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THE GUARD EXP

VOLUME THREE ISSUE TWO
MAR/APR 2006

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Letter from Leadership

Fellow Citizen-Soldiers,

As we begin the New Year, I want to offer my praise and congratulations to all our members of the Army National Guard. Your service has been exemplary, necessary and relevant while our country and our Army continue to fight the war on terror.

In particular, as the commander of the Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division, I want to express my appreciation to the more than 12,000 Army Guard Soldiers who served with the 42nd Infantry Division Headquarters in North Central Iraq during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 42nd Division headed up Task Force Liberty, a unique and diverse organization. Citizen-Soldier skills became a vital part in meeting our mission requirements. We took those civilian skills from Main Street America and leveraged them to better succeed on this asymmetrical battlefield. Our Soldiers walked the line between hard-nosed combat and nation building—I liked to call them balanced warriors!

These skills in our Citizen-Soldiers were visible throughout AO Liberty (MND-NC). We had law enforcement officers partnering with Iraqi counterparts in Samarra and Baqubah, a financial advisor helping to create a business center in Kirkuk, and civil engineers lending assistance in rural villages near the Iranian border, just to name a few. The power and impact our Soldiers made in stabilizing Iraq have set the conditions for long-term success not just for our Coalition Forces, but also for our Iraqi Security Force partners and ultimately the Iraqi people.

National Guard units came to Task Force Liberty from more than twenty different states as well as Puerto Rico and American Samoa. Like the original 42nd Infantry Division of 1917 and World War I fame, our task force once again stretched across America like a rainbow.

Our task force Soldiers were infantrymen, armor crews, artillerymen, engineers, aviators and maintainers, intelligence analysts, communications specialists, logisticians and transporters, military police, healthcare professionals, and musicians. They were the 116th Brigade Combat Team, the 278th Regimental Combat Team, or the multitude of forces in the division's 42nd Aviation Brigade, Engineer Brigade, or Division Support Command. They made up more than half of our entire divisional task force and their skills made a difference.

In the year that the 42nd Division led operations in North Central Iraq, Task Force Liberty Soldiers successfully fought the insurgency, trained, coached and equipped two Iraqi army division headquarters, including five brigade headquarters and 18 Iraqi army battalions, and helped rebuild and secure critical Iraqi infrastructure.

I wish I could share with you what I saw these Citizen-Soldiers do, day in and day out, in the country of Iraq. It was magnificent and inspirational. We all have a right to be proud of our Army National Guard Soldiers. What they accomplished is unparalleled in the history of the Army National Guard.

We helped to give the people of North Central Iraq a voice in their new government and [the opportunity to] decide their future for themselves. Our mission succeeded in protecting the emerging democratic process while preparing Iraqis to take full security control in the weeks and months ahead. We made a difference in Iraq.



MG JOSEPH J. TALUTO
Commander
42nd Infantry Division

In late January, Governor George E. Pataki appointed MG Taluto to the position of Adjutant General of the State of New York.

The 42nd Division, like so many other National Guard forces, has covered the entire spectrum of our nation's needs. From Iraq and Afghanistan to Kuwait and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, from Sinai Peacekeeping to homeland security, Rainbow Soldiers have been serving their State and Country. National Guard Soldiers have demonstrated, once again, their value to the defense of our nation.

In total, the Army National Guard receives only about five percent of the defense budget and ten percent of the entire Army budget. Yet we provide some 38 percent of the Army manpower and about half of all of the Army's infantry battalions or combat forces. As has been stated many times in the past, Americans get the biggest bang for their buck with the National Guard!

I cannot end without saying how proud I am of Task Force Liberty families. Their love and support gave us strength. The sacrifice of all military families is great. Our Guard families have grown closer and become more prominent during this time of war. It needs to stay that way. Families must remain an integral part in everything the Guard does.

Time and again, each and every one of you have demonstrated the relevance, readiness and reliability of our Army National Guard. From Homeland Security at our nation's borders, airports or disaster sites to combat operations in the sands of Iraq and mountains of Afghanistan, the Guard is the force that gets the job done. For that effort and for that success, I thank you all.

Rainbow, Never Forget!
Maj. Gen. Joseph J. Taluto
Commander
42nd Infantry Division



From Iraq and Afghanistan to Kuwait and Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, from Sinai Peacekeeping to homeland security, 42nd Rainbow Soldiers have been serving their State and Country.



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No Guard Cuts

It was with great relief that we learned that despite initial media reports, the President and the Department of Defense have no intention of cutting the number of National Guard Soldiers.

During a Jan 18 press conference, Army Secretary Francis J. Harvey commented on the Quadrennial Defense Review and the plans contained therein to transform the Army National Guard. These comments were widely interpreted to mean that the number of brigades and number of Guard Soldiers were to be lowered.

What followed, predictably, was a great outcry from every corner of the nation. The nation's Governors, many Senators and Members of the House of Representatives quickly stepped forward to express strong opposition to the idea of cutting any Guard Forces. Given the extensive employment of the Guard in fighting the Global War on Terror and the massive efforts by Citizen-Soldiers in response to recent natural disasters, it seemed absurd to suggest that we needed fewer Guard Soldiers.

Fortunately, on Feb 2 GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff clarified the Army's position: "To be clear, we have no intention of cutting the number of Guard or Reserve brigades, reducing the number of Guard or Reserve Soldiers or cutting the level of Guard or Reserve funding . . . The Guard will remain at 106 brigades, 28 brigade combat teams and 78 support brigades of varying types . . . The only thing that will change is the mix of these components and the mix of units."

The National Guard alone has budgeted \$21 billion for equipment modernization from 2001 to 2005—a fourfold increase from the 1999 period.

Unlike so many people in general public, we here at GX have the good fortune of knowing about the amazing breadth and depth of work that the Guard does improving the lives of Americans at home and carrying the light of freedom to some of the darkest corners of the world. With this knowledge, the thought that anyone might even consider the notion of fewer Guard Soldiers was frankly shocking to us. We were glad to learn how many people in power felt the same way and that in the end, it had all been a protracted misunderstanding.

The GX Team

(source: American Forces Press Service, Donna Miles)



ON THE COVER

SPC Brandi Christian's smile belies the intensity that is growing on the training grounds of the 1/34th, as deployment draws closer.

A member of Golf Company, 134 BSB, SPC Christian hails from Pipestone, MN—one of sixteen states represented in the Red Bulls' constituency.

Check out all of the action on pg. 54.

PHOTO BY CHRIS WEST

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

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“Wow” is about all I can think of when it comes to this wonderful organization, but also WOW to your magazine

CORRECTION

I was reading your *GX* Jan/Feb 2006 issue and in the last pages of your magazine is a story/comic about medic who was awarded the Medal of Honor. The unit you wrote down was 223rd 4th INF Div. The correct unit should be 223rd 40th INF Div not the 4th.

Thank you,

*SGT Rowley, Stephen
223rd INF REG (RTI)
Camp San Luis Obispo, CA*

PROUD GUARD MOM AND WIFE

I'm sure our story is not unique and there are many that could probably tell you the same, but it is special to us.

Ben joined the Iowa National Guard in January 2003 and was proud to be serving his country with his father, who has been a member for twenty eight years. My husband left for a peacekeeping mission to Egypt in May of 2003 and returned in January the following year. He made his promotion to 1SG in May of 2004. A couple of more years in the Guard and he could retire. Guess in my mind, I couldn't imagine another deployment.

In the fall of 2004, I was diagnosed with breast cancer and had only been finished with the chemo and radiation for a month, or so, when his deployment news came in. I had yet to receive a clean bill of health, so Chuck decided he needed to be here with me. It was not all that easy and he still continues to struggle with the decision. It literally breaks his heart to see his men and his own son go without him.

Before the deployment, Ben and his fiance decided to marry, then three days before he left, found out they would be expecting their

first child. His expecting wife is now living here with us and going to college, so we have much to look forward to and keep our minds busy while Ben is away. We will visit him one more times before they ship out, and that will be the hardest goodbye yet. Thank God we had the holidays together and made the best of them, with many family pictures of Grandpa, Dad and Ben in their uniforms. Our time together with our three sons and their girls was precious.

You may have heard about the campaign in this area to bring the Soldiers “Home for the Holidays.” Many people and businesses made donations and raised enough to cover the costs to bring the Soldiers home through a local bus company, Bradley Jo Charters. They played a large role in getting donations of food and drinks for the trip back. I am part of our FRG committee and was honored to be involved. Many parents and friends also helped. Our community and local cities are behind these Soldiers and their families 100%, and we appreciate their support so much.

The campaign only ran two weeks, and they brought our Soldiers home for the holidays. It was such a special occasion since they won't be here next year. We anxiously await each publication of *GX* to hear about their mission.

*Be safe yourself and God bless you,
Mrs. Kueter*

CITIZEN SOLDIER FAMILY SUPPORT FOUNDATION CSFSF

I wanted to share a success story with you and we have YOU to thank for it as well.

My name is Deanna Cole and I am the wife of SFC Shane Ross Cole. He serves in the PAARNG and is currently deployed in Iraq with the 2/28th BCT as the Brigade RRNCO.

I work as a Family Assistance Coordinator in the Washington, PA FAC office, 2BDE HQ. Two weeks ago I got a call from one of our family members that they lost everything in an early morning apartment fire. Her Soldier was in Iraq and we were scrambling to find resources to help them get back on their feet. After I had put the email out to inform the unit that we were collecting donations for this family . . . I received a response email from my husband.

He says, “Deanna, I just read about Citizen Soldier Family Support Foundation in one of the *GX* magazines and I think you should give them a call. They sound like they can help that family out.”

So I did and spoke to Molly Johnson, the CSFSF founder. Not only did she help a little, but she helped a lot.

Mrs. Johnson arranged a seven day extension at the family's hotel, paid the deposit towards a new apartment AND the first month's rent. CSFSF gave them an \$800.00 gift registry for Walmart AND gave them a \$4500.00 furniture voucher. The whole process was user friendly and fast!

“Wow” is about all I can think of when it comes to this wonderful organization, but also WOW to your magazine. I went to our recruiter's office here and found two copies of *GX* magazine to look at and I am VERY pleased with its contents! Keep up the great work!

Sincerely,

Deanna Cole, Washington, PA

GO RED BULLS!

Hi, my name is Teresa Keane, and my husband is currently a part of the 1/34th mission. I wanted to say how wonderful I think your articles are, and my sons and I are looking forward to reading them throughout the mission. I think being able to read about what they are doing will help ease the pain of separation. You are making a connection that we wouldn't have otherwise.

Thank you so much for the support you are giving the 1/34th!!

Sincerely,

Teresa Keane

My son is an LTC in the Red Bulls, and I am so happy to be offered this chance to follow the brigade with your eletter [*GX Intel* from *GXonline.com*]. Thanks so very much!—*Judy Kerska*

Running with the Red Bulls is a terrific project! I am the CSM for 2D BCT 34ID, the sister BDE to the unit you are highlighting. 1-133IN, which is attached to 1/34 BCT is one of my BNs, so the articles are especially interesting to me. Thanks for the great job you are doing!—*CSM James McEntaffer, 2D BCT 34ID IAARNG, Command Sergeant Major*

Thanks for your support and decision to highlight the Red Bulls. As a recruiter, the information helps me show prospective members a better picture of what the Army National Guard is all about.—*Timothy Richards*



ARKANSAS HERO EARNS SILVER STAR

By SGT Rick Fahr
119th Mobile PA Detachment, ARARNG

SEARCY, AR—The scene was reminiscent of an action movie, but the situation 1LT Michael McCarty found himself in was real, and it was dire. It was in Baghdad, Iraq, November 20, 2004. 1LT McCarty's platoon was serving as a quick reaction force for elements of the ARARNG's 39th BCT. An insurgent attack on a nearby Iraqi police station forced 1LT McCarty to lead his platoon into action.

As the troops neared the station, they found themselves outnumbered by insurgents armed with rocket-propelled grenades, machine guns and small arms. A suicide car bomber stormed the platoon's convoy, detonating the vehicle twenty feet from one of its gunships, injuring two of 1LT McCarty's troops.

Springing into action, the lieutenant evacuated the wounded troops and quickly returned to the battle. What he found was approximately seventy-five insurgents facing his two dozen Guard Soldiers.

At that moment, an armor-piercing rocket-propelled grenade struck the lieutenant's vehicle, incapacitating the driver, gunner and radio operator. 1LT McCarty was the only conscious person in the vehicle as it rolled out of control. As it continued to roll, 1LT McCarty saw a three-man machine gun team taking dead aim at his troops. From fifty feet away, that machine gun could wipe out what remained of the platoon. 1LT McCarty's training took over.

"I did what I do best. I got out and closed with the enemy and destroyed them," said 1LT McCarty.

The 26-year-old lieutenant took out the machinegunners single-handedly and exposed himself to fire in order to draw out insurgent targets. Without regard to his personal safety, 1LT McCarty directed ammunition resupply movements and evacuated casualties, while taking the fight to the enemy. At the end of the battle, 1LT McCarty and his troops had killed at least thirty insurgents, thanks in large part to the lieutenant's quick, decisive and courageous actions. Those actions earned him the Silver Star, the nation's third-highest combat honor.

CROWS NEST Silver Star recipient, 1LT Michael McCarty, at 'Fort Apache,' Baghdad during the Jan. 30, 2005 elections



1LT McCarty was quick to praise all the members of his platoon. "Without teamwork, you are an individual, and individuals don't last long in combat," he commented.

The lieutenant was one of several troops of the 39th BCT honored during a ceremony at the headquarters of its 3rd Battalion, 153rd Infantry in Searcy, AR, on February 4. SGT Billy Hellums earned a Bronze Star with Valor, while four officers—2LTs Bryan Keiffer, John Irvin, Christopher Lawless and 1LT Travis Goodwin—each earned a Bronze Star for meritorious service. Purple Hearts were awarded to SPCs Christopher Burns, John McShane, Rodney Simpson and Craig Mitchell.

On hand to honor the troops was Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee. "Today with all of these awards, but especially with the Silver Star . . . what we truly were doing was recognizing that our nation was built on—the shoulders of people like this lieutenant," said Huckabee.

The governor, who recently returned from Iraq, added, "The footprint that the 39th

left in Iraq was immeasurable. Everywhere I went in Iraq, people said, 'Arkansas. Yep, that's where the 39th's from. What a great, great group of Soldiers!'"

COL Mike Ross, the current commander of the 39th, echoed the governor's statement, saying that a number of young officers matured rapidly in life-and-death situations. "To be thrown immediately into a combat environment, it was just amazing how they grew to be combat-effective leaders," he said. "This war in Iraq was not fought at the brigade level. It wasn't fought at the battalion level. It wasn't fought at the company level. It was fought at the platoon level."

The commander said the troops should serve as examples to all Guard personnel, stating, "It's all about training, and every day that you go to drill, you need to be thinking that you are training for combat." **GX**

CA GUARD BATTLES FLOODING, RESCUES CITIZENS

By Keith Kawasaki

CALIFORNIA—The mission was called in late Friday night, December 30th. By 0700 on Saturday morning, the California Army National Guard was already in full motion.

Torrential rain storms and flooding had spread across Northern California on the 30th and lasted throughout the New Year holiday. Guard Soldiers were mobilized in several areas of Northern California, however the Guernville area required the most attention.

SSG James Saleda, A Co. 579th Engineer Battalion, led the charge in Guernville, along the Russian River. A resident of Sonoma, SSG Saleda battled his way to the armory as soon as his call came in. “It took me 30 minutes to get out of this town, which would normally take me five or six minutes,” said SSG Saleda in a recent GX interview.

SSG Saleda’s team of just nine Soldiers (from A Co. and HHC) answered the call of California’s citizens with rapid speed,

expertise, and heroism for four days straight.

“We did 100+ evacuations,” said SSG Saleda. “We did stuff like getting the water technicians out to the pump houses . . . got the pumps turned on so they could refill their potable water so the town could have water. We put a Zodiac and firefighters in the back of five-ton [truck] and took them out to a structure fire that was completely surrounded by water. We did that two or three times.”

However, SSG Saleda is quick to pass the spotlight to local emergency responders. Evacuation and transportation operations were greatly assisted by the seamless integration of efforts made by Guard units with those of Northern California fire departments and police forces.

“They were great,” said SSG Saleda. “Anything they needed, my guys would volunteer to do. If we needed something, they were in the truck with us. We tried to keep one firefighter in each truck to keep the communications going. You know, because

we would be on a mission, and another one would come in. We’d just go from one mission to the other and to the other. Saturday and Sunday were just non-stop.”

