activities in support of the Secretary of Defense and the states, Guard Bureau officials pointed out.

"Homeland defense activity" is defined in the law as "an activity undertaken for the military protection of the territory or domestic population of the United States, or of the infrastructure or other assets of the United States determined by the Secretary of Defense as being critical to national security, from a threat or aggression against the United States."

The law also states that homeland defense activities must not degrade the training and readiness of Guard units and personnel.

"The performance of the activities is not to affect adversely the quality of that training or otherwise interfere with the ability of a member or unit ... to perform the military functions of the member or unit," the law reads. **EX**

HISTORY HOLDS MANY MEMORABLE MOMENTS



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DEADLINE FOR STORY SUBMISSIONS IS 28 FEBRUARY 2005.



How To BECOME A SUCCESSFUL RRNCO

SFC Manuel T. (Tom) Horn, MIARNG, is the top National Guard Recruiting and Retention NCO (RRNCO) in the nation for 2004. Below he shares some of his Recruiting Tips with GX.

2. PLAN

Planning is paramount to success. We must keep our strategy simple: Long-Range, Mid-Range and Short-Range.

Long-Range: I use long-range planning to plug in all major events for the entire year. These are a few examples: every school visit is scheduled for the entire year, training with sports teams, major school events, community events, and career fairs.

Mid-Range: Mid-term planning is detailing the plan and requesting any resources that are needed like the rock wall, extra handouts, or team support.

Short-Range: For short-range planning, use a daily training schedule that goes out every two weeks. Keep it simple: who, what, where, when, why and uniform. Cover everything from phone power to physical training to office maintenance. Also, having a training schedule really helps your ADSW. It gives the soldiers predictability in their lives that will make them happier and harder workers. With ADSW's, a plan always includes a task, condition, standard and supervision for them. What gets accomplished is what is inspected, not expected. These are just a few ideas that have helped in my plan for success. Without a plan, you have nothing to go on. Remember, if you plan for success, failure will not be an option.

THE BOTTOM LINE



1. DESIRE

Desire is a deep seated longing. In order to be successful not only in recruiting, but also in life, one must possess the desire to achieve his or her mission/goal; we also must believe that achieving this goal helps the individual applicant and, most importantly, the Army National Guard. The RRNCO confronts many difficult challenges in achieving success: Cancelled appointments, no-shows, biased media and parents to name a few. However, if we believe in the Army National Guard and we possess the desire to meet our goals, we will be successful.

3. ATTEMPT

Attempt is making an effort, giving it a shot. Now that we have honed our desire and created our plan, it is time to make that attempt. Without attempt, our desire and plan mean nothing. Let's pull out the school lists and start from top to bottom, left to right; cover everyone on it, take notes during the conversations. Keep track of prospects, "not now" doesn't mean "not ever." Place fliers around town, in our high schools and even in the student parking lots. We often can find ourselves letting go too easily; we must attempt to overcome our obstacles. An obstacle is only an obstacle when we let it get in the way.

>> An obstacle is only an obstacle when we let it get in the way.

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Failure is not an option | Remain positive |
| Don't blame others | Work ethic |
| Don't accept excuses | Have desire |
| Attitude is key | Have fun and success follows |

PROSPECTING TECHNIQUES FOR PHONE POWER

- Use list for the school to which you have a visit planned during the week.
- Start at the top and start calling
- Be a friend to them
- Show a genuine concern
- If you are unable to set up an appointment, ask them to stop by at your lunch visit.

KEYS FOR STUDENT VISITS

- Grab students' attention
- Don't be pushy
- Be relaxed and casual
- Make them feel comfortable
- Let them feel in charge
- Discuss what's important to them
- Develop a plan to assist them in achieving their goal
- Reiterate that you are there to help them
- Follow-up with prospects immediately.
- Get to know the counselors and teachers.
- Don't get caught up in giving them too much information
- Don't talk about specific MOS's or bonuses
- On follow-up visit, don't be afraid to ask the applicant what the hold up is!
- Close when you feel they are ready

WHAT IS YOUR GOAL?

Set personal goals that are higher than what you're assigned. Get the funnel full with 20-25 prospects. To make your goal, you need to have 2-3 times as many applicants as you feel can enlist in that month. If something can go wrong, it will. Doing this does not place all of your eggs in one basket.



PEC: ROAD TO READINESS

By MAJ Ed Anhalt and MAJ Gary Pultro, National Guard Professional Education Center

"PEC is the road to readiness," says PEC Commandant, COL Ken Newton. The National Guard Professional Education Center (PEC) located at Camp Robinson, Arkansas is undergoing some exciting changes these days. COL Newton says "PEC makes units better by offering relevant, responsive training... and I'm here to fill the place up!"

PEC is also now the home of the Educational Support Center (ESC) that services the educational advancement needs of the entire ARNG force. Education Support Center services include military credit assessment, college degree planning and educational counseling. The ESC offers over 60 degree programs in partnership with over 22 colleges nationwide. For more information on the Education Support Center, contact the ESC staff toll-free at 1-866-628-5999 or online at www.virtualarmory.com.

In addition to training courses, PEC hosts over 150 conferences annually, offering training sessions covering all aspects of Army National Guard and DOD readiness. PEC is a full-service organization with billeting, transportation, dining, fitness center and world class library services with internet access for students. As PEC gets ready to celebrate its 30th Anniversary in 2004, COL Newton says "This is a really exciting time at PEC and this is just the beginning." COL Newton anticipates further expansion into the Joint Professional Military Education (JPME) training and homeland defense arena. He is also planning expanded use of military simulations and added DL courses.

For a complete listing of PEC courses visit the PEC website at www.ngpec.org. If you have any questions on how PEC can fill your training and conferencing needs please call the Training Management Branch at commercial phone: 501-212-4599 or DSN 962-4599; for Conferencing questions please call 501-212-4670 or DSN 962-4670.

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THE NEW BONUSES

“We’re putting our money where our mouth is.”

- LTG H Steven Blum



On December 16th, 2004, LTG H Steven Blum announced a major increase in bonuses aimed to encourage new recruits and to reenlist prior service Soldiers critical to the readiness and strength of the Guard.

“We’re in a more difficult recruiting environment,” Blum told news reporters. “There’s no question that when you have a sustained ground combat operation going that the Guard’s participating in, that makes recruiting more difficult.”

Here is the step-by-step breakdown of the new Guard bonuses and how you can take advantage of them locally and nationally.



\$10,000
FOR ENLISTING IN ONE OF THE ARNG’S “TOP 10” CRITICAL MOS’S

\$6,000
BONUS FOR NEWLY COMMISSIONED OFFICERS OR WARRANT OFFICERS

\$2,000
BONUS FOR SOLDIERS WHO AGREE TO RETRAIN INTO A CRITICAL MOS

4,100
RECRUITING FORCE FOR THE GUARD

THE NEW (RE)ENLISTMENT BONUS

\$20,000

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT (SLRP) FOR NON-PRIOR SERVICE ENLISTEES

\$350
MONTH
GI BILL KICKER TO NON-PRIOR SERVICE PERSONNEL WHO ARE ENROLLED IN COLLEGE AND RECEIVING GI BILL BENEFITS

\$15,000
6-YEAR PRIOR-SERVICE ENLISTMENT BONUS

\$6,000
FOR NON-PRIOR SERVICE SOLDIERS WHO CHOOSE TO TRAIN IN AN MOS CRITICAL TO THEIR STATE

\$2,000
OFF-PEAK SHIP BONUS TO NON-PRIOR SERVICE SOLDIERS WHO SHIP OSUT OR STRAIGHT TICKET TRAINING FROM OCTOBER THROUGH MAY

Photo by SPC Jason Ryan

NON-PRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENT BONUS

The ARNG will offer the non-prior service enlistment bonus at a rate not to exceed a total of \$10,000 for a 6-year enlistment. The ARNG will pay the non-prior service enlistment bonus at the rate of 50% upon successful completion of IADT and 50% at the end of the fourth year.

- 1 \$10,000 for enlisting in one of the ARNG's "Top 10" Critical MOS's.
- 2 \$6,000 for Critical MOS to non-prior service soldiers who choose to train in an MOS that is deemed critical to the readiness of that soldier's state (not to exceed 30 MOS's).
- 3 \$2,000 Off-Peak Ship bonus to non-prior service soldiers who ship OSUT or straight ticket training in the months of October through May.



RIGHT: The first \$15,000 re-enlistment in Kuwait.



Photo courtesy of ARNG Retention Team, Kuwait

PRIOR SERVICE BONUSES HAVE BEEN INCREASED TO \$15,000



ABOVE: On New Year's Day, nine Soldiers from C 1/201 FA re-enlist on the steps of the Temple of Ur, a 4100-year old ziggurat near Nasiriya, Iraq about 365 km south of Baghdad.

PRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENT BONUS

The ARNG will offer a 6-year prior-service enlistment bonus of \$15,000 with a payment schedule of 50% at time of enlistment and 50% at the fourth-year anniversary. The ARNG will also offer the two-3-year enlistment option at a rate of \$7,500 for the first three-year and \$6,000 for the second three-year. Payment schedule for the two-3-year options are 50% at the beginning of the three-year commitment and 50% upon completion of the three-year commitment.

RE-ENLISTMENT EXTENSION BONUS

The ARNG will offer a 6-year re-enlistment/extension bonus for \$15,000 payable in a lump sum upon re-enlistment/extension. The ARNG will also offer the two-3-year reenlistment/extension option paid at \$7,500 for the first three-year and \$6,000 for the second three-year. Payment schedule for the two-3-year option is also lump sum upon re-enlistment/extension. Soldiers with not more than 16 years of service are eligible for this bonus.