Fire departments also provided billeting, food, and equipment for Guard Soldiers while they were assigned to their towns.

The C2 cell headed up by 579th Engineer Battalion’s SFC Don Cuneo, with the invaluable aid of SSG Russ Roberts and SSG Kevin Mandell, operated as an intermediary between the boots on the ground and command headquarters—a definite key player in the success of the overall mission.

“I could call SFC Cuneo and say, ‘Hey, I need this.’ And they’re calling every couple hours, ‘Hey, how’s everything going? What do you need?’ And these guys are manning the armory 24-7; they’re taking turns. And most of these guys are AGR’s who were on leave, but they came in and did it,” said SSG Saleda of the C2 cell.

The value of quick and effective communication cannot be understated. Without the rapid contact and interaction that the 579th received, the damage caused by this flood could have been much worse. However, in keeping with the centuries-old tradition of the Guard, our Soldiers were there—ready, willing and able. **GX**



HIGHER GROUND Sgt. Robert Williford, 579th Engineers, CAARNG, evacuates Michaela Sheppard and her dog in a high water rescue vehicle from Forestville, Calif.

NDARNG BRONZE STAR/ PURPLE HEART RECIPIENT LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

By SGT Jamie Kaiser
North Dakota Army National Guard
Additional info courtesy Shelle Michaels

BISMARCK, ND—Six surgeries and three months of physical therapy was the welcome home SGT Brandon Erickson (ret.), NDARNG, received after losing his lower right arm when his convoy was attacked in Iraq, July 2003.

The day started like any other, with a mission of delivering supplies to a river patrol. Because SGT Erickson had previously been on the route, he volunteered to ride with SPC Jon Fettig. Their convoy was approximately 30 miles north of Fallujah when an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded to the rear of SGT Erickson's Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT), lifting it off the ground. Insurgents exchanged volleys with the gun trucks immediately. An estimated nine to fourteen rocket propelled grenades (RPG's) were fired at the coalition troops and 6,000 rounds were exchanged. Meanwhile, CSM Kevin Remington, a former Green Beret who came to the National Guard in 1998 and was the NDARNG 957 Multi-Role Bridge rSG, arrived on foot to help SGT Erickson and SPC Fettig. The selflessness of CSM Remington helped to save the life of Erickson, but Fettig's wounds proved fatal.

SGT Erickson has made it clear that he does not regret joining the Army National Guard. SGT Erickson said, "The military can offer some great things. It changed me not only physically but mentally."

Most would imagine a life of hardship, trying to cope with the losses suffered that fateful day, but SGT Erickson has triumphed over such despair since returning home. SGT Erickson has set himself up for success, mainly due to his mental posture and the support he has received from his family and wife Dana. "Dana has helped more than she will ever know," said SGT Erickson.

When asked whether he believed that certain people are more inclined to survive dire situations and prosper after them, SGT Erickson said, "There are definitely people who are stronger than others. Training always helps, but I think it depends on what

your mindset is . . . [to] not only survive, but to recover and make things positive."

SGT Erickson is a surefire expert at making things positive. He is attending California State University, Fresno, where he is living with his wife and working towards an advanced degree in public administration. He intends to pursue a law degree and is interested in working as a prosecutor on the local or federal level.

SGT Erickson admits that he still does not know what compelled him to enlist in the North Dakota Army National Guard, but that doesn't make him any less inclined to return to service, "I really want to get back into uniform as a JAG, just to prove to myself that I can wear it again."

SGT Erickson was asked about the current state of affairs in Iraq. He made clear that we could not quit until our job is done, saying, "they asked us to do a job, and I think we should see it through to the end."

This reflects the attitude of most any Soldier but most especially that of SGT

Erickson. He is determined to make life better for himself and those around him, which translates into working hard to complete the goals he has set forth. In ten years, he wants to be more active in politics and see where that venture takes him.

SGT Erickson attributes the lessons learned during his Guard experience to his leadership, saying, "they really taught me some things for the future."

He credits CSM Kevin Remington with saving his life and says that CSM Remington can be summarized in one word: "wise." SGT Erickson further reveals that CSM Remington, "helped [me] just by observing him. He has genuine care for his troops. CSM Remington demands respect while returning it . . . he is grateful."

It appears that SGT Erickson has taken the guidance to heart and is now a role model for others. He is a true exemplifier of positive thinking, hard work, and gratefulness for what he has been granted. SGT Erickson described CSM Remington as the "Epitome of an NCO."

Those words can now easily be used to portray SGT Erickson himself. His discipline and positive approach to life should serve as motivation and guidance to all.

SGT Brandon Erickson was a member of the North Dakota Army National Guard assigned to the 957th Multi-Role Bridge Company out of Bismarck, ND. He was awarded the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for valor under fire. **GX**



SGT (RET.) BRANDON ERICKSON



BABY NOOR Mother says goodbye to child before the long journey to a U.S. hospital

eyes, and they were so wide and eager. It's no wonder why we have all grown so attached to her."

The opportunity to assist Baby Noor came during a routine operation termed a "cordon and knock," while Soldiers did their usual evaluation of conditions in the home. "When I saw Baby Noor and her condition, I felt the burden to take care of her, and I incorporated the more-than-eager Soldiers around me," said PFC Justin Donnelly, a 10th Mountain Division medic attached to the 121st Battalion. "I have always wanted to help others, and I joined the Army as a medic for that reason."

PFC Donnelly said he has seen and treated more Iraqi citizens than fellow Soldiers. "As a medic, I have the desire and the mission to help anyone, whether American or Iraqi citizens," said PFC Donnelly. "When it comes to life and liberty, everyone deserves an equal chance, and that's what we wanted to give Baby Noor—a second chance at life."

PFC Donnelly discovered a tumor on the baby's back during the medical assessment. His compassion for the baby's apparent condition led him to show photos of her to his commanders. He appealed for an opportunity to follow through and obtain lifesaving medical assistance for the child.

"Many of the Soldiers are fathers themselves and sympathize with the suffering of any child," said PFC Donnelly. "We collectively decided this [Baby Noor] is going to be our project," said SFC Sonen.

There is no difference between the children of American Soldiers and the children of Iraq, and they all deserve the best chance in life. "The children are the future. These children will remember us and remember that we were here to help. If we do nothing else in our mission than save this baby's life, then we will have done enough for success."

CPT Compton recognized other humanitarian efforts Soldiers have undertaken during their tours of duty here. "Helping the Iraqi people through providing free clinics and other medical missions and health care has been an integral part of the Soldiers' mission from the beginning, and they have taken great pride in helping the people through hard times," said CPT Compton.

Baby Noor al-Zahra arrived in Atlanta on Jan. 1 on a military transport, accompanied by her father and grandmother. She underwent surgery performed by Atlanta Hospital's chief of pediatric neurosurgery, Dr. Roger Hudgins—free of charge, thanks to Children's Healthcare of Atlanta. The Associated Press reports she is recovering well following surgery. **GX**

SAVING "BABY NOOR"

By PFC Jason Jordan, 1/10th MTN DIV PAO
Courtesy of DVIDS

CAMP LIBERTY, IRAQ—American Soldiers' humanitarian actions following a routine search in the Abu Ghraib district of Baghdad brought a holiday miracle into the life of a family in the poverty-stricken village.

The Soldiers said they were "only doing their job" when they took steps to ensure prompt and expert medical care for a 3-month-old Iraqi girl suffering from the birth defect spina bifida.

Coalition Forces spend every day carrying out missions to rid Iraq of terrorists and help develop a free and democratic country in which the people can enjoy all of the benefits that freedom brings, said SFC Michael Sonen, platoon sergeant with

Company C, 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry Regiment, 48th Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.

The softer side to this difficult mission is the opportunity to offer humanitarian assistance, he added. "This is part of our mission. This is what we do," said SFC Sonen. "Every time we do a mission or a raid, we also do a thorough assessment of each home. We check for sewage, electricity, food and the medical problems of the families."

"Providing medical benefits to the Iraqi people is an enriching part of our mission," said CPT Keith Compton, pediatrician, 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry, 10th Mountain Division. "Baby Noor is an example of the good Soldiers are doing in the country," he said.

Recalling the day of the search, CPT Compton said, "I looked into Baby Noor's

2005 MILbloggies

MILBLOGS OF THE YEAR

TOP MILBLOG

"365 AND A WAKEUP"

ALL WINNERS

Top 100, Iraq Frontlines, and U.S. Army
365 and a Wakeup
<http://thunder6.typepad.com/>

U.S. Military Veteran
Blackfive
<http://www.blackfive.net/>

U.S. Marine Corps
One Marine's View
<http://shepherdaway.blogspot.com/>

U.S. Air Force
The Mudville Gazette
<http://www.mudvillegazette.com/>

U.S. Military Parent
Soldier's Mom
<http://somesoldiersmom.blogspot.com/>

U.S. Civilian
Soldier's Angel—Holly Aho
<http://sablogs.com/>

U.S. Navy
The Indepundit
<http://indepundit.com/>

U.S. Military Spouse
Air Force Family
<http://airforcefamily.blogspot.com/>

Afghanistan Frontlines
Firepower Forward
<http://bdelapla.typepad.com/firepowerforward/>

Foreign National
Universal Soldier
<http://universalsoldieruk.blogspot.com/>

Finalists
Michael Yon—Online Magazine
Ma Deuce Gunner
From My Position . . . On the way!
Wordsmith At War
Dr. Phat Tony's
Major K.
Sgt Hook—This We'll Defend
Froggy Ruminations
Dude, Where's the Beach?
Andi's World
Blog Them Out of the Stone Age
A Storm in Afghanistan



NEWFOUND FRIENDS
 (2005) CPT Bout with two
 Iraqi kids he helped and
 befriended

CA GUARD COMMANDER TOP MILBLOG AWARD WINNER

Courtesy of www.Milblogging.com

The Military Blogger community celebrated its first awards, known as “Milbloggies,” recognizing military bloggers and their contributions.

“I started the Milbloggies, not as a popularity contest, but to help spotlight the different types of military blogs on the internet—from frontline blogs written by Soldiers, Sailors, Air Force, and Marines to military spouses, parents, civilians and more.” said JP, manager of Milblogging.com and veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“There are lots of awards out there, but none that recognize all the different types of milblogs, and none certainly that recognize specifically those who blog from the frontlines of war.”

Milblogging.com lists exclusively military blogs. A blog is an online journal that is interactive with a public audience. To date, over 1,100 milblogs are listed in the Milblogging database in 20+ countries, with over 1,000 registered members participating in the 2005 Milbloggies.

This year’s top winner, CPT Danjel Bout (aka Thunder6) of 365 and a Wakeup won three categories: Iraq Frontlines, U.S. Army, and the overall best milblog in the Top 100. From his operating base in Iraq, CPT Bout, a Company Commander in the California Army National Guard (who has since returned home with his unit, the 1-184th Infantry Regiment), has helped to establish military blogs as a powerful source of information for

people all over the world. Telling the story of himself and his troops during his deployment to Iraq, he revealed the successes that were accomplished everyday.

“He writes a reality that no reporter could provide to people back home,” says JP.

When asked about his blog in a recent online interview, CPT Bout said, “My intent was never to change people’s opinion of the war. I just tried to give people a window into our time here in Baghdad, and let them draw their own conclusions. But apparently that was enough to change quite a few people’s opinions on our mission here in Iraq. I don’t think a day went by where someone didn’t send an email telling me that reading through the site gave them a completely different perspective on the situation in Iraq. The email that touched me most was written by a middle-aged man in Paris, who went from being (in his words) ‘a determined opponent of the American occupation’ to someone who wanted to do something to help the American Soldiers deployed to Iraq.”

The Milbloggies recognize a wide range of military blogs from military spouses, to soldiers’ parents, to civilians who blog about the military, to members of the foreign national military.

Something needs to be said of all the winners and finalists in the 2005 Milbloggies. They, along with all the other 1,100+ military bloggers listed in the Milblogging.com database, deserve to be recognized for sharing their personal stories, trials, and accomplishments. **GX**



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200TH ENGINEER BATTALION SAYS GOODBYE

ONE LAST GOODBYE The 200th Engineer Battalion rolls up its colors in a Transfer of Authority ceremony

By PFC Mark B. Matthews
27th Public Affairs Detachment
Courtesy of DVIDS

IRAQ—As operations in Iraq continue into a new year, many changes are expected. As the newly appointed Iraqi government forms and the streets continue to improve, some Soldiers' missions here are complete while others are just beginning.

At a Transfer of Authority ceremony, the reigns were handed over from the 200th Engineer Battalion to the 115th Engineer Battalion behind the Joint Visitors' Bureau on January 3rd.

Both battalions have very rich histories and have served in many other operations. The 200th ENG BN, a National Guard unit from Linden, AL, has served in Southwest

Asia, Saudi Arabia and in the Liberation and Defense of Kuwait Cease Fire.

The 115th ENG BN was constituted in 1920 and served in many campaigns world wide, including World War II, Bismarck- Archipelago, the Southern Philippines and Luzon.

The 200th has just done a terrific job . . . they have truly set the standard.

— LTC John P. Moore, incoming commander

they will miss the friendships they have established during the past year.

"We are all looking forward to going home, but at the same time we are a bit saddened because as we leave, we leave a lot of friends here," said LTC James E. Porter Jr., outgoing commander. "We have all shared anxieties

Since they arrived in Iraq in February 2005, the 200th ENG BN has had a very successful tour. Although they are all very excited to be going home,

and accomplishments together as well as having grown together as professionals."

The 200th ENG BN accomplished many missions during its time here. However, one achievement seems to stand out among all the others.

"The 200th ENG BN has trained over 200,000 Soldiers both here in Iraq and in Kuwait on explosive hazards awareness training," said COL William H. Haight III, Multi-National Corps—Iraq C7 director.

"These Soldiers were constantly on the road logging thousands of combat patrol hours in some of the most dangerous areas of Iraq and did so without a single death or serious incident."

As Soldiers from the 115th ENG BN move into position and prepare to take over the mission, they seem to understand that they all have some big shoes to fill.

"The 200th ENG BN has just done a terrific job," said LTC John P. Moore, incoming commander. "They have truly set the standard." **GX**

Note: PFC Mark B. Matthews is a print journalist assigned to the 27th Public Affairs Detachment, Fort Drum, NY, and is currently supporting Multi-National Corps Iraq.

NEW DEVICE WILL SENSE THROUGH CONCRETE WALLS

By Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Troops conducting urban operations soon will have the capabilities of superheroes, being able to sense through 12 inches of concrete to determine if someone is inside a building.

“The new ‘Radar Scope’ will give war fighters searching a building the ability to tell within seconds if someone is in the next room,” Edward Baranoski from the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency’s Special Projects Office told the American Forces Press Service. “By simply holding the portable, handheld device up to a wall, users will be able to detect movements as small as breathing.”

“The Radar Scope, developed by DARPA, is expected to be fielded to troops in Iraq as soon as this spring,” Baranoski said. “The device is likely to be fielded to the squad level, for use by troops going door-to-door in search of terrorists. The Radar Scope will give war fighters the capability to sense movement

through a foot of concrete and 50 feet beyond that into a room. It will bring to the fight what larger, commercially available motion detectors couldn’t.

“Weighing just a pound and a half, the Radar Scope will be about the size of a telephone handset and cost just about \$1,000, making it light enough for a Soldier to carry and inexpensive enough to be fielded widely. The Radar Scope will be waterproof and rugged, and will run on AA batteries.

“It may not change how four-man stacks go into a room [during clearing operations]. But as they go into a building, it can help them prioritize what rooms they go into. It will give them an extra degree of knowledge so they know if someone is inside,” Baranoski said.

Even as the organization hurries to get the devices to combat forces, DARPA is already laying groundwork for bigger plans that build on this technology. Proposals are expected this week for the new “Visi-building” technology that’s more than a motion detector. Baranoski continues, “It will actually ‘see’



SUPER SCOPE DARPA expects the portable Radar Scope to look similar to this model and to be fielded as soon as this spring

through multiple walls, penetrating entire buildings to show floor plans, locations of occupants and placement of materials such as weapons’ caches.