Photo courtesy CPT Jeff Setser, C 1 1/201 FA

AFFILIATION BONUS

The ARNG will offer \$50 per month for each month of the remaining military service obligation. Soldiers must be assigned to a vacancy for which they are MOS qualified. The MOS must have been awarded while the soldier was on active duty.

OFFICER ACCESSION AFFILIATION BONUS

The ARNG will offer a \$6,000 bonus for newly commissioned Officers or Warrant Officers and for Officers affiliating from Active Duty. The bonus will be paid 50% upon commissioning (for accessions) and 50% on the 24th-month anniversary of commissioning. Affiliating Officers will receive 50% upon execution of the contract and 50% on the 24th-month anniversary of the contract.

MOS CONVERSION BONUS

The ARNG will offer a \$2,000 bonus for Soldiers who agree to retrain into a critical MOS in order to meet the needs of the ARNG. The payment will be made in a lump sum upon completion of training in the new MOS. This bonus cannot run concurrently with any other incentives that the Soldier may have.

- 11B – INFANTRYMAN
- 13B – CANNON CREWMEMBER
- 21B – COMBAT ENGINEER
- 31B – MILITARY POLICE
- 63B – LIGHT-WHEEL VEHICLE MECHANIC
- 88M – MOTOR TRANSPORT OPERATOR
- 91W – HEALTH CARE SPECIALIST
- 92A – AUTOMATED LOGISTICAL SPECIALIST
- 92G – FOOD SERVICE SPECIALIST
- 92Y – UNIT SUPPLY SPECIALIST

10 CRITICAL MOS

 www.virtualarmory.com



Photo courtesy U.S. Army/SPC Aaron Ritter



Photo by SSG Russell Lee Klika

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

The \$20,000 Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) will be offered as an enlistment option for non-prior service enlistees. The Soldier must have existing loans at the time of enlistment. Loans established or disbursed after the date of enlistment will not be eligible. Entitlement is for the initial contract period only.

SLRP FACT

It is your responsibility to contact your unit each year upon approaching your anniversary date to initiate loan repayment. The SLRP is not on an automated repayment cycle, so contact your unit each year and complete the DOD loan application DD Form 2475.



Photo by SGT Jeremiah Johnson



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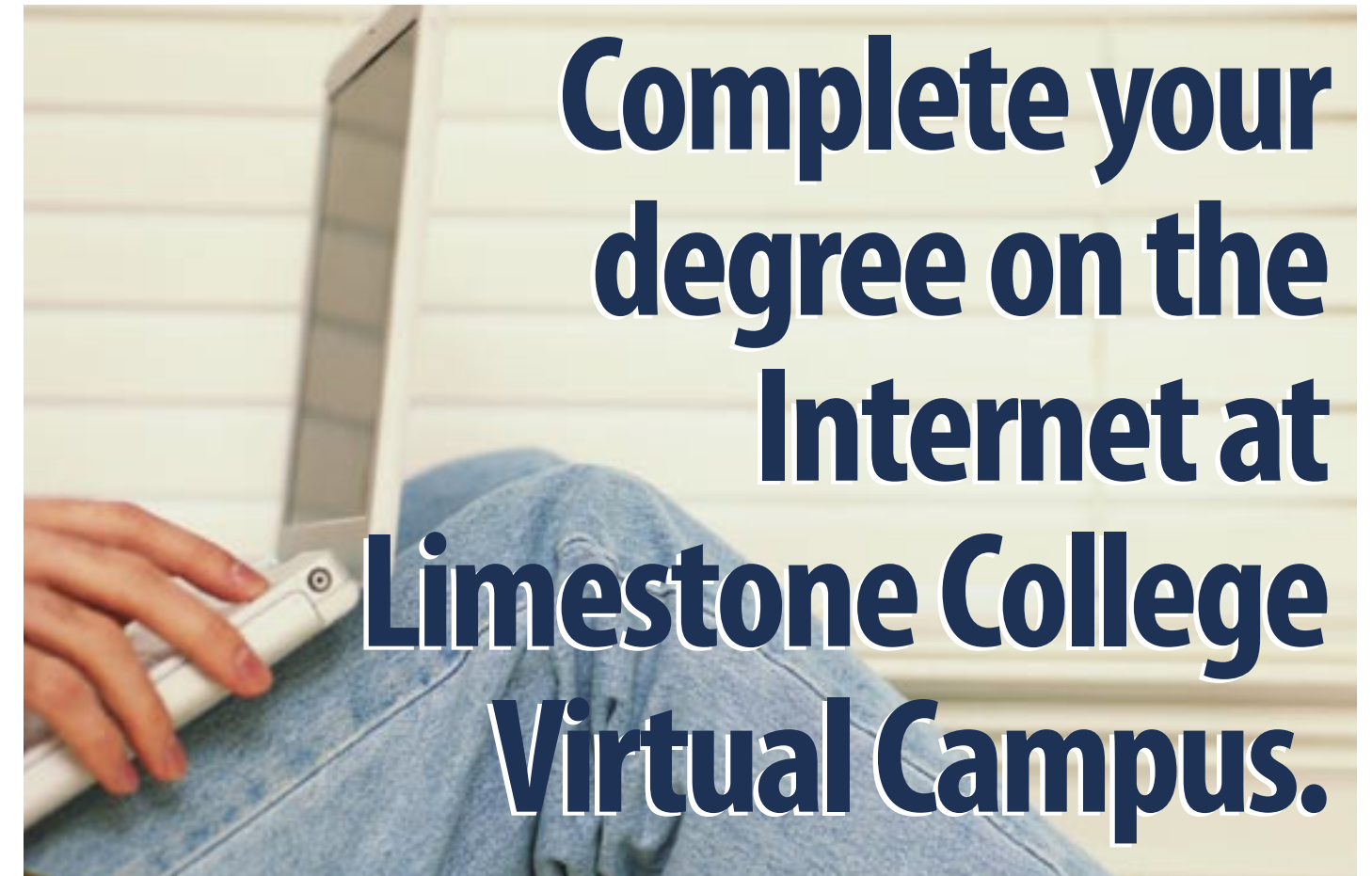


MONTGOMERY GI BILL KICKER

The ARNG will offer the Montgomery GI Bill Kicker to non-prior service personnel in the amount of up to \$350 per month. The \$350 kicker is available to Soldiers enrolled in the Officer Candidate School (OCS) and the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP). Lieutenants without a baccalaureate degree, officers, and warrant officer candidates may be offered the kicker up to \$350 per month. Those Soldiers not in commissioning programs, and who are otherwise eligible, may be offered a \$200 Kicker. **GX**



Photos by SPC Jason Ryan



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ABOVE: Multi-National Corps - Iraq (MNC-I) Public Affairs office enjoying Cuban cigars on Christmas Eve in Saddam's palace. **BELOW:** Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld meets with Soldiers from the 67th Combat Surgical Hospital at Mosul Airfield, Iraq.
Photo by Army photographer

On Christmas Eve, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld traveled to several bases and hospitals throughout Iraq. Below is an excerpt of a first-hand account of one of those visits told by CPT Dan Mattson, courtesy of www.bantyrooster.com.

It's Christmas Eve ... at around 1600 I was in the OR and I was told that Rumsfeld was downstairs ... I was taking my patient to the recovery room when we wheeled the stretcher through a mob of dignitaries ... The patient drew attention because of his bruised, banged up face ... Mr. Rumsfeld came over and heard the kid's story ... Rumsfeld kind of kept his distance from the gruesome site. He said something like "bless his heart"...

He told the Soldier, named Rob, how proud he was of his service. [Rob] was in a bit of disbelief, because he couldn't see with one eye patched and the other swollen shut. He said he wanted to talk to Rumsfeld. I said, "He's standing to your left, Rob; that's his voice you hear. You can talk to him."

**"Mr. Rumsfeld, you are doing a fantastic job."
- Wounded Soldier**

The kid was nervous at that point, but sputtered out how honored he was to talk to him. Mr. Rumsfeld replied, "No, it's an honor for me to talk to you."

Then remarkably, the young Soldier, who had just lost his left hand and right eye stated:

"Mr. Rumsfeld, you are doing a fantastic job. I know that you are taking a lot of heat for the problems with getting armor for vehicles. I want you to know that things are vastly improved. Our vehicles are great."

Rumsfeld looked choked up... What makes a man who has been so close to death and maimed for life come to the defense of the Army's highest ranking official? Loyalty.



DoD photo by Master SGT James M. Bowman, U.S. Air Force



ABOVE: SPC Jessica Stacy, of McRae, AR, displays one of the hundreds of Christmas cards and greetings.
Photo by CPL Benjamin Cossel

On Christmas day, Soldiers of the 39th Brigade Combat Team opened more than 80 Christmas presents sent to them by the World Trade Center United Family Group, a group made up of survivors and family members of the tragedy of Sept. 11, 2001.

"Dear Soldier, my daddy was on the 103rd floor of the World Trade Center when the terrorists attacked, he was killed. Thank you for all that you do. Love, Caitlin," read a letter tucked inside one of the many Christmas presents under the tree.

3rd Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment (NYARNG) patrolled on Christmas Day. The following is an excerpt from Stars and Stripes by Joseph Giordano.

"I've been shot at more this Christmas than all the other ones combined," 2LT Westmoreland said as the convoy returned after a cold, wet Christmas Day patrol.

The day started out like any other, save for the slow drizzle of rain ... As the convoy traveled along country roads paralleling canals filled with waist-high water ... rain turned the trails to a thick, muddy slurry.

The lead Humvee nearly slid off the road. Soon, it was teetering on the edge of the road.

The platoon tried to pull it back onto the road ... the side of the road caved in, flipping the Humvee into the canal.