“It will give [troops] a lot of opportunity to stake out buildings and really see inside,” he said. “It will go a long way in extending their surveillance capabilities.” The device is expected to take several years to develop. “Ultimately, service members will be able to use it simply by driving or flying by the structure under surveillance.” **GX**

NC GUARD EFFORTS REDUCE IED THREAT IN IRAQ



By CPT Christopher T. Blais, 505th Engineer Battalion PAO

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, IRAQ—Soldiers from the 505th Engineer Battalion, North Carolina Army National Guard are conducting missions to reduce the emplacement of improvised explosive devices (IEDs) along critical U.S. Army supply routes in central and northern

NEEDLES IN A HAYSTACK Members of the 505th scour the desert floor for IED’s hidden beneath the sand.

Iraq. During recent operations, members of the 505th conducted repairs to the roads in an effort to reduce the recurrence of IEDs as well as to ensure that critical routes remain travel-worthy.

“Our battalion has been working throughout central and northern Iraq,” said LTC Matthew Russo, Commanding Officer of the 505th, “to help reduce the occurrence of IED attacks against Coalition Forces. During that time, our Citizen-Soldiers have filled countless potholes and IED craters that could have been used to conceal an IED. Road repair missions are just one of the many ways our Soldiers are making a difference every day that we are here.”

During this operation, there were no injuries to local Iraqi citizens or Coalition Forces. The 505th Engineer Battalion is headquartered in Gastonia, NC, and has armories in Gastonia, North Wilkesboro, Mooresville, Kings Mountain, Lexington, Mount Airy, Forest City, Taylorsville, Elkin, Charlotte and Mocksville. The 505th was mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in August 2005 and deployed in early October. **GX**

(TOP) DONNA MILES; (BOTTOM) NCARNG

TEEN SETS SIGHTS ON 2.6 MILLION THANKS

Courtesy of Army News Service and AmericaSupportsYou.mil

LOS ANGELES, CA—The Defense Department's America Supports You program and 16-year-old Shauna Fleming, founder of A Million Thanks, launched the "2.6 in 2006" letter-writing campaign on Jan. 1. The goal of the new campaign is to increase the number of thank-you letters sent to service members to 2.6 million—the total number of people in the armed forces, including the Guard and Reserve—with the bulk of the letters coming from school-aged children.

The initiative invites America's youth to make it their New Year's resolution to find ways to show their support for members of the U.S. Armed Forces and to start by sending a letter of thanks to a service member as part of the "2.6 in 2006" campaign. Officials with America Supports You, a program that highlights what Americans across the country are doing to support the military, will work closely with Fleming to help her reach her goal.

Fleming's A Million Thanks was the first organization to join America Supports You

in conjunction with its launch in November 2004. Fleming established A Million Thanks in May 2004 as a high school community service project to do something special for the troops.

She reached her initial goal of collecting a million letters in October 2004 and presented a framed copy of the millionth letter to President Bush in the Oval Office. After reaching the 1 million mark, Fleming set out to increase the number to 1.4 million letters—the number of active duty military members—and reached her second goal in November 2005.

"I'm very excited about working with the America Supports You program on the '2.6 in 2006' letter-writing campaign to reach out to America's youth," the Orange County, CA teenager said. "I've heard directly from service members who have received our letters, and I know firsthand how much they appreciate the program. Sending a letter provides school children a hands-on and productive way to show support for the troops."

Since starting her A Million Thanks campaign, Fleming has received support



A MILLION THANKS President Bush greets Shauna Fleming in the Oval Office on Nov. 17, 2004.

from celebrities such as country music artist John Michael Montgomery, who helped Shauna promote her campaign on the radio. Montgomery's No. 1 song "Letters From Home" also became the A Million Thanks theme song. Actor Gary Sinise, star of the hit television series CSI: NY and co-founder of Operation Iraqi Children, has also helped Shauna get the word out by doing television interviews with the teen. Shauna and her organization were also featured at two major NASCAR races. **GX**

www.AMillionThanks.org
www.AmericaSupportsYou.mil



Courtesy of OHARNG PAO

COLDWATER, OH—BG Matt Kambic, assistant adjutant general for the Army and commander of the 10,000 Soldier Ohio Army National Guard, presented the MaxPreps "Tour of Champions" Award to the Coldwater High School Cavaliers 2005 football team at a January 23rd pep rally.

The Cavaliers defeated Cardinal Mooney of Youngstown for the Ohio High School Athletic Association, Division Four, Football State Championship in December. Coldwater

OHARNG PRESENTS AWARD TO HIGH SCHOOL CHAMPS

capped their 15-0 season by finishing 15th nationally in MaxPreps power rankings system, which considers the top 100 high school football

teams in the country. MaxPreps and the Ohio Army National Guard were recognizing Coldwater as one of the top ten prep teams nationally.

MaxPreps is the most comprehensive source for high school sports information. Its web site, MaxPreps.com, is the first and only site to track every high school football team and game in the country. The Guard joined with MaxPreps in the spirit of recognizing the hard work, selfless sacrifice, and team work that goes into building winning teams.

"We recognize that building winning

teams is all about fostering a strong work ethic, building character, and creating a culture of winning that in the end says to the individual, "You want to be on our team," BG Kambic said. "Coldwater embodies that, and the Ohio Army National Guard is proud to recognize these great champions."

After the pep rally, BG Kambic singled out two Coldwater students, Travis Stromblad and Aaron Evers, who recently joined the Ohio Army National Guard. Calling them out of the stands and onto the main floor, BG Kambic presented each with his one-star coin of excellence for their commitment to serve community, state and nation. For joining the Guard, Stromblad and Evers will be eligible for the 100% Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program. **GX**

(TOP) WWW.AMILLIONTHANKS.ORG; (BOTTOM) OHARNG PAO

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Courtesy of CPT Cory Angell,
PAARNG PAO

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, PA—Seventeen Soldiers from across Pennsylvania graduated from the first Modern Army Combatives class held by the Pennsylvania National Guard in Dec. 2005. The course, based on Brazilian Jujitsu, has been in the Army for some time but is not widespread yet. It was developed because the Army's older hand-to-hand combat program lacked effectiveness. The Army needed something that could be taught easily and that encouraged competition.

"The Pennsylvania National Guard has been able to send a number of us to Fort Benning, GA, for combatives training," said SFC Jeffery Malloch of Coplay, PA. "This has enabled us to become proficient so that we can run our own Level One course."

The course is forty hours and physically demanding. Soldiers learn different fighting techniques and begin fighting each other over and over to gain proficiency.

"They gain their fair share of bruises during the course, but the most challenging event is the clinch drill," said SFC Malloch. The clinch drill is one in which the students have to close with and grip the instructor in a special hold that disables him from throwing punches. As the student advances on the instructor, the instructor will punch the student while wearing 16 oz. gloves.

"It's part of being a warrior," said SFC Malloch. "You have to [get] close with your enemy to win the fight."

The new graduates of the Level One Combatives course will take their skills into the Recruit Sustainment Program and teach new Soldiers who have just entered the Guard

1ST MODERN ARMY COMBATIVES CLASS FOR PAARNG



ROUND ONE
Soldiers train in the new hand-to-hand combat techniques based on Jujitsu

prior to basic training.

"It's amazing training," said PFC Tiffany Noll, one of two females in the class. "I have learned that it doesn't matter how big your opponent is. If you focus on the techniques, you can win the fight." **GX**

Anyone interested in free self-defense instruction can contact

SFC Jeffery Malloch at 601-972-9398.



1ST ARKANSAS MILITARY CROSSES AWARDED TO GUARD SOLDIERS

Courtesy of ARARNG PAO

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, NORTH LITTLE ROCK, AR—The Arkansas National Guard presented its first two Arkansas Military Cross Medals in honor of the heroic efforts of two of its Soldiers on February 5.

CPT Marshall Cooney, of North Little Rock, and 1SG Larry D. Robinson, of Bradford, placed themselves in harm's way on Oct. 29, 2004, when rescuing a woman trapped in an overturned car east of Prescott, AR. The men

pulled up to the vehicle while traveling east on Interstate 30. They immediately noticed the vehicle was smoking, and on fire, and rushed forward to find the injured female conscious and trapped inside. Disregarding the danger to themselves, not knowing if the vehicle might explode, CPT Cooney and 1SG Robinson pulled the woman from the car and removed her to a safe distance, staying with her until fire and rescue personnel arrived.

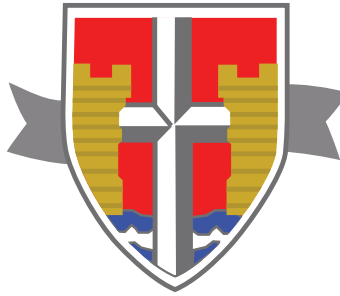
The Soldiers' immediate recognition of the situation and prompt action was instru-

mental in saving the woman from more serious injury or death. CPT Cooney and 1SG Robinson's readiness to put another's safety above their own speaks volumes about their characters, and the value of their service as Citizen-Soldiers of the Arkansas Guard.

The Arkansas Military Cross is awarded for conspicuous gallantry or extraordinary heroism, above and beyond the call of duty, to any person who is honorably serving in the Arkansas National Guard while in state or federal service, under state control. The individual receiving the award must have performed an act of heroism involving voluntary risk of life or limb, designed to protect the life of another person or persons or to accomplish a task or mission that would lessen a threat to the health and safety of others. **GX**

PUERTO RICO NATIONAL GUARD IN IRAQ

By SPC Anna-Marie Risner
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



FOB WARRIOR, IRAQ—With the increase in Reserve and National Guard mobilizations, many Guard Soldiers have found themselves pulled from their civilian lives to deployment in Iraq. For many, this has caused a lot of disruption back home—with Soldiers having to leave their jobs and put on hold their college education. But for one Puerto Rico National Guard unit, this disruption is just part of the job.

The 918th Military Police Company, originally Battery A, 1st Battalion, 162nd Artillery Regiment, deployed to Iraq last year and have been performing a number of jobs in the area.

Starting at FOB Danger, the unit's mission has included everything from convoy security to detainee transport. Soldiers assigned to 918th keep morale up throughout their many jobs by talking with each other and reflecting on their families and lives back home.

"As a leader, I need to keep their morale high," said MSG Juan Lopez. The Carolina, Puerto Rico, native said on his first trip to Iraq—during Operation Desert Storm—he would watch how leaders handled morale issues, and he tries to use some of those tactics now.

He added that when his Soldiers come to him with problems, he tries to look at all angles of the situation while helping them through difficult times. "It's never easy,"

said SPC Nestor Claudio, "but it's what we're trained to do."

The Caguas native put his forensics studies on hold to deploy with the unit. "Back home, I carry around [the periodic table of elements] and HE means helium . . . here, I carry around my Mark-19 and HE means high explosives."

Some Soldiers find solace in photos and memories of their families. SSG Jose Acevedo keeps a family picture on his desktop—a reminder of his wife and five children who eagerly await his return to Bayamon.

"They miss me a lot," he said. "They don't really understand . . . When I went home [on mid-tour leave] and I had to go back, they didn't want me to go."

He added that this deployment has been hardest on his three-year-old daughter. Many of his pictures show the little girl lovingly clinging to daddy's leg.

For these troops, Operation Iraqi Freedom is winding down, but for many more Soldiers, the year away from home is just beginning. Hopefully these Service members and the countless others receiving mobilization orders can take a cue from 918th members and survive on happy memories of those waiting back home. **GX**

AZARNG 855TH MP CO. RECEIVES "VALOROUS UNIT" AWARD

Courtesy of AZARNG PAO

FLORENCE, AZ—Soldiers from the Phoenix-based 855th Military Police Company were honored for their service to our nation on January 7th at the Arizona Army National Guard's Florence Military Range in Florence, AZ, where they were presented the Valorous Unit Award from the Department of the Army for their dedicated service while deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition to the unit award, fourteen unit members received the Combat Action Badge for their service in Iraq.

The 855th MP Co. also has a detachment in Yuma. While deployed, unit members established and operated two Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) Camps during the Major Combat Operations Phase of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

According to the Department of the Army's Commendation, The Valorous Unit Award is being conferred for service from 15 April 2003 to 5 November 2003 while assigned

to the 720th Military Police Battalion. In addition to establishing and operating the two EPW camps, the Guard members processed and safeguarded over 3,000 enemy prisoners during this time with zero escapes. At times, the unit was processing over 200 prisoners per day.

At the end of Major Combat Operations, the 855th MP Co. moved to Balad, Iraq, where the mission changed; here the Soldiers trained Iraqi Police and helped re-establish law and order in the region north of Baghdad. The unit also conducted numerous raids seizing a large amount of weapons that could have been used against U.S. Forces.

The unit returned to FT. Bliss, Texas, in March of 2004. On Sept. 4, 2005, the 855th MP Co. deployed to the Gulf Coast and returned Oct. 7. This unit was the first Arizona National Guard unit to deploy in support of



PROUD MOMENT MG David P. Rataczak presents the Valorous Unit Award to CPT Jon Cookson of the 855th Military Police Company.

Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. The 855th MP Co. also provided security at the 2002 Winter Olympics, Salt Lake City. **GX**



**Excerpts from “Thank You”
Letters sent by Service and family
members** (courtesy of Dee’s Nursery):

“My son Jeff, who volunteered for Iraq as a combat ground medic through his Air National Guard Unit, received some of your trees and was able to get them out to the troops even on the frontlines. The wounded Soldiers that pass through Jeff’s medical unit in Balad are especially appreciative of the Christmas trees, which certainly brighten their spirits. Your Christmas trees represent two major ideals to our troops: Faith and Freedom. We are blessed to live in the United States of America and are blessed to have businesses such as yours and DHL who support our troops and America’s faith and freedom in such a tangible way. And for touching an individual family; you have done much for us.”—*Father of an Air National Guard Service member*

“You should have seen the look on my face when the DHL guy told me he had twelve [trees] for me in the back of his truck. It really meant a lot to the guys, so many thanks. Everyone here said the same thing: how a real tree is a great touch and much better than an artificial one. No one can believe that real trees actually made it over here in the desert. Again, many thanks and a great idea.”—*Marine*

“Today was a great day for our unit. The 3rd Marine Aircraft Wing received your pallet of Christmas trees, ornaments, and lights. There is no way we can thank you enough. I know all the troops really appreciated it. It is already hard to be separated from home and loved ones, but during Christmastime, it is even more trying. Your trees really lifted our spirits. It is comforting to know that fine Americans like you continue to support our efforts over here.”—*Marine*

“From the bottom of my heart and from my home to yours and your colleagues, I thank you for everything you have done and wish you all a very healthy, safe, and happy holidays and may God bless you ALWAYS!”
—*Mother-in-law of a Service member*

NY COMMUNITY PULLS TOGETHER TO SUPPORT SOLDIERS

By Keith Kawasaki

OCEANSIDE, NY—“It means a lot to know people are thinking of us and haven’t forgotten. To be honest, we start to wonder sometimes what people are thinking when we watch the broadcast media from back home. Please tell everyone connected to this effort how grateful we are for their kindness and generosity. In my mind, people like you are what make America great and make it worth fighting for.”—CPT Cory L. Grabenbauer, Support Operations Officer, Army Field Support Battalion, Iraq; ‘thank you’ letter in response to NY initiative, December 2005.

In November of 2004, a woman walked into Dee’s Nursery, a garden center in Oceanside, NY. She said her son was serving in Iraq and asked if owner Tom DiDominica could send one of his Christmas trees to her son. DiDominica was happy to oblige and offered the tree free of charge if she could help find a way to ship it overseas. The woman, who did not leave her name, walked off and was never heard from again. Little did she know, she planted a seed that would harvest a massive community support effort for our Soldiers.

One year earlier, another customer had walked into Dee’s, purchasing a ton of Christmas decorations. “Finally we asked him, ‘what the heck are you doing with all this stuff?’” said Joe DiDominica, son of owner Tom DiDominica, in a December GX interview. The man, Jim Adelis, head of a security business for JFK International Airport, replied that his son was deploying, and he wanted to give

him a good Christmas before he left. The DiDominicas remembered Adelis, now a regular customer, when the mystery woman walked out of the store in 2004. They tossed the woman’s idea to him the first chance they had.

“We said, ‘We want to give you a tree to give to your son; do you have any idea how to get any there?’ So he said, ‘Let me talk to some of my friends, and I’ll get back to you.’ The next day, he calls back and asks, ‘How many trees do you have to send over?’ We had like seventy-five trees here, so we sent those seventy-five over, said Joe. It was huge, just the feedback we got, so we sent another seventy-five!”

Adelis had a contact with DHL, a worldwide shipping service that routinely flies into Iraq. The contact, Neil Moran, head of JFK operations for DHL, immediately took to the Christmas tree effort, and DHL donated all shipping services. Cathy O’Reilly of DHL handled all the logistics. Adelis also contacted MG Richard Colt of the U.S. Army Reserve



HOLIDAY CHEER One of the trees donated by Dee’s Nursery gets makeshift desert decorations.

77th Regional Readiness Command, who was eager to help. The Port Authorities of NY and NJ and area businesses soon all joined in, and by November 22 of 2004, the first shipment of Christmas trees, lights, decorations, steaks, Weber grills, and care packages arrived in Baghdad. One particular gift of note was that of LT Dan Carbonaro and Officer Mike DeFilippis of the NY Port Authority. The officers donated the Christmas tree lights from the World Trade Center.

Inspired by the enthusiastic response in '04, Dee's Nursery, along with Adelis and DHL, decided to do it again in '05.

"We started an organization called Citizens for Soldiers in Service. Because a lot of customers of ours wanted to get involved . . . the more money we got, the more stuff we were able to send," said Joe. "Between the money we received and what we were donating ourselves out of our farm, the total was 500 trees, plus all the lights. DHL called us maybe two weeks before and said, 'Get us 500 trees.' So, this year we had 1,000. And, it wasn't just us. There were so many other local businesses around here that got involved—Valley Stream Chevrolet donated a lot of money; Howland Construction down in Island Park donated a lot of money. And just people, customers, kept bringing stuff in."

On Dec. 6, 2005, the town held a send-off ceremony at Dee's Nursery, which was attended by Veterans from all branches of the military, local citizens and military families. Then, in a caravan of DHL trucks, seeming to stretch one-mile long, 1,000 Christmas trees, 4,000 boxes of lights and decorations, in addition to holiday cards from local schools, care packages from local church groups, and countless other goods traveled to JFK International Airport. Shortly after, the shipment touched down in Iraq. From there, it was divided and spread across the entire region, even to the most remote bases and locations.

"It was good," said Joe. "And we're going to keep doing it 'til they're back. The NY State Veterans Association and the NY Port Authority police each gave like 2,000 bucks this year—for next year!" **GX**

Dee's Nursery was founded in 1958 by Tom DiDominica and remains a vital family-owned and operated business in Oceanside, NY.

www.deesnursery.com
www.DHL.com

NE SOLDIER PRAISES EMPLOYER SUPPORT

By Rudi Williams
American Forces Press Service

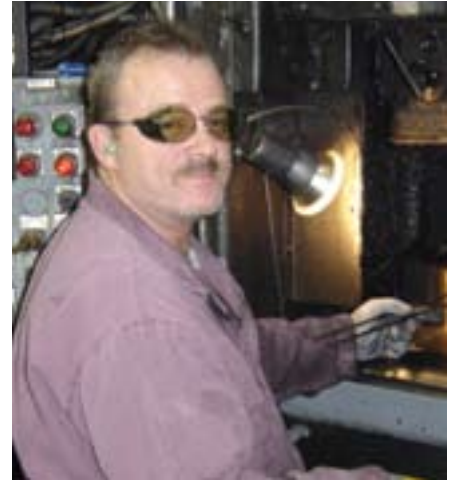
WASHINGTON, DC—SSG Mark L. Kniffen, 41, was overwhelmingly thankful for his employer paying his full salary, allowing him to keep his medical benefits and helping solve family crises for the fifteen months he was in Kuwait and Iraq supporting the war on terrorism.

When he returned home from the war, NEARNG SSG Kniffen decided to show his appreciation for what his employer did for him, and more than 100 other deployed National Guardsmen and Reservists. He composed a powerful, glowing nomination letter recommending Eaton Corp. for the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

And, to his surprise, the firm was selected as one of fifteen winners out of more than 4,000 nominations for the prestigious award.

"I was surprised that they won the award, but I figured that they had a pretty darn good chance," he said. "I don't think there's another company in the world that supports their employees as well as Eaton does. They paid us for 40 hours per week while we were gone, with no questions asked. We were also allowed to keep our insurance benefits."

Eaton, with more than 59,000 employees serving customers in more than 125 countries, currently has about 110 employees on active duty in the Guard and Reserve. Boasting sales of more than \$9.8 billion, the company has had more than 425 employees mobilized in the past four years, according to company officials.



PUBLIC APPRECIATION NEARNG SSG Mark L. Kniffen nominated his employer, Eaton Corp., for the Employer Support Freedom Award.

Not only did Eaton pay the Citizen-Soldiers' full salary and allow them to keep their medical benefits, the firm also put out boxes for employees to fill with personal items and goodies to send to the troops in Iraq.

"They also supported us with letters and e-mails," SSG Kniffen continued. "They supported our families back home by staying in touch with them, finding out how they were doing. If a crisis at home showed up, like somebody needing washers and dryers or a car fixed, [Eaton employees would attend to] the little things I couldn't do."

SSG Kniffen left for Iraq on March 22, 2004, and came back a year later. While in Iraq and Kuwait, he was a truck driver with the 734th Transportation Battalion (Motor Support) that was part of the 35th Infantry Division out of Missouri. He said his unit provided force protection in Kuwait and Iraq, which included distributing everything that came into or went out of those—from food to water to replacement parts.

The company was recognized in an October 2005 ceremony in Washington as one of America's most supportive employers of Servicemembers.

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award was established in 1996 to recognize outstanding efforts on the part of employers who support their National Guard and Reserve employees. **GX**

FAST FACTS

EMPLOYER SUPPORT

You can show your thanks to an outstanding employer by registering them on **www.esgr.org**.

KFOR 7

TEXAS GUARD

TAKES THE REIGNS

What is KFOR?

The Kosovo Force (KFOR) is a NATO-led international force whose objective is to establish and maintain a secure environment in Kosovo, including public safety and order; to monitor, verify and when necessary, enforce compliance with the agreements that ended the conflict; and to provide assistance to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

KFOR contingents are grouped into four multinational brigades. Although brigades are responsible for a specific area of operations, they all fall under a single chain of command under the authority of Commander KFOR. Task Force Falcon is the U.S. contribution to KFOR.

Located at Camp Bondsteel and Camp Montieth, the mission of Task Force Falcon is to provide support within capabilities to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and monitor, verify, and when necessary, enforce the Statement of Principles for the Kosovo Protection Corps and Former Republic of Yugoslavia forces' compliance with the Military Technical Agreement to enable the establishment of a stable environment.

Source: United States European Command

By BG Darren G. Owens
Commander 36th Infantry Division, KFOR 7

CAMP BONDSTEEL, KOSOVO—Howdy from Kosovo! We arrived here before Christmas and met with the Soldiers we are replacing, the 40th Infantry Division from the California National Guard. They have been good hosts and have helped us with our final preparations for taking over this mission. We were busy early in the year doing what we call a “Left Seat–Right Seat Ride.” That means that for the first week or two, the California Guard members showed us how they do business here in Kosovo. Then, we switched places and conducted operations while the other Soldiers stood by to help as needed. We also met with our NATO allies from Poland, Ukraine, Lithuania, Greece, Romania, and Armenia here and finally formed our whole team. Our units are now officially a part of “Multi-National Brigade East.”

The economy here in Kosovo is not good. Unemployment is extremely high. It is not uncommon to see folks traveling down the street in a horse-drawn wagon. They have been generally very friendly to us. They appreciate us for coming here and trying to make this a safer, better place. Each of our Soldiers has a job to do here. Some go out on patrol and look for criminals, extremists, and smugglers. Some work in an office or handle

I am honored and humbled to serve with such fine men and women here, and I thank you for your service at home —BG Darren G. Owens

supplies. We have an excellent hospital here staffed by Soldiers. We have mechanics and pilots and technicians. Every single one of these jobs is important to the success of this mission. The job that your Soldier is doing here makes a difference to the success of our mission and ultimately, to the success of the people of Kosovo. Your Soldier is here doing the hard work of peace enforcement. I appreciate what each one is doing. Please know this: I appreciate you, the folks back home, just as much. Please take care of Camp Homefront so that your Soldier can do his or her job. Without you, this mission could not succeed. I am honored and humbled to serve with such fine men and women here, and I thank you for your service at home. Lone Star! **GX**



Who is KFOR 7?

KOSOVO COMMAND

Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
72nd Brigade
Texas National Guard
Austin, Texas

1st Battalion,
141st Infantry Regiment
Texas National Guard
Alice, Texas

4th Battalion,
112th Armored Regiment
Texas National Guard
Angleton, Texas

636th Military Intelligence Battalion
Texas National Guard
Austin, Texas

3rd Battalion,
238th Combat Support Aviation Regiment
Michigan National Guard

1st Battalion,
104th Aviation Regiment
Pennsylvania National Guard

24th Medical Detachment
Kansas National Guard

17th Medical Detachment
New Mexico National Guard

142nd Field Artillery Brigade
Arkansas National Guard

685th Finance Detachment
Massachusetts National Guard

BOSNIA COMMAND

Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
72nd Brigade
Texas National Guard
Austin, Texas

You can check in with the 36th ID
on the KFOR 7 Web site:

[http://www.agd.state.tx.us/
falcon-family/index.htm](http://www.agd.state.tx.us/falcon-family/index.htm)

TEXAS GUARD RESPONDS TO WILDFIRES

By Chief MSG Gonda Moncada
Courtesy of TXARNG PAO

CAMP MABRY, AUSTIN, TX—What started with the statewide disaster declaration by Governor Rick Perry has resulted in continued support from the Texas Army and Air National Guard working in coordination with a number of local, state and federal agencies.

Gov. Perry ordered the deployment of state fire-fighting assets and issued a statewide disaster declaration Dec. 27. The Texas National Guard deployed two UH-60 Blackhawks from the Austin Army Aviation Support Facility and two CH-47 Chinooks from the Dallas AASF in Grand Prairie. The Louisiana National Guard sent three UH-60 Blackhawks with 18 crew members. The helicopters were readied to join firefighters in suppressing and containing numerous wildfires in areas the governor described as “tinderboxes.”

On Dec. 28, two of the Texas Blackhawks dropped forty-seven 990-gallon buckets of water to support firefighters in southeast Travis County.

On Dec. 31, the Department of Emergency Management requested four bulldozers and tractor trailers from the Engineer Brigade to assist in Abilene, TX. Nineteen Army Guard and two Air Guard personnel were deployed.

One refueler was requested Jan. 1 to support personnel in the Abilene area. The armory in Stephenville, TX, was designated as an operating base.

Four Blackhawks assisted firefighters in Eastland County, and two Chinooks with the larger 2,000-gallon buckets supported firefighters in Carbon, Eastland County, January 1. The aircraft flew a total of 7.5 hours and dropped a total of 17 buckets until nightfall.

On Jan. 2, aerial support continued with

WATER BOMB
A TXARNG Blackhawk carries a “Bambi bucket” to dump water on a hotspot



TXARNG aviators have flown 37 missions, flying 174.4 hours. They have dropped 615 buckets containing 596,180 gallons of water.

three Blackhawks and two Chinooks flying in support of ground personnel.

Between Dec. 17 and Jan. 12, TXARNG aviators have flown 37 missions, flying 174.4 hours. They have dropped 615 buckets containing 596,180 gallons of water. On the ground, engineers assisted with bulldozers and personnel.

Quick response from Louisiana was the result of the Emergency Management Assistance Council “Immediate Response” agreement, signed by governors across the country. Even with 80,000 Army and Air National Guard members deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism, the skills and flexibility of Guard members have proven to be invaluable in any emergency situation related to their homeland defense and homeland security missions. **GX**

278TH ACR SOLDIER REMAINS IN IRAQ TO CONTINUE GOOD WORK

By SPC Lee Elder, 133d MPAD

MUQDADIYAH, IRAQ—The largest deployment of Tennessee Army National Guard in its history ended in November when members of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment redeployed to Tennessee, but a handful of the unit based in Knoxville, Tennessee, opted to remain here.

The highest-ranking member of the regiment to stay is MAJ Rhonda Keisman. The 27-year Guard veteran remains as the military civilian affairs' officer for the 1-32 Cavalry, which replaced the 278th at Forward Operating Base Normandy.

"I've spent two Thanksgivings, two Christmases and two New Years here," MAJ Keisman said. "Actually, the holidays are just another day here. The only thing that makes them a holiday is that we usually have a special meal in the mess hall."

MAJ Keisman arrived with the regiment in October 2004. As the 278th prepared to leave Iraq last fall, she had planned to return with them. Then, the incoming command asked her to stay.

"I only wanted to stay to work with the people I have worked with in the area for the 278th," she said. "I'm doing my same job and

live in my same room. I thought it was a good opportunity and I was attached to my job so I said, 'Sure.'"

MAJ Keisman serves as the Army's liaison to the local Iraqi governments. She often meets with mayors and city and state officials and coordinates U.S. aide to the Iraqi people.

During her year with the 278th, MAJ Keisman handled more than \$14 million in projects. She currently has \$7.5 million in ongoing projects on the board.

These projects entail improvements to Iraqi schools, hospitals and infrastructure facilities such as water, electricity and garbage disposal. She has even funded the construction of a women's center.

A Mississippi native, MAJ Keisman said schools are a matter close to her heart. She is proud that many of the surrounding communities have new school buildings.

"All the schools are in bad shape," MAJ Keisman said. "[The Iraqi people] need so much. The schools are so much better than what they had. They aren't up to what we're used to, but for them, it's a castle."

MAJ Keisman represents the military throughout the negotiations with Iraqi contractors who do the actual construction. She handles most of the eastern Diyala province, which includes three cities whose populations are more than 100,000 and many other smaller villages.

"I initiate the contract, sign the contract with them, and at that time, we establish when payments will be made, and I make the payments to them," MAJ Keisman said.

MAJ Keisman's current boss, LTC Arthur A. Kandarian, commander, 1-32 Cavalry, 101st Airborne Division, said she has filled a crucial

role for his unit. Had she not extended, he had no other experienced officer to use in that job.

"She has provided continuity," LTC Kandarian said. "She was doing this for a year with the 278th, and she knows the system."

The transition between the 278th and her new unit has gone well, MAJ Keisman said, although she admits she was nervous at first.

"It was sad watching the 278th leave because I felt like I'm all alone now and I don't know anybody," MAJ Keisman said. "It's been a good unit, and they have treated

me absolutely fine."

MAJ Keisman plans to return to Tennessee this summer and back to her regular job as a labor relations officer for the Guard.

She has no regrets about lengthening her stay in Iraq.

"I find satisfaction from helping the people," she said. "That's why I stayed. It's very fulfilling to see the accomplishments with what we are doing with the local villages and the infrastructure out there."

There is still a lot to be done, but MAJ Keisman remains optimistic. She said a lone battalion is now doing what the entire regiment, which consists of four battalions, was once doing.

"We still have the bad things [to deal with], but that's not my job," MAJ Keisman said. "My job is to do the good things that help the people." **GX**



It's very fulfilling to see the accomplishments . . . with the local villages and the infrastructure.

— MAJ Keisman

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Nashville, TN
37203

or Email:
editor@GXonline.com



UTAH SOLDIER RESCUES INJURED MOTORIST ON NEVADA HIGHWAY

By SGT Scott Faddis, 640th Regional Training Institute

PERSHING COUNTY, NV—SGT Scott Campbell, UTARNG 640th Regional Training Institute, was driving east along I-80, with his wife Ellen and their young son. They arrived upon an overturned SUV in the median. The elderly SUV driver, Robert Adams, was out of the vehicle, disoriented and stumbling.

SGT Campbell evaluated Adams' condition, which showed the early stages of shock. Adams explained that he had fallen asleep and that his 51-year-old daughter was still in the vehicle. SGT Campbell, and others who had stopped to help, wrapped Adams in a blanket and turned their attention to Adams' daughter, Stephanie Mathis.

Nevada State Trooper Peeples arrived at the scene and asked if anyone had medical training. SGT Campbell said he was a Soldier in the Guard and had some training. SGT Campbell also told Peeples that Adams was displaying symptoms of shock and needed to get someplace warm. Peeples instructed SGT Campbell to help Mathis as the trooper led Adams to his vehicle and he informed SGT Campbell that EMTs were still several minutes away.

Two years ago the 640th taught the medical [common task training] to deploying units every weekend for two to three months. That training and experience allowed me to know exactly what to do. —SGT Scott Campbell, UTARNG

A former firefighter who had also pulled over to help had worked his way into the overturned vehicle and was attempting to stabilize Mathis' head to prevent her from sustaining additional injury. Mathis was lying on the vehicle's ceiling, and her head was wedged between the door frame and the seat's headrest. SGT Campbell worked his way through the crushed passenger side window opening to determine the extent of her injuries. Mathis complained of severe pain in her arm, so SGT Campbell started to feel his way along her limb to find the cause of her pain. Mathis' arm had gone through the window and was pinned under the vehicle as it lay on its roof.