[A] soaking-wet SGT Neason [who was driving] emerged from the Humvee shaken

but uninjured ... He said, "I could hear you yelling and I yelled back, but my head was underwater."

PVT Lugo yelled out that the convoy was taking fire. Red tracer rounds flew in ... The patrol returned fire.

"Merry [expletive] Christmas," someone muttered.

On the last stretch of road before the camp, a car sped toward the last Humvee in the column. PVT Lugo ... flashed a light at it, warning the driver. When the car kept coming, he put two warning shots into it with his .50-caliber.

Finally, the convoy rolled through the gates of Camp Cooke... PVT Lugo broke into a set of Christmas carols from up in the gunner's hatch.

"Although it's been said, many times, many ways," PVT Lugo sang, remarkably on key, "Merry Christmas to you."

**"I've been shot at more times this Christmas than all other ones combined."
- 2LT Westmoreland**

Dec. 21st, Santa Claus visited newly promoted ILARNG MAJ Tammy Duckworth (below) at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., where she is undergoing treatment after being severely injured in Iraq on Nov. 12. A rocket-propelled grenade hit the helicopter that Duckworth was piloting, and most of both her legs have been amputated.



ABOVE: Afghan girl with her new shoes
Photo by COL Todd Nehls

COL Todd Nehls and the WIARNG and INARNG Soldiers he leads have been playing Santa to the children of Gardez, Afghanistan, for several months now. Shortly after arriving in the country in August, the patrolling Guardmembers saw how few children in the region had shoes. Knowing the looming winter would bring sub-zero temperatures and heavy snows, COL Nehls, the elected sheriff of Dodge County, WI, sent word to his constituents to ask that they send shoes, socks, and school supplies for the local village children.

The response was amazing. As of their Christmas Eve deliveries, the Guardmembers have distributed over 1,000 pairs of shoes, 400 lbs of school supplies, 250 lbs of candy and hundreds of toys and hope to continue weekly drops through Easter.

**"It's not so bad. I'm just glad it was me and not one of my guys out there."
- MAJ Tammy Duckworth**

LEFT: MAJ Tammy Duckworth with Santa on Dec. 21st.
Photo by MSG Bob Haskell, National Guard Bureau

VICTORY MAP

PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE

Alaska

AKARNG pioneered a hazardous materials training course to teach Soldiers how to battle pollution. Course includes handling and disposing of hazardous materials and waste, natural and cultural resource conservation and more.

Alaska

Alaska National Guard delivered clothing, toys, books, school supplies and more to remote villages across Alaska in their 48th annual Operation Santa Claus.

Wyoming

Wyoming State Legislature now offers the Military Assistance Trust Fund to serve as a last resort for dependents of deployed Wyoming military personnel to turn to in times of financial hardship.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin National Guard's Challenge Academy graduated 95 graduates in December. The goal of the academy is to re-shape the lives of 16-to-18-year-olds who are at risk for problems as they enter adulthood.

California

National Guard Armory opens its doors to the local homeless population.

Michigan

Gov. Granholm kicks off "Operation Troop Connect," a statewide initiative to collect telephone calling cards for military members and their families.

Nevada

NVARNG partners with 8 public agencies and non-profit organizations to support marsh habitat and provide outdoor education opportunities for Reno's schoolchildren.

Missouri

Missouri National Guard actively participates in the Missouri Methamphetamine Initiative—an action set on educating citizens about meth and treating citizens with addiction.

North Carolina

North Carolina National Guard sponsors Tarheel Challenge, a program to improve the life-coping skills and employment potential of high school dropouts or expellees.

Nebraska

Jacob Kaemmer, son of CWO4 Jerry Kaemmer, a MOARNG UH-60 Blackhawk pilot with Company C, 1/106th Aviation currently stationed in Iraq, won the Lincoln marathon, in place of his father who normally runs every year. Jacob's time was 2 hours, 30 minutes, 25 seconds in the 26.2 mile race.

Mississippi

MSARNG monitors erosion control and internal wetland rehabilitation at the 132,000-acre Camp Shelby. Information is shared with regulatory agencies, including the U.S. Forest Service. Monitoring has saved taxpayers \$1.2 million.

SEND YOUR NEWS TO:

✉ editor@gxonline.com

Iraq

MEARNG's 133rd Engineer Battalion built 18 wood buildings with electrical wiring for lights, heat, and A/C for 16 Iraqi National Guard (ING) traffic control checkpoints. Previously, the ING lived in tents.

Iraq

ILARNG's 232nd Corps Support Battalion helps rebuild local communities by providing supplies for Iraqi schools. The 232nd also provides water, fuel, and food to Soldiers.

Afghanistan

SGT Teryl Stacey of SDARNG's 109th Engineer Group designs and oversees engineering projects such as the construction of a military hospital and three schools and reconstruction of the Salerno air base. SGT Stacey also is teaching local Afghan masons proper techniques for lasting structures.

Iraq

Company C, 199th Forward Support Battalion, 256th Brigade Combat Team, collaborated with several units from Camp Liberty to conduct a medical screening at Shatt Al Arab School in hopes of curing some of the common ailments that might be plaguing the children.

Afghanistan

Fourteen weapons caches discovered by coalition forces prevented anti-coalition militia from using them against innocent people, security forces or coalition soldiers. Five of the caches were turned in to coalition forces by local security forces or citizens.

Iraq

141st Engineer Combat Battalion Trailblazers found as many as five roadside bombs in a single day during 9th month of the route-clearance mission. In total, 44 bombs, or IEDs, were found from Nov. 12 through Dec. 11. Since March 12, the battalion has found 269 bombs before they could detonate and injure someone.

Afghanistan

109th Engineer Group builds road from Kandahar to Tarin Kowt, cutting a 9-hour trip to a 2-hour trip.

Japan

More than 200 ARNG and 300 of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force conduct bilateral training to improve skills and learn tactics from each other.

Afghanistan

Khovst, once the location of an Osama bin Laden Al-Qaeda training camp, is now home to the newest National Army Volunteer Center for the Afghan National Army.

South Asia

Alaska and Hawaii are supporting American relief efforts by sending Air National Guard personnel and resources to the South Asian region devastated by the Dec. 26 tsunami.

Afghanistan

LAARNG's 528th Engineer Battalion built a chapel at Forward Operating Base Salerno, replacing the tent previously used for 1,500 Soldiers and local civilians. To avoid attracting enemy attention and rocket attack, the 528th had to use small pen-sized flashlights to see while they cut the wood.

Afghanistan

UTARNG Soldiers of the 1-211th Attack Helicopter Battalion helped local civil affairs officials distribute clothing and basic goods to children in a nearby orphanage.

MOBILIZATION

THE IN'S AND OUT'S OF LEAVING HOME AND COMING BACK.

LEAVING HOME is never easy. DEMOBILIZATION

But for some, it's the easiest part of a difficult transition from maintaining your career and family to serving your Country in another part of the world.

GX wishes to thank ESGR POC for Guard members, SGM Ken Hardy, for his assistance with this story. SGM Ken Hardy >> Senior Enlisted Advisor, ESGR >> Kenneth.Hardy@osd.mil



Here's some helpful advice – from saving money for a new baby to reintegrating with your civilian co-workers – to take with you on the long road ahead.

PERSONAL MATTERS:

- Discuss with your family how you will communicate with them during mobilization.
- Contact and work with your Family Assistance Center or Family Support Group.
- Obtain ID cards for all family members.
- Discuss your departure plans and feelings with your spouse and children or parents, whichever applies to your personal situation.
- Inform your employer that you will be leaving for military duty (preferably in writing)
- Learn how your benefits will change during mobilization.
- Safely store important legal documents.
- Discuss financial arrangements with family and loved ones.
- Establish needed allotments from pay when processing direct deposit of payroll documents.
- Develop a new budget based on the changed conditions of mobilization.
- Check and update life insurance, health insurance, auto policies, etc.
- Arrange for paying bills, tax preparation and paying taxes.
- Put family security measures in place.
- Make sure that all appliances are in good condition before departure.
- Make sure your automobiles are in good repair.
- Make all storage arrangements.

PRE-MOBILIZATION CHECKLIST

LEGAL DOCUMENTS:

Ask your commander or unit administrator for a *DD Form 1543-Annual Legal Checkup*. Also, make sure you have the following legal documents:

- Certified copy of your marriage certificate.
- Certified copies of birth certificates for you and authorized family members.
- Certified copies of court orders or decrees pertaining to persons who are your authorized family members. Don't forget to include divorce decrees and adoption papers.
- Detailed plans for dependent care, including a special power of attorney for emergency medical care for your family members.
- A general power of attorney, or special power of attorney, to ensure the person you appoint can take care of financial, legal and medical matters for you and your family in your absence. These can be written so they are only active in your absence and allow for only specific areas of action as required.
- A detailed will. This is especially important if you own property. You should include a plan for distribution of your property and personal effects in the event of death.
- Copies of civilian medical history for you and all family members (to include a record of past illnesses or injuries not recorded in your military medical record and immunization records).

YOUR JOB IS SECURE!

YOUR RIGHTS UNDER USERRA

As a Uniformed Service Member, you have rights under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA):

- >> Military leave of absence (includes weekend drills, required training, all involuntary service and up to five years of voluntary service)
- >> Prompt reinstatement back into your job
- >> Accumulation of seniority, including pension plan benefits
- >> Reinstatement of health insurance, regardless of pre-existing conditions
- >> Training or retraining of job skills, including accommodations for disabled
- >> Protection against discrimination

YOUR REQUIREMENTS

BEFORE REPORTING FOR DUTY:
Provide prior notice to employer, preferably in writing

WHILE PERFORMING DUTY:
Serve under honorable conditions

AFTER RELEASE FROM DUTY:
Return to work in a timely manner

WHEN SHOULD YOU RETURN TO WORK?

PERIOD OF SERVICE	RETURN/APPLY TO RETURN OF WORK
Less than 31 days	Report next work day after safe travel home and 8 hours of rest
More than 30 days but less than 181 days	In writing, apply for reinstatement within 14 days of release from active duty
More than 180 days	In writing, apply for reinstatement within 90 days of release from active duty

HOW TO RESOLVE AN EMPLOYMENT ISSUE

- >> Inform your unit/military chain of command
- >> Contact ESGR:
1-800-336-4590
ncesgr-ombud@osd.mil
www.esgr.org
- >> If your issue hasn't been resolved, contact the Department of Labor:
1-866-4-usa-dol (1-866-487-2365)
www.dol.gov
- >> If your issue can't be resolved by the DOL, as a last resort, you may consult a private attorney, but doing so will preclude ESGR assistance.

HELPFUL SITES

www.soc.aascu.org

Information for college students

www.sba.gov/vets

Information for small business owners

www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve

Information on TRICARE coverage

www.usmilitary.about.com/od/sscra

Information on the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act (SCRA)

www.militaryonesource.com

Online counseling, information and resources about important life issues including family, health and emotional well-being

 www.esgr.mil

 1-800-336-4590

AWARD-WINNING EMPLOYERS

REWARD YOUR BOSS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR SERVICE

PATRIOT AWARD

ESGR awards a Patriot Award Certificate and a Patriot lapel pin on behalf of the Department of Defense to all employers nominated by Guard members. This employer recognition is the most frequently presented and is subsequently used by the State ESGR Committee for consideration to receive higher level awards.

ABOVE AND BEYOND AWARD

Designed to recognize those employers who have gone above and beyond the legal requirements for granting leave for military duty, this award is given in limited numbers and presented annually by each State ESGR Committee.

PRO PATRIA AWARD

The PRO PATRIA Award is presented to those employers who demonstrate exceptional support for our national defense by adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard. Each state committee gives only one PRO PATRIA annually.

SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FREEDOM AWARD

These awards, ESGR's most prestigious, are presented annually to the most supportive employers in America by the Secretary of Defense. They recognize unique support to National Guard and Reserve employees. The nomination period ends February 24th, so go to www.esgr.mil and recommend your employer today!



The National Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) recognizes employers for supporting employees serving in the National Guard. All employer recognition and awards originate from your requests; so go to www.esgr.mil and complete the form to recognize your award-winning employer.

BOSSLIFT PROGRAM

"Bosslifts" transport employers to military training sites where they observe National Guard members on duty. Employers see firsthand the type and quality of military training and leadership activities Guard members receive.

During a Bosslift, employers also have the opportunity to share their insights on having employees that serve in the Guard directly with Department of Defense leadership.

BRIEFING WITH THE BOSS

Briefings with the Boss are forums in which local employers, unit commanders, ESGR members, and community leaders meet to discuss employee participation in the National Guard. Through education, understanding, discussion and cooperation, many of the difficulties related to having Guard employees are eliminated.



STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

Recognize your National Guard and Reserve member employees by signing and displaying a Statement of Support! Say "Yes, I pledge my support to the National Guard and Reserve Members" by filling in and submitting this form and you will receive a personalized Statement of Support Certificate for mounting and display in your company offices!

www.esgr.mil

1-800-336-4590

RETURNING TO WORK

KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS IS ONLY

part of the picture when it comes to returning to your civilian job. You need to be prepared for your own reaction to your return, as well as for the reactions of others.

To ease your own adjustment period, be proactive about reintegrating to your work environment. Ask questions about major decisions that have been made in your absence. Learn about any general changes in work flow or company policy. Talk with the people who were "taking up the slack" during your deployment. Find out why decisions were made.

Refrain from overt or excessive criticism of what went on while you were away. You cannot know what went into the thought processes at the time and should trust that your co-workers did the best they could. Besides, since you can't change the past, you don't have much choice but to accept and move forward. Berating or scolding employees will not change what has happened and may create resentment and anger.

The other half of the picture is being prepared for what others are feeling.

There may well be a degree of resentment towards you from people who feel that they had to "pull your weight" in your absence. Some people may have a romanticized view of what military life was like and so they feel as if you ran off to "play soldier" while they stayed home and did the heavy lifting.

Your initial reaction to their feelings may be to "set them straight" or "tell them how it really was." Responding in anger will not help the situation and, again, may stir more resentment. A more constructive response might be, "I understand where you're coming from, and in your shoes I might feel the same way. I appreciate all of the hard work you did to cover my responsibilities while I was deployed. I'm glad to be back and to be able to have dinner with my family each night and sleep in my own bed again." In this way, you can subtly point out to them some of the sacrifices you have made in the service of your, and their, country.

Finally, one last potential source of irritation among your colleagues will be your "deployment war stories." To a point, people will likely be interested in hearing about your experiences, especially if they ask. However, they will eventually reach their individual "saturation point." If you notice that people begin to disconnect when you launch into another story, it

may be time for a change of conversational topic. Also, make sure to express an interest in hearing about what happened in their lives while you were away.

TALK TO YOUR BOSS

Communication with your employer throughout your deployment is the best way to ensure a smooth transition back to work. Your boss will be pleased to know that you are being taken care of and learning new skills that can pay off on the job. You are being deployed to serve your community and the nation which is a strong indication to people at work that you are the type of person who seeks out—and can handle—serious responsibility.

Being up-front and honest with your employer will help them better support you when you return.

"Troops need to take the time to involve their employers in what they are doing," said MG Steve Read, U.S. Army Reserve readiness commander. "If Soldiers keep their employers informed and abreast of what's going on, the employers will tend to be more receptive."

PUT YOUR FINANCES IN ORDER BEFORE THE ORDER COMES

BY RICH STRICKLER
DEPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM MANAGER, USAA

EVEN WHILE YOU'RE A world away defending your

country, life back home keeps running. Monthly bills, taxes, and even a broken washing machine will still need attention, and possibly on a tighter budget. Since you can't predict when or where you'll be called to serve, the best time to ensure your household is mission-ready is long before you receive your orders. As you sit down with family and friends to create a deployment readiness plan, consider the following: >>

INSURE PEACE OF MIND

Life insurance can be difficult to discuss, but giving your loved ones financial security will help put your mind at ease. Consider whether the standard Servicemen's Group Life Insurance (SGLI) is enough to meet your needs, especially if you have dependents. A general rule of thumb is that adequate life insurance protection should cover seven to 10 times your annual income. But to be sure you only pay for the coverage you need, it helps to consult with a financial planner who does not earn a commission on the products you buy.

PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY

Whether you rent or own a home, you may need to make changes to your property insurance coverage before deployment. If your home will be unoccupied, notify your insurance company and arrange to store your property with a friend, relative, or in a commercial storage facility. Important papers, jewelry, and other small valuables can be kept in a safe deposit box.

If someone else will drive your car while you are deployed, you may need to add that person to your auto insurance policy. However, if your vehicle will be properly stored, you may be able to save money by reducing your coverage, depending on your state laws.

GET FIT TO FILE

If April 15 will roll around during your deployment, be sure to understand how your tax return will be affected. Generally, if you or your spouse are serving in a combat zone or hazardous duty area, the IRS offers several options to let you delay filing returns, paying taxes, making claims for refunds, contributing to IRAs, and other actions. If the rules apply to you, you can file an extension and take up to 180 days after leaving the combat zone before filing or paying taxes. Consult the Armed Forces' Tax Guide (IRS Publication 3) for details.

If you find that filing a return in April is still required, a durable power of attorney allows a designated person at home to file your taxes for you.

RETAIN YOUR FINANCES AND PROPERTY WHILE YOU'RE AWAY

TRACK DOWN DISCOUNTS

To help ease financial pressure, take advantage of discounted services many companies offer for deployed military personnel, such as no international fees on ATM cards and reduced credit card interest rates. Also, the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act of 2004 requires lenders to cut interest rates on existing loans to military members to six percent during periods of active duty military service. Consult with your JAG for a full explanation of your protections under the Act.

While preparing the homefront for deployment can be difficult, making important financial, legal, and insurance arrangements ahead of time will help get you in shape for your next mission.

Rich Strickler is Deployment Assistance Program Manager with USAA. He also served 30 years in the U.S. Navy. USAA is a diversified insurance and financial services organization that has served the military community since 1922.

AS WAVES OF returning troops

have set off a mini-baby boom throughout the military community, many service members will find themselves on diaper duty in the next year. While parents are rejoicing over their new arrivals, they also may be worrying about their financial security. After all, a U.S. Department of Agriculture survey found the average family will spend more than \$13,000 on baby-related expenses just in the child's first year.

Certified Financial Planner™ practitioners from USAA offer these tips to help parents ensure their families stay fiscally fit for years to come: >>

BEFORE THE BABY ARRIVES

CREATE A "BABY BUDGET":

Consider the new costs that a baby brings to the home, update your monthly budget to match, and immediately start living within those parameters.

PLAN FOR UNEXPECTED EXPENSES:

Use any savings in your new budget to begin building an emergency fund of three to six months' living expenses.

AVOID HEALTH INSURANCE HEADACHES:

Analyze your health insurance policy to determine what expenses are covered for mom and baby during the birth event. If you will owe a large deductible or know some costs won't be covered, you can start saving now.

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS:

Childhood illnesses are a part of having a new baby. If your employer offers a flexible spending account, enroll in the plan as soon as possible so you can pay for child care and medical expenses with pre-tax dollars.

PLAN FOR TIME OFF:

Ensure you understand your employers' maternity and paternity leave policies and whether you will be paid if you take time off. If not, determine how your health insurance coverage and any employer-sponsored retirement plans will be maintained during this period.