At this point, EMTs arrived and used the Jaws of Life to try to extract Mathis. They slipped an air bag under the car to free her. As they lifted the vehicle, SGT Campbell held

her arm steady. Upon seeing the severity of the injury, SGT Campbell immediately called for a compress to stop the blood flow because she still was not in a position to be moved. SGT Campbell wrapped Mathis' arm with bandages and stayed in the vehicle with her to stabilize her arm as the EMTs worked to remove her from the wreckage. Mathis was rushed to a local hospital and was later flown to Reno.

According to the Nevada Highway Patrol, she was in stable condition. Adams was treated for his injuries and released.

"Two years ago, the 640th taught the medical [common task training] to deploying units every weekend for two to three months," SGT Campbell said. "That training and experience allowed me to know exactly what to do." **GX**





REPORT FOR DUTY

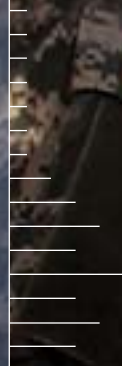
FOB Speicher, Iraq

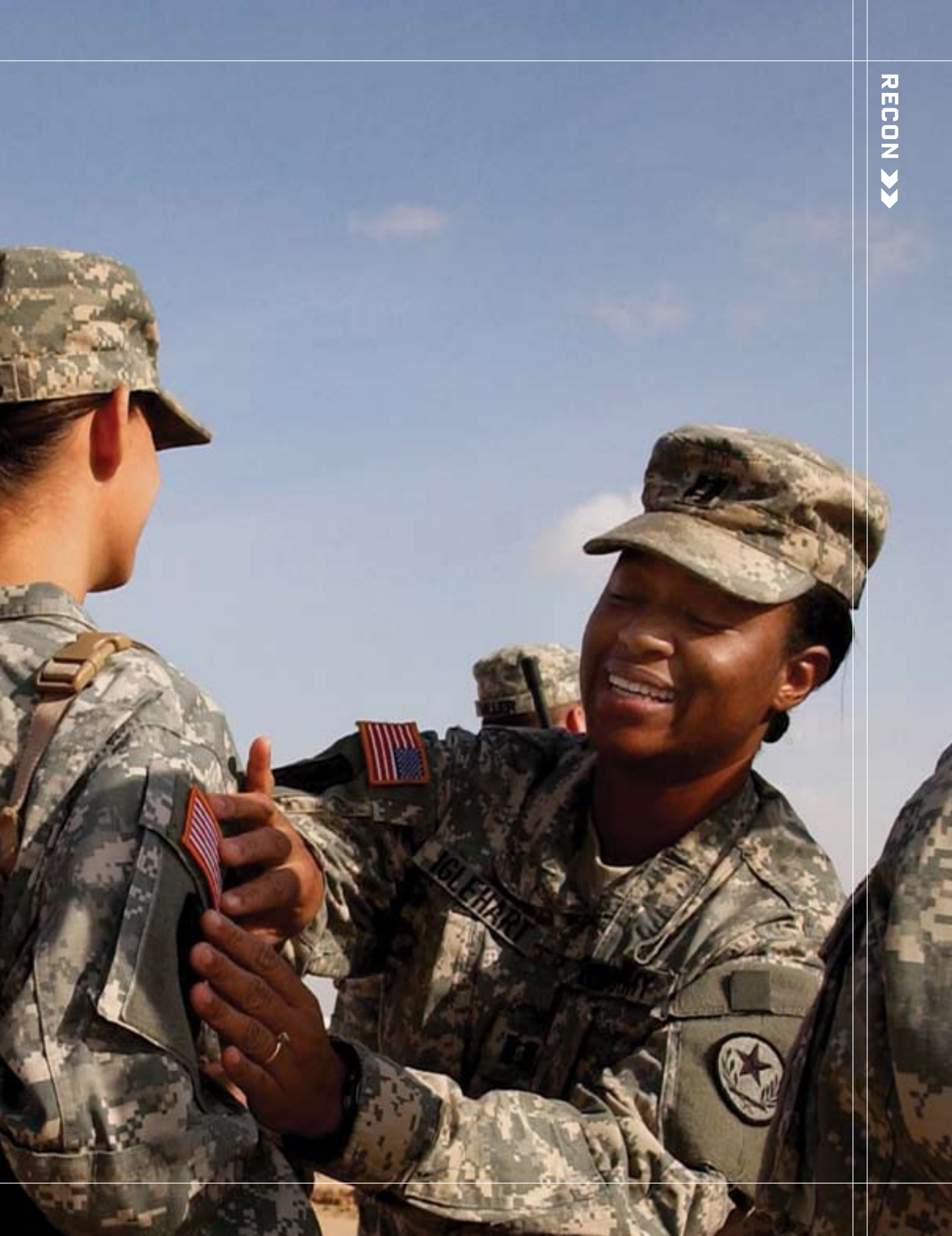
CPT Nicole D. Iglehart, Commander of A Co, 136th SIG BN, TXARNG places a combat patch on a Soldier in her unit during a combat patch ceremony at FOB Speicher, Iraq on February 12, 2006.

PHOTO BY SSG RUSSELL LEE KLIKA



Distance from Houston, TX to FOB Speicher: 7,314 miles







BEYOND WORDS

An Nasiriyah, Iraq

SPC Sam Rogers, with HHC 48th Brigade Combat Team, receives a heartfelt thank-you from a young Iraqi girl who is overjoyed with her new shoes. SPC Rogers helped deliver donated shoes to the Abu Tubar School, near An Nasiriyah in southern Iraq.

PHOTO BY SSG BRITT SMITH



Distance from Ft. Stewart, GA to An Nasiriyah, Iraq: 6,889 miles







BELLY OF THE BEAST

Central Afghanistan

10th Mountain Division troops and supplies are transported across Central Afghanistan in a National Guard Chinook.

PHOTO BY SGT SCOTT MATTHEWS



Distance from Ft. Drum, NY to Central Afghanistan: 6,591 miles




EDUCATION

PAY

BE





On January 6, 2006, President Bush signed the 2006 National Defense Authorization bill into law. This year's budget includes a raise for Soldiers and a range of new and improved benefits.

Chuck Witschonke, the Department of Defense's deputy director for compensation, told the American Forces Press Service, "Every year for the past several years, our service members have gotten larger pay, increased benefits and other special incentive pays. This is a clear reflection of our Congress, our administration and our country wanting to take care of our service members and their families . . . The members of our uniformed services should feel very good about this year's defense bill." He did, however, go on to stress that the new law does not guarantee that all service members will qualify for all of these pay raises and benefits, or that those who do qualify will receive the highest amounts authorized. Rather, he said, the law gives defense and service leaders the flexibility they need to tailor the force to meet operational, recruiting and retention goals.

In the following pages, *GX* has compiled some of the highlights from the new budget as well some of the most important benefits that were already available. >>>

NEFITS AND BONUSES

Source: Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

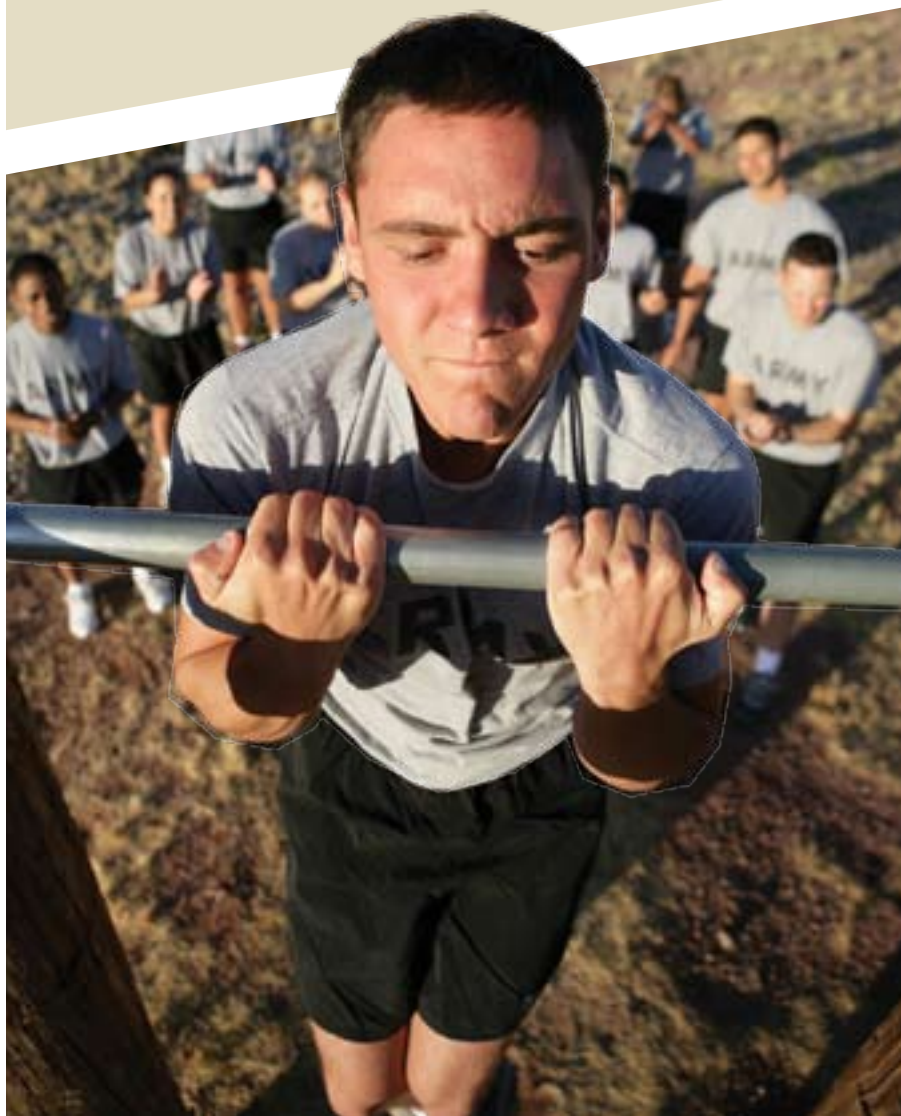


3.1% RAISE



Probably the most far-reaching change in the new budget is a 3.1% raise, a full half percentage point higher than the average private sector raise of 2.6%. This raise follows the formula established in 1999 which is intended to close a gap between pay for similar positions in the private sector and those in the military.

INCOME REPLACEMENT



This benefit is intended to help offset the pay lost by some Guard Soldiers when they are called to active duty. Specific guidelines as to when this benefit is available, and in what amount, will be developed over the next six months. In all likelihood, the benefit will be available to involuntarily activated Guard Soldiers who are deployed for 18 months or more. The benefit will offer up to \$3,000 per month to compensate qualifying Guard members who take a significant pay cut when called away from their civilian jobs to serve.



EVERY SOLDIER A RECRUITER (ESAR)

Every Soldier a Recruiter (ESAR) is a pilot referral bonus program of the Active, Reserve and National Guard components of the Army that provides select Soldiers the opportunity to assist with the recruiting efforts, and rewards those efforts with referral bonuses up to \$1,000. ESAR is open to individuals in the ARNG (SELRES), including AGR Soldiers on Active Duty, Military Technicians (MILTECHs) and Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) personnel. ESAR is also open to Soldiers of the USAR and Active Duty. Referrals must be non-prior service and may not be members of the referring Soldier's immediate family. Referrals may be to any component of the Army (Active, Reserve or ARNG) and do not have to be in the same component as the referring Soldier. For more information visit www.1-800-Go-Guard.com/ESAR

NOTE: This program should not be confused with the ARNG's current Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP), which is a civilian contract recruiting program. Learn more about G-RAP on page 42.

HOUSING ALLOWANCE

Full Housing Allowance payments are available for Guard Soldiers called to Active Duty for more than 30 days, down from the previous standard of 140 days.

A bonus of \$10,000 for newly commissioned Officers and Warrant Officers

\$10,000 OFFICER BONUS



EDUCATION BENEFITS AND RESOURCES

THE MONTGOMERY GI BILL, SELECT RESERVE

The Montgomery GI Bill, Selected Reserve (MGIB-SR) is available to help with expenses while studying for a degree, pursuing an apprenticeship or receiving on-the-job training. Up to \$297 per month (for full-time enrollment) will be paid directly to the Soldier.

The MGIB-SR Kicker is a bonus incentive designed to encourage Soldiers to enlist and remain in certain occupational specialties. The Kicker pays up to \$350 a month while attending college (or other approved technical school). Paid as a stipend, this incentive provides up to \$12,600 over a period of 36 months.

100% TUITION ASSISTANCE

The National Guard offers 100% Federal Tuition Assistance up to \$250 per semester hour and \$4,500 per person per fiscal year. This Assistance is in addition to the Montgomery GI Bill.

\$20,000 STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM (SLRP)

The Student Loan Repayment Program will pay up to \$20,000 in student loans to those who have an existing student loan obligation at the time of enlistment in the Army National Guard. In addition, current Army National Guard members who extend their enlistment contract for a minimum period of three years are also eligible for this program if they meet certain requirements.





GET YOUR PULSE RACING.

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Watch Greg Biffle and the No. 16 Ford roar into the 2005 NEXTEL Cup season. As a member of the Army National Guard team, Greg represents the men and women who serve their country and community with great distinction. In the Army National Guard, YOU CAN!



YOU CAN

1-800-GO-GUARD • www.1-800-GO-GUARD.co

National Guard used by permission of the National Guard Bureau. Roush Racing and Greg Biffle's name and/or likeness used by authority of Roush Racing, Livonia, Michigan.



ENLISTMENT BONUSES UP TO \$20,000

**MAXIMUM
NON-PRIOR SERVICE
ENLISTMENT BONUS
(NPS-EB) HAS BEEN
DOUBLED
FROM \$10,000 TO
\$20,000**



The ARNG is offering the NPS-EB at a rate not to exceed \$20,000 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% on the third year anniversary from your enlistment date. The current NPS-EB is authorized until May 31, 2006 but is dependent on Congressional funding and may change at any time. Be sure to check with your Army National Guard recruiter for the latest information.



THERE ARE MANY WAYS YOU CAN QUALIFY FOR YOUR \$20,000 BONUS!

\$20,000 "TOP 10" CRITICAL MOS NPS-EB

The Guard is now offering \$20,000 to non-prior service members who enlist in one of the ARNG's "Top 10" Critical MOSs.

\$15,000 STATE CRITICAL MOS NPS-EB

In addition to the ARNG "Top 10" Critical MOS's each State can designate an additional 20 MOS's as critical to that state's readiness. \$15,000 is offered for NPS-EB to any member who enlists in one of their state's critical MOSs.

\$5,000 OFF-PEAK BONUS

\$5,000 Off Peak Bonus to non-Prior service Soldiers who ship OSUT or straight ticket training in the months of October through May. This may be combined with the \$15,000 State Critical MOS bonus, or other NPS-EB as long as the total NPS-EB does not exceed \$20,000.

\$5,000 QUICK SHIP BONUS

\$5,000 Quick Ship Bonus to non-Prior service Soldiers who ship within 45 days of enlistment. This may be combined with the \$15,000 State Critical MOS bonus, or other NPS-EB as long as the total NPS-EB does not exceed \$20,000.

\$10,000 ALL MTO&E UNIT BONUS

(Modified Table of Organization and Equipment)

\$5,000 ALL TDA UNIT BONUS

(Table of Distribution and Allowances)

\$20,000 TOP 10 CRITICAL MOS

- 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



GUARD RECRUITING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (G-RAP) OFF TO AN OUTSTANDING START

A FEW OF THE RECENT SUCCESS STORIES

For more information about G-RAP and how you can become a Guard Recruiting Assistant, visit www.guardrecruitingassistant.com.



Shown are (left to right) PVT 2nd Class DJ Sullivan, SSG Dori Mulder and PVT 2nd Class Jarrod Bridwell. SSG Mulder, a MOARNG recruiter, processed the enlistments of both Guard members.

Missouri Guard Pioneers Ahead with G-RAP Success

By SPC Katherine L. Collins, Unit Public Affairs Representative MOARNG

Just two months after the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP) was introduced statewide to the men and women of the Missouri Army National Guard, MOARNG reports that it continues to experience a steady flow of Guard members qualifying as Recruiting Assistants (RAs) and citizens enlisting through G-RAP.