USAA is a diversified insurance and financial services organization that has served the military community since 1922.

A LITTLE PLANNING AHEAD CAN KEEP YOUR BUNDLE OF JOY FROM GROWING INTO A PILE OF DEBT.

BUDGETING

BEFORE THE BABY'S FIRST BIRTHDAY

REVIEW TAX BENEFITS:

New provisions allow parents a tax savings of almost \$1,800 as a result of having a new child, assuming a 25% tax bracket. According to the Internal Revenue Service, parents receive a \$1,000 child tax credit and a \$775 exemption for each child. Check out the IRS withholding calculator at www.irs.gov for more information on how to adjust your current withholdings.

UPDATE IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Make sure your new family member is added to your health insurance policy, and review other important documents, such as beneficiary information, for potential updates.

CREATE A SECURE FINANCIAL FUTURE:

With a child depending on your income, it's wise to obtain life insurance. A financial planner or estate attorney can help you determine which type of plan and level of coverage is best for your needs. Also consider purchasing supplemental disability insurance to guarantee income for a larger family.

PREPARE YOUR ESTATE:

Protect your new family by updating your wills to include who will serve as your child's guardian if the need arises. Depending on your situation, you might want to consider setting up a trust to ensure your property is given to your child according to your wishes.

SAVE EARLY FOR COLLEGE:

Because of the benefits of compounding interest, parents who start investing when their child is born have a much better chance of covering the escalating costs of college. Investing in tax-advantaged plans like state-sponsored 529 College Savings Plans or Coverdell Education Savings Accounts (CESAs) can help you make the most of your money.



PUT IT IN WRITING

If your financial accounts are in your name only, your spouse, or the person designated to handle your affairs, may have trouble dealing with any problems that arise in your absence. Have your spouse, relative, or trusted friend listed as a joint account holder who is authorized to make changes to the account without your signature. Additionally, enacting a durable power of attorney will allow your designee to manage legal matters on your behalf.

HELPFUL LINKS

www.usaa.com
www.virtualarmory.com





Photo: TSG Brian Christiansen, NCARNG Public Affairs

HOMECOMING TIPS

FOR YOU

1. Plan on spending some time with the entire family, but be flexible if teens have other plans.
2. Show interest and pride in how your family members have grown in your absence.
3. Expect it will take a little time to become reacquainted with your spouse. Be sure to tell him/her just how much you care. Make an effort to do little romantic things.
4. Resist the temptation to criticize. Your spouse has been doing his or her best to run the household. Give your spouse credit for his or her efforts even if his or her way of doing things is different from yours.
5. Take time to understand how your family may have changed. Go easy on child discipline—get to know what new rules your spouse may have set.
6. Don't be surprised if some family members are a bit resentful of your deployment. Others often think of the deployment as fun and exciting.
7. Infants and small children may be shy or fearful at first. Be patient; give them time to become reacquainted.
8. Resist the temptation to go on a spending spree to celebrate your return.
9. Most importantly, make time to talk with your loved ones. They need individual time and attention. Remember, focus on the positives and avoid criticism.

FOR YOUR SPOUSE

1. Do something special to welcome your spouse home—help the children make a welcome banner, make your spouse's favorite dessert, etc., but be understanding and flexible if your spouse is too tired to notice.
2. Give your spouse time to adjust to being home. Don't tightly schedule activities for him/her. Don't expect him/her to take on old chores right away.
3. Plan on some family togetherness time. Time together helps your spouse to get back into the rhythm of family life.
4. Be patient and tolerant with your spouse. Your spouse may have some initial discomfort adjusting, but this doesn't mean he/she is unhappy.
5. Don't spend money you don't have on celebrating your spouse's return.
6. Don't be surprised if your spouse is a little hurt by how well you ran the household and managed the children without them. Let him/her know that your preference is to share responsibilities with them.
7. Don't neglect the children's need for attention as you are becoming reacquainted with your spouse.
8. Stay involved in your own activities and interests, but be flexible about making time for your spouse.
9. Don't be surprised if children test the limits of the family rules. Consistent enforcement of family rules and even-handed discipline are key.

REUNION AND CHILDREN

TODDLERS (1-3 YEARS)

Toddlers will typically hide from you, cling to their primary caregiver, and cry. Give your child time to warm up to you. Sit at eye level with them (so you are less intimidating) and talk with them. Gently offer to play with them, but do not force the issue.

PRESCHOOLERS (3-5 YEARS)

Children at this age tend to think that the world revolves around them. Accordingly, they may think that they somehow caused you to leave them or that you left because you no longer cared about them. Your preschooler may feel guilty or abandoned and express these feelings as intense anger. They may try to push you away. Accept the child's feelings, do not act overly concerned, and focus on rewarding positive behaviors. Talk with them about whatever interests them and give them some undivided attention.

SCHOOL AGE (5-12 YEARS)

A school-age child's reaction to your return will depend heavily on the nature of your relationship before you were deployed. If the relationship was strong, you will likely receive a warm reception. On the drive home, he or she will try to talk your ear off and upon arrival, he or she will want to show you items that have been special to him or her during your deployment. Be sure to spend some time focused solely on him or her. If your relationship was strained before you left, your child may fear that you will punish him or her for any misbehavior while you were away. If this is the case, the child is likely to be shy and withdrawn. The best way to reconnect is to show interest in what he or she has done and praise his or her efforts and accomplishments.

ADOLESCENTS (13-18 YEARS)

Adolescents are normally prone to radical mood swings, and so their reaction to you may be characterized by mixed emotions. You may receive a warm reception, but teens can be reticent to show emotion in public. Children in this age range are very sensitive to being unfavorably judged or criticized. With this in mind, be sure to make time to discuss what is going on in your adolescent's life and share some of your experiences with him/her.



Photo by SSG Tad Browning, 100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, TXARNG

“THE ARMY IS committed to

taking care of its people and to providing the best possible healthcare—regardless of the Soldier's component and regardless of the nature of the illness or injury,” says COL Mike Deaton from the Army Surgeon General Office. “Our Soldiers have volunteered to stand in harms way for our nation and they deserve the best in healthcare.”

Mobilized National Guard Soldiers who no longer meet deployment standards as a result of a pre-existing or new medical condition are placed in Medical Holdover (MHO) status. Some MHOs receive medical care at active Army installations; but increasingly, others are being treated closer to home under the supervision of recently developed Community Based Health Care Organizations (CBHCOs). CBHCOs expand the Army's care-giving capacity and provide high-quality health care for Reserve Component Soldiers who live at home and often perform duty nearby.

CBHCOs are manned primarily by mobilized National Guard Soldiers who oversee and administer care for Reserve Component Soldiers undergoing medical treatment in VA and civilian health care facilities within their region to ensure the program meets the Army's high standards for care.



MHO Soldiers who receive treatment in CBHCOs retain the same pay and benefits, though they understandably have reductions in allowances like hazardous duty pay and family separation pay. The overwhelming majority of MHO Soldiers who receive treatment in CBHCOs are very happy with their medical care and administrative support.

One such satisfied Soldier is SPC Logan G. Brown, who received multiple injuries July 22, 2004 when his convoy was ambushed in Iraq. The El Dorado, AR native now receives medical care at CBHCO at Camp Robinson, AR. SPC Brown says he couldn't ask for a better program – he's able to be with the people he loves and the care and the leadership is genuine. “You can tell they [the case managers, doctors and platoon sergeants] really care about the Soldier and it means a lot to come home,” said the humvee gunner with the 3/153rd INF, 39th Infantry Brigade.

SSG Roberto Scott agrees. He was injured in a helicopter accident in Afghanistan September 17, 2004. He was evacuated to Fort Drum, NY where he was treated before entering the CBHCO at Hanscom Air Force, MA. SSG Scott says he was amazed by the quality treatment he's receiving. “They really care about the health and welfare of each one of us,” said the Guardsman with E Battery (TA), 101st Field Artillery, “And by going home every night, I feel that my condition, my well-being is much better.”

With the opening of several new CBHCOs in the next few months, CBHCO coverage will be available in all 50 states by this March. Once all the CBHCOs are fully open for business, more MHO Soldiers will be given the opportunity to use them instead of military installations. **GX**

COMMUNITY BASED MEDICAL CARE

NEW PROGRAMS EXTEND THE ARMY'S HIGH STANDARD OF MEDICAL CARE FOR ALL SOLDIERS.