"The progress of the G-RAP program in Missouri is starting to take flight," said LTC John W. Findley, the MOARNG recruiting and retention commander. "This program is truly a 'strength from within' program," he said.

According to LTC Findley, the MOARNG is continuing to interest an increasing number

of its Citizen-Soldiers in the program. He added that the RAs are very proactive. Some publish newspaper ads, while others hold pizza and movie parties to catch the interest of the communities' young citizens, he said.

As of Feb. 3, MOARNG's Kyle Ballew ranked as the nation's top RA with six G-RAP enlistments. This means that Ballew is eligible for \$12,000 simply for recruiting his friends and fellow citizens into the ARNG.

As of Feb. 4, the MOARNG ranked second nationally in the total number of G-RAP enlistments, with 89 G-RAP enlistments. It ranked fourth nationally in the total number of RAs, with 1,234 registered RAs. **GX**

First G-RAP Enlistee to Enter Wyoming Army National Guard

Courtesy of Wyoming National Guard Public Affairs

Yvette Giroux became the first Soldier to enter the WYARNG as a result of G-RAP in January. Raul Sena served as the G-RAP Guard Recruiting Assistant for Giroux.

"G-RAP is centered on a 'strength from within tradition' that has grass roots in Wyoming's communities and the WYARNG," said MAJ Fred Fichtner, Wyoming Army National Guard officer strength manager. More than 70 Soldiers have signed up to be Guard Recruiting Assistants since the Wyoming Army National Guard began the program in December. **GX**

NHARNG: 2nd BN Soldier Becomes 1st G-RAP Success

Courtesy of New Hampshire National Guard Public Affairs

PFC Frank Crabtree, of Battery A, Detach. 1, 2nd BN, 197th F.A., became the first New Hampshire ARNG Soldier to benefit from G-RAP, enlisting Raymond Eames, a 20-year-old Berlin resident.

It was the seventh successful referral for PFC Crabtree, who is an 18-year-old senior at Berlin High School. He has been in the NHARNG for just over a year. The other six Soldiers he brought into the Guard were before G-RAP was initiated. However, PFC Crabtree was rewarded for his extraordinary efforts by earning a slot at Airborne School after he completes AIT. "I signed up for the G-RAP program so that I could benefit the New Hampshire Army National Guard and the nation," said PFC Crabtree.

Currently, 112 NH Guard members have taken the G-RAP online tutorial to qualify as a Recruiting Assistant. Another 28 are in training. Since the program began in December, a total of 22 referrals have been generated. **GX**

NDARNG: G-RAP Success Update

Courtesy of North Dakota National Guard Public Affairs

The North Dakota Army National Guard has had a successful first month with the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP). As of January 2006, NDARNG has had 514 Soldiers qualify as Recruiter Assistants with another 46 Recruiter Assistants in training. The NDARNG has enlisted 35 Soldiers under the G-RAP program and 93 potential enlistments are currently being tracked. **GX**



SFC Doug Griffin of HHC, 1-112th Aviation Battalion, NDARNG, received a check for \$2,000 on Jan. 20, 2006. SFC Griffin referred a lead, Zachary Verke, who enlisted into the North Dakota Army National Guard.

RECRUIT SUSTAINMENT PROGRAM

WARRIOR TIPS:

Wear your uniform with **PRIDE**, always look your best.

The best way to get better at Physical Fitness Training is to perform the stretches and exercises **DAILY** and **CORRECTLY**.

If the standard is 50%, make yours 100% and you won't **FAIL**.

A key to success is **TEAMWORK**, remember you're part of a **TEAM**.

CADRE CORNER

PRINCIPLES OF LEADERSHIP

- > Know yourself and seek self improvement
- > Be technically & tactically proficient
- > Make sound and timely decisions
- > Set the example
- > Build the Team



ARE YOU READY FOR BASIC COMBAT TRAINING?

- YES NO HAVE YOU RECENTLY BEEN PROMOTED?
(HAND-CARRY A SIGNED AND DATED DA FORM 4187 TO BCT)
- YES NO HAS ANY OF YOUR PERSONAL INFORMATION CHANGED?
(ADDRESS, PH NUMBER, INSURANCE BENEFICIARY, ETC.)

IF YOU ANSWERED YES TO EITHER OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS
PLEASE CONTACT YOUR RSP COORDINATOR OR YOUR RECRUITER.

- YES NO DO YOU MEET HEIGHT AND WEIGHT STANDARDS?
- YES NO HAVE YOU PASSED THE ARMY PHYSICAL TRAINING ASSESSMENT?
- YES NO IS YOUR PAY CORRECT?
(RANK, NUMBER OF DEPENDENTS, BANK ACCOUNT, ETC)
- YES NO HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR ORDERS FOR ACTIVE DUTY TRAINING?
- YES NO HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR SHIPPERS COUNSELING AND BRIEFING?

IF YOU ANSWERED NO TO ANY OF THE ABOVE QUESTIONS
PLEASE CONTACT YOUR RSP COORDINATOR OR YOUR RECRUITER

STRENGTH MAINTENANCE OPERATIONS

Enlistment of Non-High School Graduates (Tier III) Under the Army National Guard (ARNG) GED Plus Program

COL RICHARD R. GUZZETTA, GS Chief, ARNG Strength Maintenance Division

The ARNG now authorizes the enlistment of applicants having neither a high school diploma nor alternate education credentials (GED, National Guard Youth Challenge, Correspondence Diploma, etc). Applicants can enlist under the "Army National Guard GED Plus Program." Applicants are required to have a minimum AFQT score of 31 and a certified transcript showing completion of the ninth grade.

Non-High School Graduate applicants may not participate in the Split Training Option (STO) and may not be shipped for Initial Entry Training (IET) until they complete their GED/alternative high school education.

The GED Plus training program will be established at the Professional Education Center and will be posted to ATRRS. Until the class is posted in ATRRS, guidance counselors must contact the ROC and obtain a control number for enlistment of all GED Plus applicants. An annex to the enlistment contract must be executed at the time of enlistment, in which the new Soldier must acknowledge the requirement to achieve GED/diploma prior to shipment to IET.

Any ARNG GED Plus Soldier who presents an accredited GED completion certificate/diploma prior to attending IET will be exempt from attending the ARNG GED Plus Training program. **GX**

ARNG GED PLUS PROGRAM CRITERIA:

- The applicant must have withdrawn from high school for at least six months prior to date of application for enlistment. No waivers are authorized.
- The applicant must be 18 years old or older or not be eligible to return to his/her local high school for completion of the high school diploma program.
- The applicant must qualify for enlistment by achieving a minimum score of 31% or higher on the AFQT. Applicants scoring 31 to 49, as well as those who score 50 or above on the ASVAB but do not pass the TTAS, will count against High School graduate NPS accessions. Applicants who score 50 or higher on the ASVAB and meet TTAS Tier I status are eligible to receive Tier I incentives and are excluded from the Tier I quality benchmark calculations, up to a 5% exemption of the NPS accessions.
- Any applicant testing positive on the Drug and Alcohol Test (DAT) screening will be immediately discharged from the program. DAT waivers are not authorized.

MIARNG: Recruit Sustainment Battalion

Courtesy of Michigan National Guard Public Affairs

A Soldier can join the Michigan Army National Guard, but completion of the enlistment process and signing the contract doesn't guarantee the recruit will graduate Initial Active Duty Training (IADT).

So what does the MIARNG do to prepare the recruit for Basic Training? The Recruit Sustainment Battalion (RSB).

RSB is designed to help prepare the IADT Soldier by training them prior to shipping out for training. The goal of the RSB is to reduce Basic Training failures to less than 12 percent. RSB was established in March 2004. In June 2005, Recruiting Command was tasked to run the program because there is a relationship between recruiters and their recruits. If the recruit gets cold feet about going to Basic Training, the recruiter knows how he or she thinks and can help them work through any fears.

The RSB environment is instructive but not intimidating. It is not conducted in a Basic Training environment.

The RSB program uses Soldier Enhancement, Empowerment and Readiness (SEAR) curriculum to train recruits. SEAR consists of 100 hours of instruction in subjects

such as the Army values, chain of command, rank, saluting, military time, phonetic alphabet, as well as information on equal opportunity and sexual harassment. SEAR training is condensed into a "Battle Book" the recruits receive at the beginning of RSB training.

RSB is broken down into four groups: recruits attending their first orientation drill, recruits awaiting IADT, Split Option Training Soldiers who have attended IADT and are awaiting AIT, and Soldiers who have completed both IADT and AIT.

The recruits attending orientation receive their "Battle Book" and classroom briefings to orient them. The recruits awaiting IADT attend training on drill and ceremony, military legacy, and physical readiness. Recruits must pass a modified Army Physical Fitness and Readiness test.

The last phase recruits attend focuses on shipper expectations, tells the recruits what to bring and what not to bring to Basic Training, and addresses any personal affairs prior to shipping out.

The RSB also serves as a communications mechanism between the recruit in training and family back home. Administrative NCO

SGT Diedre Piechocki said the RSB calls the recruit's family once they arrive at Basic Training and keeps communication open.

Split Option Soldiers who graduate Basic Training return to Michigan and remain in the RSB until they ship out for AIT. The RSB Cadre conducts training, maintains the Soldiers' Army Standard level of Physical Fitness and keeps the battle skills sharp.

SGT Piechocki said the Split Option Soldiers must maintain the Army physical fitness standard and have a high school diploma or GED prior to returning to AIT. The RSB ensures these requirements are met to avoid AIT washouts.

The Final Phase occurs when the Soldier returns MOS Qualified and ready for "Battle Handoff" to their assigned unit. They are then briefed on expectations, sponsorship at the unit, and encouraged to stay physically fit. The Soldiers participate in a beret donning ceremony and are welcomed into the MIARNG family.

PFC Lisa Wilson summed up the RSB program as: "A wonderful insight as to what to expect at Basic. The first two weeks was a review of RSB." She gave her advice for new Soldiers: "Your Army experience is what you put into it. A positive attitude will bring a positive outcome." **GX**

The RSB environment is instructive but not intimidating. It is not conducted in a Basic Training environment.

The Army National Guard has enhanced its recruiting web site, 1-800-Go-Guard.com, with its greatest asset: real live Soldiers. Since December 5, 2005, visitors have been able to talk to National Guard Soldiers via a live, real-time one-on-one chat feature. Visitors to the site can use the chat feature to get answers about benefits, bonuses, enlistment waivers, or Basic Training from Soldiers who have “been there and done that.”

There is no limit to who can use the additional features. “We’ve talked with high school students, teachers, parents, grandparents, and Active Duty members from all services. I even had a conversation with a United Kingdom Territorial Army Officer. He was doing research for a briefing on U.S. reserve forces.” said CPT Tim Irvin, Program Manager. “As you can imagine, we get a lot of different and sometimes bizarre questions.”

The program named “Hero on Call” has been a huge success. Since



FLORIDA TEAM 1: (L-R) SPC Weston Cain, PFC Ashley Quinney, SPC Ryan Bounds, SGT James Gatchell

“What’s it like to be a Soldier?”

1-800-Go-Guard.com gives visitors the ability to ask real Guard members



Hero on Call’s inception, operators have helped over 2,900 visitors. One visitor told SPC Bounds, Florida Team Leader “I’m really glad the Guard started this program. I didn’t know where to begin. I feel better about talking to the recruiter next month and signing on the dotted line.”

“There are many options to consider when enlisting. For anyone who has questions, we want this to

be an easy way to get accurate information so that they can make an educated decision regarding the Guard,” said CPT Irvin. “Our online operators share their personal experiences in the Guard as well as accurate, up-to-date information on benefits and enlistment options currently available. It’s like having a buddy in the Guard.”

To chat live, visitors go to 1-800-Go-Guard.com and click on the “Talk with a live Hero” icon on the right side of any page throughout the site. If a Soldier is currently online, the visitor can immediately begin the chat session by asking a question. An added advantage to the live chat feature is that visitors can request a transcript of their entire chat session, allowing them to keep their “conversation” for future reference.

“Hero on Call” Operators are currently available during peak hours, normally weekends and evenings, but since the response from visitors has been so strong, additional Operators are being added, and hours will be extended. Visitors who click on the icon when Operators are offline may still ask a question. A “Hero on Call” Operator will answer their inquiry within 24 hours of receiving it.

“With today’s hectic schedules, time to do research and ask questions about the Guard is tight. With our new features, we are making it easier for anyone to get information and make the right decision about the Guard,” said CPT Irvin. **GX**



FLORIDA TEAM 2: (L-R, Above) SGT Steven Handwork, SGT Amanda Taylor, SSG Michelle Araujo, and SGT Joe Kaidor

INDIANA TEAM: (L-R, Below) 2LT Lisa Menck, SMP Cadet David E. Bryant, PFC Josh Boone and SPC Daniel Birge



HEROES ON CALL

FLORIDA TEAM 1

Ryan Bounds, E-4, SPC
FL Team Leader
Unit: Charlie Battery 1st/265th ADA
(Avenger), Daytona Beach, FL

Weston Cain, E-4, SPC
Unit: 146th SIG BN, Jacksonville, FL

Ashley Quinney, E-3, PFC
Unit: STARC (-), St. Augustine, FL

James Gatchell, E-5, SGT
Unit: Alpha Battery 1st/265th ADA
(Avenger), Palatka, FL

FLORIDA TEAM 2

Michelle Araujo, E-6, SSG
Unit: JFHQ, St. Augustine, FL

Joe Kaidor, E-5, SGT
Unit: 220th FN GRP, St. Augustine, FL

Amanda Taylor, E-5, SGT
Unit: STARC (-), St. Augustine, FL

Steven Handwork, E-5, SGT
Unit: JFHQ, St. Augustine, FL

INDIANA TEAM

Lisa Menck, O-1, 2LT
Unit: 219th Med. Co., Edinburgh, IN

David E. Bryant, E-5, SMP Cadet
Unit: 151 LRS Det., Darlington, IN

Daniel Birge, E-4, SPC
Unit: 38th MP Co., Indianapolis, IN

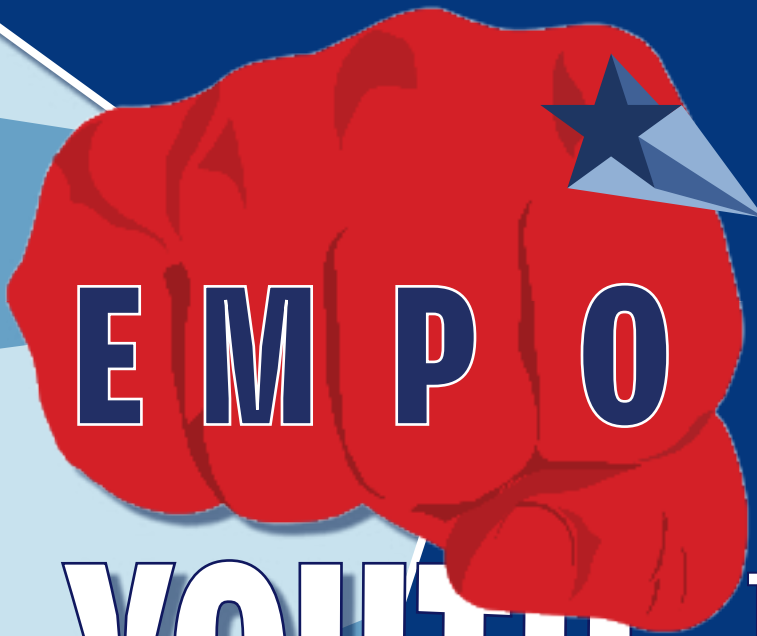
Josh Boone, E-3, PFC
Unit: A Co., 2-152 IN, Indianapolis IN



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“He was a very slow student who came in with a first grade reading level and a second grade math score. At the end of twenty-two weeks, he left us with a fourth grade reading level and a fifth grade math score, and we got him a job at McDonald’s. He worked there consistently: went to work everyday, continued to call back and let us know how he was doing. Just about a month ago, he called back to tell us he was married, working in Illinois, and supporting himself. And he was thanking us for what he learned in ChalleNGe.”

When I look at the progress he made in the first twenty-two weeks, I always compare our kids with what I know about kids in high school. I worked in high schools for thirty years. We’ve got a kid that dropped out in the tenth or eleventh grade with a first or second grade education, and he came to ChalleNGe for six months and gained three or four grade levels—that makes us about twenty times better at what we do than what the public schools do. And, I would say that only happens because we are able to use structure and discipline to gain the trust of these kids. It’s the most rewarding job I’ve ever had in my life.”—BG (ret., ARNG) Roger Allen, Director of Michigan National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program, illustrating a ChalleNGe success story. BG Allen initiated the ChalleNGe program in Michigan in 1999 and shared his thoughts on the program in a recent *GX* interview courtesy of Joe Padilla, Deputy Director of National Guard Youth Programs.

The National Guard is 100% dedicated to protecting America’s freedom and prosperity. Not only does our nation call upon our Soldiers for combat missions and search and rescue, but it also asks them to safeguard the stability of future generations of America—our children. This mission just might be one of the most critical of the Guard’s operations, yet it rarely receives the spotlight it deserves.

There are two main Guard missions working in the lives of America’s youth. There is the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program, which mentors and educates troubled teens, and the Drug Demand Reduction efforts, which focus on eliminating problems before they start, through education.

Youth Challenge



Congress initiated the National Guard Youth Challenge program in 1993 as a pilot program under the Defense Authorization Bill. According to the Challenge program web site (www.ngycp.org), the goal of the program was to determine whether life skills, education levels, and employment potential of youths who drop out of secondary school could be significantly improved through quasi-military assisted training. After over a decade of operation, the program has more than proven itself.

Core Components of the Challenge program

LEADERSHIP/FOLLOWERSHIP Identification and application of individual moral and ethical standards are the focus of the various roles and responsibilities as the cadets live and learn in a structured group environment.

RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP The U.S. Government structure and processes, along with individual rights and responsibilities at the local, state and national level, are addressed in the classroom environment, in the student government process, and through practical experiences within local communities.

SERVICE TO COMMUNITY A minimum of 40 hours of service to the community and/or conservation project activities are performed by each cadet in groups and on an individual basis. These activities provide additional opportunities for career exploration as well as enhancing community-needs awareness in cadets.

LIFE-COPING SKILLS Increased self-esteem and self-discipline are gained through a combination of classroom activities and a structured living environment. The development of individual strategies and coping mechanisms for managing personal finance and dealing with such emotions as anger and stress are developed through structured group discussion and in the classroom environment.

PHYSICAL FITNESS Programs conduct a physical fitness program using the President's Challenge, a test battery based on data collected from a

GROUP HUG
Challenge
brings people
from all walks
of life together

variety of sources including the 1985 President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports National School Population Fitness Survey, the Amateur Athletic Union Physical Fitness Program and the Canada Fitness Award Program.

HEALTH AND HYGIENE A holistic approach is taught that combines physical and mental well-being as cadets explore the effects of substance abuse and sexually transmitted diseases on their physical health and well-being. Cadets learn the physical and emotional benefits of proper nutrition through participation in classes and structured group discussions.

JOB SKILLS Career exploration is accomplished through career assessment and interest inventories, job-specific skills orientation and awareness, and training in area vocational centers. Specific classroom activities focus on development of individual resumés, completing job applications, and preparation for, and conduct of, job interviews.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE All cadets attend daily academic classes preparing them for testing for the General Education Development (GED) credential, a high school diploma, or increased math and reading comprehension. Evaluation of cadets' grade level progress during the Residential Phase is measured using the Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE) testing process. *Source: National Guard Youth Challenge Program 2004 Annual Report, produced by AOC Solutions, Inc.*

Phases of the Challenge program

RESIDENTIAL PHASE During the Pre-Challenge portion of the Residential Phase, applicants are assessed to determine their potential for successfully completing the program.

During this initial two-week phase, applicants have an opportunity to adjust to the physical, mental, and social discipline of the program. The focus is on teamwork, close order drill, code of conduct, leadership and followership practicums, and physical fitness training. For those applicants who successfully complete this phase, they earn the distinction of becoming full-fledged cadets. Over 90% of these cadets will successfully complete the program. The Residential Phase of the program consists of 22 weeks conducted in two phases: a 2-week Pre-Challenge Phase and a 20-week Challenge Residential Phase. The residential facilities, located on an active or closed Guard base, a Guard training center, or school campus, accommodate an average of 100 cadets, with separate quarters for men and women. Several states have more than 100 youths in their program.

In the 20-week Residential Phase, daily activities and community service experiences build the cadets' job skills and self-concepts. The



academic program prepares cadets for the GED exam given at the end of the Residential Phase. Cadets also develop a Life Plan that outlines their 12-month Post-Residential plan.

Mentors are matched with cadets midway through the Residential Phase. The mentors help support the cadets during the remainder of the Residential Phase and help them prepare to reenter community life. Mentors continue their responsibilities during the 12-month Post-Residential Phase.

POST-RESIDENTIAL PHASE The 12-month Post-Residential Phase begins when graduates return to their communities, continue in higher education or enter the military. The goal of this phase is for graduates to sustain and build on the gains made during the Residential Phase. In addition, they must continue to develop and implement their Life Plans.

The mentors, matched with cadets during the Residential Phase, play a critical role in ensuring their continued success. They help the youths transition from the structured environment of the Residential Phase to self-management. The mentors also support and guide the cadets through implementation of their Life Plans. *Source: www.ngycp.org*

**TEAMWORK
ChalleNGe
builds lasting
bonds of
friendship
and trust.**



it into his life at a time when he needed it most.” *Source: www.ngycp.org/state/ok*

Get Involved

CHALLENGE AS A STRENGTH MULTIPLIER In a recent five-year longitudinal study conducted by the Michigan National Guard Youth ChalleNGe program, it was found that approximately 40% of graduates have eventually joined the military. In an average class, there can be 20-30% of cadets who enlist—high numbers despite the fact that recruitment is never a priority.

“I think the reason that so many people want to join the military is the same reason that kids want to grow up to be like their mother and father. They learn to love and trust these folks [the instructors], and they want to emulate them in their careers.” —BG Allen on Michigan’s enlistment numbers.

BECOME A CHALLENGE MENTOR All Guard Soldiers can become mentors in the ChalleNGe program. The only qualifying criteria consists of a thorough background check, followed by ChalleNGe Mentor Training (the do’s and don’t’s of mentoring and relationship building). To find out more, contact your local ChalleNGe office or visit www.ngycp.org.

“You have to gain the trust of the kids. You have to walk the talk. You have to have compassion for these youngsters and continually maintain the standards you have set.” —BG Allen on what it takes to be a successful ChalleNGe mentor.

BRING THE CHALLENGE TO YOUR STATE GX was surprised to find that only 25 States and Puerto Rico currently offer a ChalleNGe program. Congressional support is critical to bringing the program to the entire nation. If your State is one of those lacking a program, we encourage you to write your legislature and ask it to bring the ChalleNGe to your State.

ChalleNGe Success Stories

When Felicia Ridgway was 11 years old, she was addicted to cocaine. At 13, she had moved in with a 27-year-old boyfriend who abused her. After years in rehab and detention centers, Felicia reached the age of 17 with only a fourth grade education.

“No matter what I did, it wasn’t the right thing,” said Felicia. “I would be dead right now if it weren’t for the program.”

At 17, Felicia stopped the cycle of destruction and entered the Florida National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Academy at Camp Blanding. Since graduating, Felicia received her high school equivalency diploma and enrolled at Florida Community College. Felicia was named the ambassador of the Florida program and earned a paid internship working for the public relations agency that represents the ChalleNGe program as a whole. *Source: www.ngycp.org/state/fl/*

Sammy Smith was devastated by the divorce of his parents, and by twelve he was using drugs to placate his loneliness and heartache. Consequently, his attention to his education plummeted, and he began stealing from his own family. At 13, Sammy was arrested.

After four years and failed stints at rehab, a boys’ home, and recovery programs, Sammy’s mother, Brenda, brought him to Oklahoma National Guard’s Youth ChalleNGe Thunderbird Academy. Sammy would come and go from the Academy several times, but each time he’d return to open arms at the Academy. By age 17, Sammy had graduated and shortly after enlisted in the Army.

“Without their perseverance, patience, dedication, and love, I feel certain that my child would be just another tragic couple of lines in the newspaper that prompt us to say, ‘Oh, how sad,’” says Brenda of the Thunderbird Academy and its impact on her son. “My son thrived in the Thunderbird environment, and I thank God everyday for putting

Drug Demand Reduction



The Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) mission is to educate communities on the harmful effects of drug abuse in an effort to reduce the demand for illegal substances. Although DDR efforts are addressed to all ages, a primary focus is given to the youth of America.

Red Ribbon Week

In October, the National Guard landed two Kiowa helicopters (OH-58A+) loaded with Guard Soldiers and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict, Thomas O'Connell, on an elementary school soccer field in Olney, MD, kicking off Red Ribbon Week—a national DDR effort. The symbolic Red Ribbon is in part a tribute to a fallen DEA officer, slain by drug traffickers in California, and a symbol of commitment to the eradication of drug demand throughout the nation.

“We are here to present the students with a message to make the right choices in life despite the obstacles they may encounter,” said CW4 Anne Sprute (WAARNG), the National Guard’s DDR program chief. “They are the future; the next generation to ensure their families have the opportunity to live in a free America and a drug-free society.”

“The school’s students met the arrival with rousing applause and excitement,” reports SSG Cheryl Hackley of the National Guard

Bureau Counterdrug Office. Students were separated by grades for varying workshops and presentations. For example, third and fourth grade students watched an inspirational and motivational video; sixth through eighth graders spent time with CW4 Sprute to hear her compelling personal story of achievement; and it was the lucky second graders who were the first ones able to hang out on the helicopters. “Many of them were very interested in learning how to fly the Kiowa,” asking CPT Kirk Regina, an MDARNG pilot, for impromptu instruction, reports SSG Hackley.

“Working together and being positive role models will ensure the choices they make are the right ones,” said CW4 Sprute.

Brainstorm

This past fall, the New York National Guard was recognized for having the best DDR program in the Guard. Their innovative “Brainstorm” program illustrates to third and fourth graders what drug abuse does to their brains and highlights that even just one-time use can lead to addiction.

“The unique aspect of this program is that we see the same third and fourth graders on four different occasions,” said TSG Marlene Frankovich, a DDR administrator with the NY Guard’s Counterdrug program who accepted the recognition on behalf of NY DDR task force. “This allows us to establish relationships. After a few times, if the children see us on the streets, they come up to us and say, ‘Hello.’”

Project SOAR

Each quarter, Mount Charleston in Nevada hosts the Nevada National Guard DDR initiative Project SOAR (Seeking Opportunities and Accepting Responsibility) at Camp Lee Canyon. Project SOAR is coordinated with the assistance of the Clark County Department of Juvenile Justice Services and gives first-time offenders or at-risk youths a healthy dose of military discipline and mentoring.

At the start of the program, youths are put through two hours of intense physical and mental drills to break down defensive emotional walls. Later, participants march eight miles, navigate through an

Air Force obstacle course and ropes courses, participate in community service, and attend drug awareness courses.

“I felt complete, like I had finally done something,” said Joseph Smith, a young Project SOAR participant after completing the eight-

CHECK IT OUT
Second graders get a VIP tour of CPT Kirk Regina’s chopper during a DDR Red Ribbon Week workshop.



mile march and obstacle course. Smith found himself at Project SOAR after being caught with a knife at school.

“There’s an ability that the National Guard members have to reach those kids that we probation officers do not have,” Deborah Dow, a Clark County Deputy Probation Officer, told MAJ Nahaku McFadden of the NGB Counterdrug Office. “They fear that if they open up to us, they will get in trouble for it. They feel more open during these classes and sometimes pour their hearts out.”

“This is an excellent program, and we need more programs like this,” added Luis Rodriguez, a probation officer. “This program is not about the military. It is not about probation. It’s all about the kids.”

“Hearing about drugs, and seeing what people go through to try to get off that stuff,” said Smith to MAJ McFadden, “I’m going to tell my little cousins about it before they get too out of hand.”

RIARNG Youth Development Adventure Camp

Rhode Island Guard dedicates 11 weeks of each summer to DDR by way of the Youth Development Adventure Camp. Forty children ranging in age from 12 - 17, both at-risk and non-risk, are brought out to Camp Fogarty to participate in games and skill-building exercises that instruct a drug-free and healthy lifestyle.

After a day of physical training, basic first aid training, compass instruction, and more, the campers receive a search and rescue mission. Utilizing the skills they acquired from day one, campers are tasked with locating a downed pilot and returning him to safety.

Other activities include traversing New England’s largest and tallest High/Low Ropes Course and several discussions about self-esteem, decision-making, and goals.

“As educators, mentors and parents, we are making a conscientious choice to be a part of the solution for our children to lead a healthier and safer lifestyle,” said Air Force COL Earl Bell, chief, National Guard Bureau J3 Counterdrug Division, in regard to DDR efforts. “The future is determined by the decisions our children make today.”

DDR information courtesy of the NGB Counterdrug Office

The National Guard hosts, manages, and participates in many other youth-related education and mentoring projects. The list is as ever-expanding as the Guard, even after over 300 years, is still evolving to meet the needs and serve the American people.

One shining example of these efforts is the upcoming Lewis and Clark Youth Rendezvous to be held in North Dakota in August of this year.

The project educates students about the Lewis and Clark journey as a military expedition by exploring the leadership and values of the military of the past and the military of today. Ten students from each state and territory are chosen to participate based on an essay competition. The entire event, including transportation to North Dakota, is free of charge.

For more information, visit
www.lcyouthrendezvous.com

PERSONAL BEST
MSG Robbie Vale and
SGT Robert Sayles,
with the help of a co-
worker, demonstrate
the rope bridge.



To stay up to date on all youth-related efforts and activities, contact your local National Guard office. We also highly recommend visiting and bookmarking the following web sites:

www.guardfamily.org

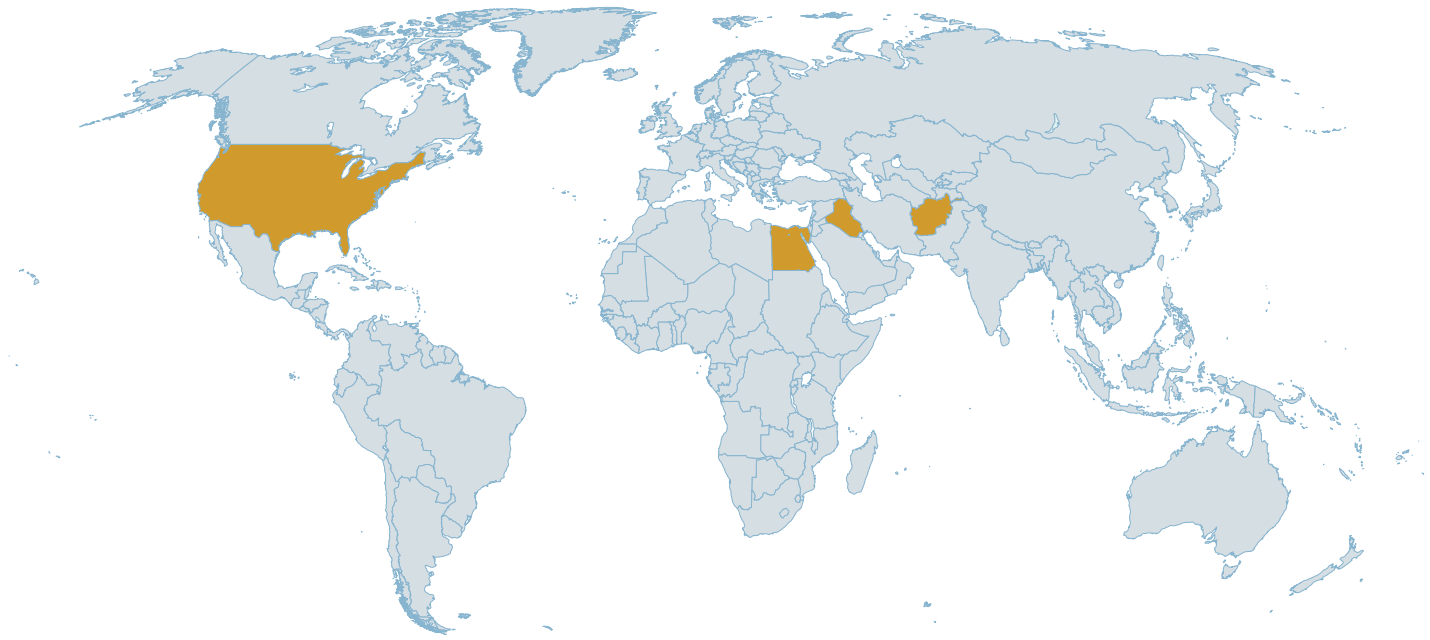
www.guardfamilyyouth.org

[www.guardfamilyyouth.org/
09_teen_connection/](http://www.guardfamilyyouth.org/09_teen_connection/)

www.myarmylifetoo.com

www.gftb.org

www.nmfa.org



VICTORY MAP

Sharing the good news from Guard units around the world.