HELPFUL RESOURCES

- Strategic Communications Current Themes/ Messages, and Talking Points, dtd. 5 Nov. 2004
- Title 10 USC, Chapter 61
- DODI 1332.18, Nov. 04, 1996 Separation or Retirement for Physical Disability
- DODI 1332.38, Nov. 14, 1996 Physical Disability Evaluation
- DODI 1332.39, Nov. 14, 1996 Application of the Veterans Administration Schedule for Rating Disabilities
- AR 600-20, July 15, 1999 Army Command Policy
- AR 600-60, June 25, 2002 Physical Performance Evaluation System
- AR 635-40, August 15, 1990 Physical Evaluation for Retention, Retirement, or Separation
- AR 40-3, Nov. 15, 2002 Medical, Dental and Veterinary Care
- AR 40-400, March 12, 2001 Patient Administration
- AR 40-501, August 29, 2003 Standards of Medical Fitness
- AR 40-400, March 12, 2001 Patient Administration
- DD Form 2796, April 2003 Post Deployment Health Assessment
- OASD/HA Memorandum, March 10, 2003 TRICARE Benefits for Activated Reserve Component Personnel and Families

GUARD CAR 2005

2005 NEXTEL CUP SERIES SCHEDULE

February 12	Daytona Int'l Speedway	July 02	Daytona Int'l Speedway
17	The Gatorade Duel Daytona Int'l Speedway	10	Chicagoland Speedway
20	Daytona Int'l Speedway	17	New Hampshire Int'l Speedway
27	California Speedway	27	Pocono Raceway
March 13	Las Vegas Motor Speedway	August 07	Indianapolis Motor Speedway
20	Atlanta Motor Speedway	14	Watkins Glen International
April 03	Bristol Motor Speedway	21	Michigan Int'l Speedway
10	Martinsville Speedway	27	Bristol Motor Speedway
17	Texas Motor Speedway	September 04	California Speedway
23	Phoenix Int'l Raceway	10	Richmond Int'l Raceway
May 01	Talladega Superspeedway	18	New Hampshire Int'l Speedway
07	Darlington Raceway	25	Dover Int'l Speedway
14	Richmond Int'l Raceway	October 02	Talladega Superspeedway
21	Lowe's Motor Speedway	09	Kansas Speedway
29	Lowe's Motor Speedway	15	Lowe's Motor Speedway
June 05	Dover Int'l Speedway	23	Martinsville Speedway
12	Pocono Raceway	30	Atlanta Motor Speedway
19	Michigan Int'l Speedway	November 06	Texas Motor Speedway
26	Infinion Raceway	13	Phoenix Int'l Raceway
		20	Homestead-Miami Speedway

NATIONAL GUARD FORD TAURUS CAR SPECS

Wheelbase:	110"	Shifter:	Long
Treadwidth:	60 1/2" (center to center)	Headers:	Roush/Yates Racing Engines
Height:	51"	Clutch:	Quartermaster
Overall Length:	17'	Gasoline:	Sunoco
Weight:	3400 minimum	Oil System:	Roush Racing
Distribution:	1800 lbs. Left/1600 lbs. Right	Engine Oil:	Pennzoil
Engine:	358 cid Ford V-8	Oil Filters:	Wix
Carburetor:	Holley	Fuel Cell:	ATL (22 gallon)
Ignition:	Ford MSD	Axles:	Stock Car Products
Spark Plugs:	Bosch	Wheels:	AERO (10" width, 15" diameter)
Transmission:	Roush	Tires:	Goodyear Eagle Racing Tires
Battery:	Reactor Cell	Brakes:	Brembo
Camshaft:	Comp Cams	Shocks:	Penske
Pistons:	Roush/Yates	Hose Fittings:	Icor
Valves:	Xceldyne	Rear Suspension:	9" Ford rear end housing
Connecting Rods:	Carillo	Bellhousing:	Ford
Crankshaft:	Moldex/Bryant	Belts:	Goodyear
Engine Bearings:	Clevite 77	Gauges:	Autometer



“ It means a little more when you know there are Soldiers up in the middle of the night, overseas, who have stayed up just to cheer for their car in the Nextel Cup race.

This season, we've had the chance to hear stories and meet Soldiers who were either just returning home or were preparing for deployment. I was happy to put their car in victory lane at Michigan and I look forward to the opportunity to put the National Guard Ford in the winner's circle a few more times in 2005.

- Greg Biffle, #16 Guard Car Driver



Roush Racing and Greg Biffle's name and/or likeness used by authority of Roush Racing, Livonia, Michigan.

GUARD CAR PARTNERS 2005



Products

3M is a diversified technology company serving customers in more than 200 countries around the world. The company's 67,000 people use their expertise, technologies and global strength to lead in major markets including consumer and office; display and graphics; electronics and telecommunications; safety, security and protection services; health care; industrial and transportation. 3M's brands include Scotch, Post-it, Scotchgard, Thinsulate, Scotch-Brite, Filtrete, Command and Vikuiti.

3M's Post-it brand joins the #16 team as the main associate sponsor for 2005. 3M invented the Post-it Note 25 years ago, and recently introduced the Post-it Super Sticky Note. Other Post-it brand products include flags, easel pads, bulletin boards, software notes, and custom printed notes. For more information, including the latest Post-it product and technology news, visit www.Post-it.com.

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provides business-to-business video, data and Internet protocol (IP) solutions through Charter Business™. Advertising sales and production services are sold under the Charter Media® brand.



The SUBWAY® chain was founded in 1965 in Bridgeport, Conn. by then 17-year-old Fred DeLuca, with a \$1,000 loan from a family friend, Dr. Peter Buck. Today, the SUBWAY® chain is the world's largest submarine sandwich franchise, with more than 22,000 locations in 78 countries. In 2002, the SUBWAY® chain surpassed McDonald's in the number of restaurants open in the United States and Canada. SUBWAY® restaurants was named the number one franchise opportunity in all categories by Entrepreneur magazine in its Annual Franchise 500 ranking for 2005 - for the 13th time in 17 years! For more information about the SUBWAY® chain, see its Web site at www.subway.com.

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get Thriftlodge® properties representing 41,930 guest rooms throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico. Reservations and further information are available by visiting www.travelodge.com or calling the toll-free Travelodge number, (800) 578-7878, or the Thriftlodge number, (800) 535-9055. Travelodge Hotels is a subsidiary of Cendant Corporation (NYSE:CD).



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ALL THE PRESIDENT'S MEN

BEFORE THEY WERE LEADERS OF THE FREE WORLD

THEY WERE LEADERS IN THE NATIONAL GUARD



In honor of President's Day (FEB 21,) we present a history of Presidents in the National Guard. Observed on the third Monday in February, the holiday was originally in observation of George Washington's birthday (b. FEB 22, 1732). Still officially known as Washington's Birthday, according to the Office of Personnel Management, the holiday has become popularly known (and in some cases legally known at the state level) as "President's Day" to honor fellow February baby, Abraham Lincoln (b. FEB 12, 1809).

GEORGE WASHINGTON
Virginia Militia 1753-1775
U.S. President 1789-1797



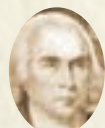
George Washington, our first President and "Father of our country," led the Continental Army during the American Revolution. After six years of fighting, Washington's army defeated the British at Yorktown, Virginia, and won our nation's independence. George Washington was posthumously awarded the rank of Five Star General 175 years after his death.

THOMAS JEFFERSON
Virginia Militia 1770-1781
U.S. President 1798-1809



Thomas Jefferson was an officer in the Virginia Militia before becoming the third President of the United States. A powerful defender of liberty, he is perhaps known best for drafting the Declaration of Independence.

JAMES MADISON
Virginia Militia 1775
U.S. President 1809-1817



At the outbreak of the Revolutionary War, James Madison was commissioned a Colonel in the Virginia Militia. After the Revolution, Madison went on to draft large sections of the United States Constitution. He was elected the fourth President of the United States.

ANDREW JACKSON
Tennessee Militia 1802-1813
U.S. President 1829-1837



A boy during the American Revolution, Andrew Jackson became a Major General of the Tennessee Militia. "Old Hickory" gained national fame as the commander of the militia and regulars against the British in the Battle of New Orleans. He was elected the seventh President of the United States.

WILLIAM HENRY HARRISON
Kentucky Militia 1798-1812
U.S. President 1841



The ninth President of the United States, Harrison served as a Major General during the War of 1812. His earlier defeat of Chief Tecumseh at the battle of Tippecanoe helped pave the way for settlement of America's frontier.

JOHN TYLER
Virginia Militia 1813
U.S. president 1841-1845



John Tyler joined the Virginia Militia during the War of 1812. As a Captain, Tyler and his militia joined the 52nd Regiment and helped defeat the advancing

British at Williamsburg. During his term as the 10th President, the United States annexed Texas.

JAMES K. POLK
Tennessee Militia 1821
U.S. President 1845-1848



In 1821, Polk was elected Captain and then Major of the Maury County Militia of Tennessee. But Polk's destiny was to serve his country and state as a politician; he was President during the Mexican War, which almost doubled the size of the U.S. territory. Polk was our country's 11th President.

FRANKLIN PIERCE
New Hampshire Militia 1831-1832
U.S. President 1853-1857



Our 14th President, Franklin Pierce served as a Brigadier General in the Army National Guard during the Mexican-American War. He fought bravely in many close actions and acquired a bullet hole in the brim of his hat.

JAMES BUCHANAN
Pennsylvania Militia 1814
U.S. President 1857-1861



Buchanan fought bravely with the Pennsylvania Militia during the War of 1812. He helped resist the British advance on Baltimore by volunteering for secret raids to supply the militia with horses. He became the 15th President of the US in 1856.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN
Illinois Militia 1832
U.S. President 1861-1865



Our 16th President, "Honest Abe" Lincoln was a young lawyer when he joined the militia during the Black Hawk War. One of the country's greatest Presidents, some

historians today argue that if Lincoln had not been President, the South might have won the Civil War.

ULYSSES S. GRANT
Illinois Militia 1861
U.S. President 1869-1877



Former Colonel of the 21st Illinois Volunteers, Grant's first Civil War victory over the Confederate Army came at Fort Donelson, Tennessee, in 1862. Appointed by President Lincoln as Commander of the Army of the Potomac, Grant defeated the Army of Northern Virginia and accepted Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Virginia. Grant was our 18th President.

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES
Ohio Militia 1861-1864
U.S. President 1877-1881



Hayes fought many battles during the Civil War and was promoted to the rank of Brevet Major General in the 23rd Ohio Infantry. Although he accepted a nomination to Congress while still an officer, he refused to campaign, explaining "an officer fit for duty would abandon his post to electioneer... ought to be scalped." In 1877, Hayes gained the Presidency by a margin of only one electoral vote.

JAMES GARFIELD
Ohio Militia 1861-1863
U.S. President March 4, 1881 - September 19, 1881



In 1862, after taking part in important Union military victories at Middle Creek, Shiloh and Chickamauga, Garfield was

promoted to Brigadier General. He was re-elected to Congress for 18 years before becoming the 20th President of the United States.

CHESTER A. ARTHUR
New York State Militia 1861
U.S. President 1881-1885



The 21st President of the United States, Chester Arthur earned a reputation for honesty and government reform. As Quartermaster General of the New York State Militia, Arthur was noted for having organized, equipped and sent to war 68 regiments of infantry, two battalions of cavalry and four artillery battalions in four months.

BENJAMIN HARRISON
Indiana Militia 1862-1865
U.S. President 1889-1893



Benjamin Harrison formed the 70th Indiana Infantry, which fought in the Civil War. After joining forces with General Sherman, Harrison helped storm the Confederate army at Durham's Station, North Carolina. The grandson of the ninth President, W.H. Harrison, Benjamin Harrison became the 23rd President of the U.S. in 1888.

WILLIAM MCKINLEY
Virginia Militia 1861
U.S. President 1897-1901



McKinley enlisted in the militia as a Private when the Civil War began. He experienced many victories and left military service as a major. During McKinley's term as the 25th President of the United States, he presided over the annexation of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam and the Philippines during the Spanish American War.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT
New York National Guard 1882-1886
U.S. President 1901-1909



During the Spanish-American War, Colonel "Teddy" Roosevelt and his volunteer cavalry, the "Rough Riders" (officially the First U.S. Volunteer Cavalry), captured Kettle Hill and helped force the Spanish to surrender in Cuba. As President, he preserved much of America's forests and wildlife. The "Teddy Bear" got its name from our 26th President.

HARRY S. TRUMAN
Missouri National Guard 1905-1906 & 1917
U.S. President 1945-1953



Harry Truman served as a Captain of an artillery battery during World War I. As 33rd President of the United States, Truman made some of the most important decisions of the 20th century. He brought World War II to an end with the use of atomic weapons. He also presided over the Korean War and negotiated the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

GEORGE W. BUSH
National Guard 1968-1973
U.S. President 2001-



George W. Bush is the 43rd President of the United States, the 19th President to have served in the Guard or Militia, and the first President who served in the Air National Guard. In 1975, he received a Masters degree in business from Harvard University. Bush piloted F-102 fighter jets with the 147th Fighter Group, based in Houston, Texas.

FROM PRESIDENT GEORGE WASHINGTON TO PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH, NINETEEN PRESIDENTS HAVE SERVED WITH HONOR AND DISTINCTION IN THE GUARD.

GX hits the slopes with an early season sugar buzz.

by Chris Davis

sweet!



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Thanks to Sugar Mountain for hosting GX. We enjoyed the experience and appreciate the hospitality ... especially the Ski Patrol.

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Five-Day Boarding School

We've talked gear and we've talked geography, now let's talk time. Here is the ideal five-day scenario for you beginners out there.

Day 1: Expose
Get to know the board. Get to know the snow. Get to know the board on the snow. It's way too early to try to look cool, because you won't.

Day 2: Recoup
Heal, sit, relax, ice, heat, massage, and recover. Your body will tell you how to spend day two.

Day 3: Return
Get back out, focus on riding technique, go toeside, go heelside, go toeside to heelside to toeside again. (It's called carving.)

Day 4: Play
With exposure and technique in your bag, go have fun. Connect your turns, go fast, try to do a little jump, and most impressively don't bust everytime you get off the lift.

Day 5: Impress
You're no pro, but you should be comfortable enough to try some tougher runs, ride a little faster, and wave at the pretty girls (or boys) on the lifts while simultaneously not slamming into stationary objects. Mom would be so proud.

LET IT RIDE

A good ride starts with the right gear. While almost anything you need can be rented from the slope, if you are planning on several trips or a new lifestyle, here is what you'll need.

The foundation of your setup is the board (intuitive enough). Follow the rule of chin: if the board, standing on end, stops somewhere between your chin and your nose, it's your size. The longer boards are gonna ride faster, smoother, and are a must in deep powder. Your smaller boards are more nimble and make for better terrain park and halfpipe companions.



Burton Feelgood Board

The pros would argue the binding is as important as the board. Are you a pro? No. Neither am I, so let's talk non-pro here—find a strong binding. Mind its material (is it plastic or carbon fiber) and construction (is it rickety or sturdy when you move your boot). A busted toe-strap at the top of a double black diamond is about as fun as it sounds. Take our advice, or you'll learn what that means first-hand—again, not fun.



Burton Lexa and C60 Bindings

The items that you should go pro on are the boots—the intermediary between you, the snow, the speed and the force. Think warmth, dryness and comfort. Not all boots are the same. If you have \$600 to spend on a set up, spend \$300 of it on a good pair of boots. (Just suck it up and tell yourself you'll wear them to your next formal.)



Burton Emerald and Shaun White Boots



FANTASTIC!

Let's all put our hands together and clap for Jake Burton for making all this possible... or at least for the sport and the gear you see here. Of course Burton is known for its boards, boots, and bindings, but check out some other must-haves:

www.burton.com



ELEMENT JACKET \$149.95
WHAT WE ♥:
 >> warm, but not bulky
 >> a lot of secure pockets
WHAT WE x:
 >> the elastic waist band pulls on clothing

ANON ANAGRAM GOGGLES \$89.95
WHAT WE ♥:
 >> durable: no scratches even with plenty of opportunities
 >> no moisture build-up inside
 >> fit well around the face
 >> comfortable

PROFILE GLOVES \$39.95
WHAT WE ♥:
 >> warm
 >> the attached interior lining
 >> drew tight around the wrists



RU DOWN JACKET \$299.95
WHAT WE ♥:
 >> really warm
 >> the easily accessible waterproof ID pocket
 >> flexible, easy to move
WHAT WE x:
 >> the hood fur froze and poked us in the eye
 >> we wish the mesh pocket were more like the waterproof ID pocket
 >> the elastic waist band pulls on clothing

METRO INSULATED PANT \$189.95
WHAT WE ♥:
 >> flattering cut
 >> fit well over boot
 >> really warm
 >> waterproof inside
 >> flexible, easy to move
WHAT WE x:
 >> the ineffective velcro to tighten or loosen the leg

INSULATED CARGO PANT \$179.95
WHAT WE ♥:
 >> warm
 >> breathable
 >> good flexibility, easy to move and perform jumps
 >> the special pockets
WHAT WE x:
 >> the obsolete side zippers

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POP FILMS

GX FAVORITES OF 2004

OUR PICKS FOR THE BEST FROM HOLLYWOOD IN 2004



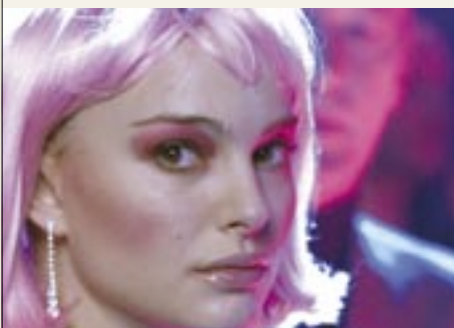
PERFORMANCES

JAMIE FOXX (Ray, Collateral)
 NATALIE PORTMAN (Garden State, Closer)
 JIM CAVIEZEL (The Passion of the Christ)
 CATE BLANCHETT (The Aviator)
 JOHNNY DEPP (Finding Neverland)
 TOM HANKS (The Terminal, Polar Express)
 JUDE LAW (Sky Captain and the World of Tomorrow, I Heart Huckabees)
 KATE WINSLET (Finding Neverland, Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind)
 LEONARDO DiCAPRIO (The Aviator)
 JIM CARREY (Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind)



MOVIES

THE AVIATOR Miramax Films
 COLLATERAL Dreamworks Dist. LLC
 HARRY POTTER AND THE PRISONER OF AZKABAN Warner Brothers Pictures
 NATIONAL TREASURE Buena Vista Pictures
 OCEAN'S TWELVE Warner Brothers Pictures
 THE PASSION OF THE CHRIST Newmarket Film Group
 RAY Universal Pictures
 SHREK 2 Dreamworks Dist. LLC
 SKY CAPTAIN AND THE WORLD OF TOMORROW Paramount Pictures
 SPIDER-MAN 2 Columbia Pictures



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FAMILY

THE INCREDIBLES Buena Vista Pictures
 MIRACLE Buena Vista Pictures
 SHARK TALE Dreamworks Dist. LLC

THE WORST MOVIES OF THE YEAR

JERSEY GIRL Miramax Films
 PAPARAZZI 20th Century Fox Film Corp.
 TORQUE Warner Brothers Pictures



INDIES

GARDEN STATE Fox Searchlight Pictures
 NAPOLEON DYNAMITE Fox Searchlight Pictures
 ETERNAL SUNSHINE OF THE SPOTLESS MIND Focus Features

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Gordon and his crowbar are back! Although it's been six years, we were still glad to see them both.

This sequel had quite a legacy to live up to. The original Half-Life was one of those high-points in the evolution of an entire genre of games. For the first time in a first-person-shooter you encountered a computer enemy that used true squad tactics. Rather than lining up to await execution, the baddies would fan out, create overlapping fields of fire and flush you from your hidey-hole with a couple of well placed grenades.

HL2, while not the revolution that the original was, easily ranks as one of the best FPS of 2004. Picking up some years after the original, you are once again dropped into a story in progress as Gordon Freeman, the baddest theoretical physicist since Einstein laid out Oppenheimer late in the 7th (Eisenhower went to his grave swearing the Opp-inator took a dive). This time around you're in a 1984-like world laying waste to both classic monsters from the original and a healthy host of new villains.

While requiring a pretty robust system for top performance, the graphics are rich in detail and buttery smooth. The human models are eerily realistic. The audio also really steps up. The voice talent, atmospheric sounds, and weapon effects complete the experience admirably.

“Gravity Glove + Giant Circular Saw Blades = Hours of Fun.”

- The Brothers West

Probably the single most fun addition to the game is a new weapon, the Gravity Glove. Although it takes a little getting used to, this little beauty turns anything that isn't nailed down into a weapon. You suck items to you and then fling them violently. I won't go into detail but Gravity Glove + Giant Circular Saw Blades = Hours of Fun.

Finally, a camel spider repellent that works!

This game was HUGE fun, but we have a couple of complaints. First, amazingly, sections got a bit long. We enjoy shotgunning zombies as much as the next guy, but come on! After the 20th level it starts to get a little old. Consistently throughout the game we were bordering on burn-out by the time we moved to a new section.

Secondly, and this will only apply to people who are thinking about buying the game through Valve's online system "Steam"-DON'T DO IT! Buy this game, but for the love of all that's good and holy, buy the CD. We loved the idea, but slow, glitchy service; very little feedback and the complete inability to play without an internet connection make Steam infuriating. The loads between levels could stretch out endlessly and crashes were not unusual.

Don't let these little gripes deter you though, buy the CD version of the game: flinging drums of explosives, amazing physics and graphics to die for make this one well worth the price of admission.

SID MEIER'S PIRATES! LIVE THE LIFE



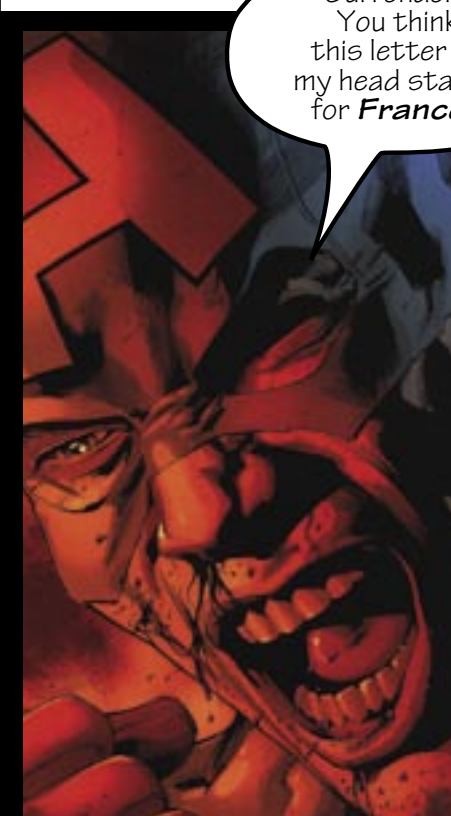
ABOVE: "Hello, my name is Inigo Montoya..."

We had such high hopes... This was a faithful recreation of an early 90s classic (yes, we're old, what of it?). To be honest, it was a little too faithful. Game play was an attractive re-skin of the original with only a few new mini-games. We enjoyed this game, we just expected more from our hero Sid Meier (Sid, dude, we're starting to worry)

Having said that, this is a fine family game. If you let your kids watch Pirates of the Caribbean you likely won't mind them playing this. With its light-hearted, cartoony take on the Golden Age of Piracy and open-ended game-play everyone can enjoy the

life of a scurvy sea-dog. The new board-game-like city assault was particularly fun with its use of terrain and different unit types. The sailing portion was more arcade game than laborious sim, which suited us just fine. From raking the poop-deck with grape shot to swinging across to duel with the enemy captain, combat was quick and entertaining.

So, ignore the grumpy old guys initial complaints, if you've ever dreamed of plundering the Spanish Main cough up a few of pieces of eight, buckle your swash, and hoist the Jolly Roger! **GX**



THE ULTIMATES

Vol. 1 Super Human, Vol. 2

By Mike Millar

Marvel is modernizing some of its classics, reframing the old myths for today's audience and a likely movie release. These are not your father's Avengers. Gone are the one dimensional boy-scout heroes. Taking their place are realistic, often dark characters each with their own identity and motivations depicted in a politically charged, convincing world. The Hulk's pure animalistic rage is a perfect counter-point to Bruce Banner's quiet desperation. Captain America redefines righteous fury. The pre-casting of Samuel L. Jackson as Nick Fury is a move, of which, we heartily approve. While this PG-13 rated comic book may not be appropriate for younger readers, we heartily recommend it to new and returning adult fans of the Avengers. **GX**

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THE 278TH



The Tennessee Volunteers are once again living up to their proud heritage of over 200 years of unwavering service to our nation. The 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR), whose forebears earned Tennessee its nickname as "The Volunteer State," began activating on June 7, 2004. This enhanced ACR, the only one of its kind in the Guard (and one of only two in the Army) began six months of intense training preparing for deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Reorganized as the 278th Regimental Combat Team for the duration of their current mission, the unit has become a part of Task Force Liberty with responsibility for the cities of Tuz, Khanaqin, Balad Ruz, Jalula and Mandali and a section of the Iraqi/Iranian border (some soldiers have been attached to active duty units).

Although they anticipate 12 months boots-on-ground in Iraq, according to CPT Minhledorff, "the unit has not yet received re-deployment orders, and will be here until the Army sends us home." **GX**

TOP: Men of the 278th on patrol in Iraq BOTTOM: The University of Tennessee Volunteers (Vols) draw their nickname from Tennesseans' tradition of answering duty's call. During football season, you'll see UT's orange and white as much as olive and khaki around the men and women of the 278th. Photos by SSG Russell Lee Klika

GEAR

M-1 ABRAMS

The M1 Abrams Main Battle Tank (MBT) is the backbone of the armored forces of the United States military. The purpose of this vehicle is to provide mobile firepower for armored formations of sufficient capability to successfully close with and destroy any opposing armored fighting vehicle in the world, while providing protection for its crew in any conceivable combat environment. It is capable of engaging the enemy in any weather, day or night on the multi-dimensional, non-linear battlefield using its firepower, maneuver, and shock effect.



BRADLEY

The mission of the Bradley Fighting Vehicle (BFV) is to provide mobile protected transport of an infantry squad to critical points on the battlefield and to perform cavalry scout missions. The Bradley Fighting Vehicle is a fully armored, fully tracked vehicle designed to carry Mechanized Infantry into close contact with the enemy. It possesses sufficient cross-country mobility to keep up with the Abrams Main Battle Tank, medium-and long-range firepower capable of defeating any vehicle on the battlefield, and is adequately armored to protect the crew from artillery and small arms threats.



M109

The M109 series howitzer is a vehicle that provides armored combat support, is air transportable, internally loaded, and has excellent ground mobility. It allows firing in a 360-degree circle through its primary armament, the 155mm cannon assembly, and its secondary armament, the M2 heavy barrel caliber 50 machine gun. The system is capable of both direct (line of sight) and indirect (out of the line of sight) firing.



RIGHT: The 278th Armored Cavalry shoulder patch was derived from the three white stars on the flag of the State of Tennessee which represent that Tennessee was the third state to join the Union after the original 13 colonies. The blue divisions allude to the Tennessee, Holston, and French Broad Rivers.



It was the fall of 1780 and Colonel John Sevier needed to raise an army quickly. The revolution was not going well. Major General Charles Cornwallis had just captured Charlotte, NC and now had a clear path to take Virginia.

To guard Cornwallis' left flank as he pushed north, Major Patrick Ferguson was waging a war of intimidation on the people of the Blue Ridge mountains. Ferguson was counting on fear to keep the populace from helping the rebels.

Sevier looked over the backwoods people assembled. Known as the Over Mountain Men, they had largely sat out the war.

Colonel Sevier spoke: "Give me 100 good men." What happened next would set Tennessee's reputation in stone: "I volunteer, sir!"

One after another, the men stepped forward. Two hundred and forty men volunteered to carry the fight to Ferguson.

The Over Mountain Men joined up with other militias and made a 30-mile dash to catch Ferguson at King's Mountain, SC.

Major Ferguson had staked out the higher ground in anticipation of an attack. He was counting on the superior position from which to fire on the rebel troops. He did not count on the Over Mountain Men. After only an hour, the Patriots had overwhelmed the Loyalist troops, and Major Ferguson lay dead on the battlefield.

The loss effectively ended the British advance into Virginia. The break allowed the American Army to regroup. A little over a year later, Washington accepted Cornwallis' surrender at Yorktown.

The men and women of the 278th, with units from East and Middle Tennessee, are the descendants of the Over Mountain Men of the Revolutionary War. When America called, these men and women answered with,

"I VOLUNTEER, SIR!"

"I Volunteer, Sir!"

- motto of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment

Murphy's Laws of Combat

1. Incoming fire has the right of way.
2. Teamwork is essential. It gives them someone else to shoot at.
3. Things that must be together to work usually can't be shipped together.
4. Never draw fire, it irritates everyone around you.
5. When you have secured an area, don't forget to tell the enemy.

Your Family Might Be Too HOOAH If...

1. Your wife's two favorite shades of lipstick are light green and loam.
2. You go to a barbecue and insist that your family feed in a tactical chow line at five meter intervals
3. Your son calls his mother "Household 6."
4. Your daughter's first haircut was a flattop.
5. Your newborn's first words were "all OK Jumpmaster."

Artillerymen know of two types of people. One type is other artillerymen and the second type is targets.

WORD SPY www.wordspy.com



velocitize

(vuh.LAWS.i.tyz) v. To cause a person to become used to a fast speed.
—velocitization n.

meanderthal

(mee.AN.dur.thawl; th as in thin) n. A person who walks particularly slowly and aimlessly.

darknet

n. The collection of networks and other technologies that enable people to illegally share copyrighted digital files with little or no fear of detection.
Also: Darknet.



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