Send your news to editor@gxonline.com.



UNITED STATES

CONNECTICUT

In one of the largest single unit deployments in Connecticut history, the 102nd Infantry Battalion deployed to Afghanistan in January. This deployment follows a previous mobilization of Company C, 102nd INF, which returned from Iraq early last year. Of the Soldiers headed to Afghanistan, only a handful were a part of the group that spent more than year in Iraq.

DELAWARE

SGT Robert Ford of HHC 280th Signal Battalion in Georgetown, has taken the next step in his career by extending his enlistment for six years in January.

GUAM

In early February, more than 130 Guam

Army National Guard members of the 1-294th Infantry Battalion deployed to the Horn of Africa for an 18-month mission. The group is the third team to be sent to the Horn of Africa from Guam since 2004. The team relieves the previous Guard team sent there, and will support the Combined Joint Task Force's counter-terrorism operations under the U.S. Central Command.

INDIANA

The Indiana National Guard Relief Fund received an additional \$25,000 dollars from The Evan and Susan Bayh Foundation. Senator and Mrs. Bayh serve on the Board of Directors of the foundation, which is funded largely by leftover contributions from Senator Bayh's campaign for governor and makes charitable contributions to important Hoosier causes.

"Our National Guard members are among the most selfless, idealistic people I have met, working to make such countries as Iraq and Afghanistan better places while separated from their families for often more than a year at a time," Senator Bayh said. "They should

know that while they're fighting overseas to protect our freedom, their families are being taken care of at home. That's why the Foundation is honored to make this donation to the Indiana National Guard Family Relief Fund. I encourage all Hoosier families who can to recognize the sacrifices made by our National Guard members by donating to the Relief Fund this year."

The relief fund is a corporation formed exclusively for the purpose of providing relief and emergency assistance to the members of the Indiana National Guard and their families who are experiencing periods of financial distress due to deployment or mobilization.

MICHIGAN

Following a tour of duty in Iraq, 112 Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers from two units returned home in late January. Fifty-six Soldiers from Company A, 107th Engineer Battalion returned to Baraga. They were called to active duty November 2004 and sent to Camp Attebury, IN, for mobilization training. They arrived at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait in late January 2005 and, from there, deployed to Iraq. Fifty-six Soldiers from Company C also returned home. They were called to active duty November 2004 and also sent to Camp Attebury for mobilization training. They arrived at Camp Beuhring, Kuwait in early February 2005 and, from there, deployed to Iraq. Both units are utility companies consisting of carpenters, plumbers,

electricians, masons, and equipment operators. While in country, the units provided base camp construction in and around Baghdad.

NEW JERSEY

On January 25, 2006, four cadets from the New Jersey Youth Challenge Academy mingled with Donald Trump at *Apprentice 2* winner, Kelly Perdw's book launch event at the Trump World Tower in New York. The cadets, Monique Pacheco, Thomas McDougald, Megan Criscione, and Anthony Pinapfel, attended the launch as guests of Mr. Perdw, a National Guard Youth Challenge Academy national spokesperson since March of 2004. Perdw highlighted the program in his new book, *Take Command: 10 Leadership Principles I Learned in the Military and Put to Work for Donald Trump*, and included his volunteer work with the NG Youth Challenge Academy in the book's "Selfless Service" chapter. In addition to meeting "The Donald," two of the cadets joined Perdw on the FOX News Channel's *Fox & Friends* for a five-minute segment about the program.

NORTH DAKOTA

In late January, the 141st Engineer Combat Battalion, North Dakota Army National Guard, was awarded the Valorous Unit Citation for heroic accomplishments during their year-long tour in Operation Iraqi Freedom. This citation is one of the highest awards the Army gives for combat actions.

OHIO

SSG Gary Sarver, a CH-47 Flight Engineer from Company G, 137th Aviation (Heavy Helicopter), OHARNG was presented the Air Medal by BG Jack E. Lee, Troop Command Commander. SSG Sarver won the prestigious medal, along with 17 of his fellow Company G soldiers, for flying combat missions in Iraq while attached to Company C, 193rd Aviation, HAARNG. SSG Sarver flew over 300 combat flight hours while deployed.

SOUTH DAKOTA

Soldiers from the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment have received a mobilization order for deployment in support of OEF and OIF. The SDARNG unit will mobilize in mid-April and will report to Fort McCoy, WI, to begin the deployment process. The unit will spend several months training at McCoy before they deploy. The unit's mission will be to conduct public affairs operations for CENTCOM and any of its 26 areas of responsibility throughout the world, which includes the Iraq and Afghanistan theaters of operation.

In early February, SSG Clay E. Rees of Sioux Falls was named the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, and SPC Randi Jo Frank of Sturgis was named the Soldier of the Year for 2006 for the SDARNG. Each award is the top honor for both the noncommissioned officer corps and enlisted corps within the SDARNG.

TEXAS

According to the Houston Chronicle, the Texas Army National Guard signed up more new Soldiers between October and January than it has in a four-month period since the mid-1990s. The Texas Guard signed up 1,017 enlistees during the period, which overlapped with the end of a year-long Iraq deployment of Texas Guard members—making Texas tops in the nation in recruiting.

In a deployment ceremony on Sunday, Jan. 8, 450 Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 124th Cavalry Regiment, were recognized before they depart for the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt. The Soldiers deployed for a 12-month tour of duty in support of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

VIRGINIA

Soldiers of the 1710th Transportation

CO, VAARNG hosted a movie night for local high school students in January. The featured film was the major motion picture hit *War of the Worlds* starring Tom Cruise—and the 1710th Transportation CO. The unit worked as extras on set. SSG Douglas Perry, School Resource Officer for Patrick County High School, set up the event to give students a safe and fun event for a weekend night. After the movie, students questioned SSG Perry and other National Guard members about their experiences serving in the National Guard. SSG Perry feels it is important that students in Patrick County know what the Guard has to offer. "In this area, a lot of kids, financially, won't have the opportunity to go on to college. Jobs are scarce here. Economically there's just not a lot going on, and the Guard offers a lot of opportunities," SSG Perry said. "The military's done a lot for me personally, and it's an avenue that students can use to better themselves in life."

WYOMING

Members of the Wyoming Army National Guard's Force Protection detail were awarded in February for their call to duty during Operation Noble Eagle. These Soldiers and their families were honored as being Defenders of Freedom. Each Soldier received awards presented for their service, including an encased American flag, a commemorative coin, a certificate of appreciation from Army National Guard leadership, and a lapel insignia. The Soldiers' spouses received a lapel insignia, while the Soldiers' children were recognized and presented with a Future Soldier Footlocker Kit.

AFGHANISTAN

Coalition forces are installing windmills across southern Afghanistan to provide farmers with water 24 hours a day.

"Windmills for the farmers provide an easy energy source to a rural area," said U.S. Army LTC Andrew Mazerik, a civil affairs officer with Task Force Bayonet of the coalition's Combined Joint Task Force



ACTION! VAARNG Soldiers race past actor Tom Cruise in *War of the Worlds*.

76. "There's not a lot of maintenance needed for the windmills, and this effort shows that the Afghan government is doing something for the people."

The first Afghan public health clinic in Khowst is complete, and Afghan medical personnel are being trained by U.S. Soldiers to operate the clinic.



EGYPT

In early February, two TXARNG Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 124th Cavalry Regiment, conducted a recovery mission following an Egyptian ferry disaster in the Red Sea. The unit was deployed to the Sinai Peninsula to observe peace between Egypt and Israel. Soldiers 1LT John "Doc" Brown (a physician's assistant) and MSG Earl Redrick (a medic) were mobilized to aid Italian forces and traveled approximately eight hours to the disaster site. After patrolling the area for twelve hours, they began to find survivors. The two Soldiers managed to save seven lives.



IRAQ

MG Tod Bunting, The Adjutant General

of the State of Kansas, swore in SPC Timothy Nichols and SGT Michael Hunsaker, Company "C", 2-137 IN, who both chose to reenlist while in Iraq in January. SPC Nichols extended for six years, while SGT Hunsaker signed a three-year extension.

Instructors with the National Guard Marksmanship Training Unit's Sniper School are deployed to Iraq for the third time in three years this February. A Mobile Training Team of seven instructors travel with the school to provide sniper training for Soldiers with the 101st Airborne Division, currently in the Iraqi theater.

The National Guard school is the only training center outside Fort Benning that is accredited to provide the Sniper training. Due to the high demand for this specialized training, the school has been called upon to extend its mission on many occasions to train Active Component Soldiers at bases across the US and overseas.

MAJ Chris Stevens (29th Brigade, HI-ARNG) received the Bronze Star for inventing a way to add armor to the underside of Humvees to protect them from roadside bombs. MAJ Stevens credited "all the welders and mechanics who figured out how to make an idea work. Otherwise, it would just be an idea."

SPC Timothy Nichols and SGT Michael Hunsaker, both of C CO, 1/137 INF, KSARNG, reenlisted while in Iraq late-January. SPC Nichols extended for six years, and SGT Hunsaker signed a three-year extension. **GX**

A Brave New World

The Bulls step it up as training grounds become the front lines. Story and photos by Chris West

Something had changed at Camp Shelby, MS—that much was obvious. It was hard to put your finger on it though. Was it the extra razor wire that had sprouted everywhere like stainless steel hedgerows? Was it the intensity with which every Soldier seemed to be going about even the most mundane tasks? Maybe it was the stepped-up security? Perhaps it was the mortars and machine gun fire that boomed and rattled throughout the night?

That wasn't quite it, though. As we stood in the early morning mist, waiting to link up with our guide, it became apparent that those were just characteristics of a larger change. In the month since we had last seen the 1/34th, an amazing transformation had taken place. These men and women were no longer preparing for their time in Iraq. They were, for all intents and purposes, already there. >>>



RUNNING WITH THE BULLS, PART 2 OF 10





These men and women were no longer preparing for their time in Iraq. They were, for all intents and purposes, already there.



The last time GX visited the 1/34th in December, the Soldiers were working through individual, squad and platoon level skills. These exercises, while focused and intense, had the feel of a rehearsal. If a skill was not executed correctly, instructors would give notes, and the Soldiers would try it again. Every Soldier knew he or she was preparing for possible combat, but the atmosphere was fairly light and, at times, even fun. GX showed up expecting to see more of the same sorts of training we had seen before, just on a larger scale. Boy, were we wrong.

The Brigade had moved into the Field Training Exercise (FTX) phase of its prepara-

tions. This sounds innocuous enough, but that simple name doesn't even begin to convey what the Brigade is dealing with. Soldiers are operating out of several Forward Operating Bases (FOBs) and conducting real world missions into local "Iraqi" villages on a daily basis.

These villages are continually populated by local citizens who have been trained to act and react as if they were Iraqi civilians. These Civilians on the Battlefield (COBs), combined with native Iraqis speaking Arabic and a handful of translators, do an amazing job of creating a completely immersive environment for the Soldiers to train in.

HIGH SPEED. VERY REAL. This all sounds pretty high speed, very real-world, very fun. Think again. These missions aren't just one-shot exercises. Camp Shelby is now a dynamic theatre where every action taken by the Soldiers has repercussions. If you go into one of the simulated towns kicking down doors and pointing guns at everyone regardless of the security situation, you are sure to upset the locals, and there will be consequences. One wrong move and the friendly village you've been working with for the past few days will become "hostile" and may well side with the opposing force (OPFOR).

The converse is true as well. If the mission is conducted well, without traumatizing the populace and with the cooperation of the local mayor and sheik, the Soldiers can gain valuable and actionable intelligence. We observed the Civil Affairs Team doing just that one afternoon. The team worked closely with the village leadership, and as a result, the mission went smoothly. Accordingly, the Soldiers were able to gather information on the location of a "person of interest."

This information was passed up the chain of command, and a mission plan was developed according to what the Civil Affairs Team found. The next day, we observed a company of infantry mounting up to capture and detain the "person of interest" in question. There was only one problem. He was the mayor of the local town. This one was going to be tricky.

The infantry knew for a fact that there were going to be problems. Snatching up an official, for whatever reason, was sure to upset the locals. "Upset" can mean any number of things, ranging from a controllable protest to an all-out armed confrontation. This is all simulated, but you couldn't tell it from the Soldiers' reactions. They were keyed up and ready for anything.

In order to manage the villagers' reactions, the infantry took several steps. First, before entering the village, a cordon was put into place, restricting traffic both into and out of the area. This action served two purposes: ensuring that the suspect didn't get away and providing an overwhelming security >>>

TENSION BUILDS A Soldier is keenly aware of all the activity surrounding him while guarding the streets of the "Iraqi" village.





Insignia of the Red Bull

The Red Bull insignia of the 34th Division was designed by Marvin Cone of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, who drew it for a contest while with the division at Camp Cody in 1917. A steer skull imposed on the shape of a Mexican water jar (an "olla") recalled the division's desert home not far from the Mexican border. During World War II, German soldiers in Italy referred to the American soldiers who wore the familiar patch as "Red Devils" or "Red Bulls." The latter name stuck, and the division soon adopted it officially, replacing its World War I nickname of "Sandstorm Division." *Source: Military Historical Society of Minnesota*

Organization and World War I

by MAJ Jack Johnson, MNARNG (retired)

The 34th "Red Bull" Infantry Division Organization was created from National Guard troops of Minnesota, Iowa, the Dakotas and Nebraska in late summer 1917, four months after the U.S. entered World War One. Training was conducted at Camp Cody, near Deming, New Mexico (pop. 3,000). Dusty wind squalls swirled daily through the area, giving the new division a nickname, the "Sandstorm Division."

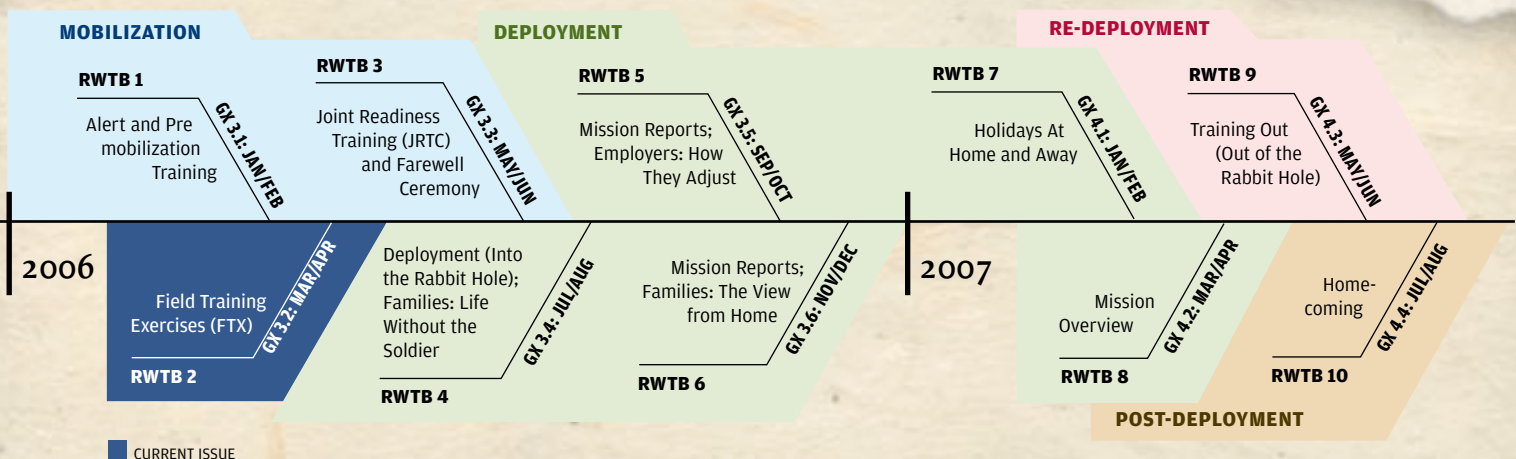
As the men arrived at Camp Cody, other enlistees from the Midwest and Southwest joined them. Many of the Guardsmen had been together a year earlier at Camp Llano Grande, near Mercedes, Texas, on the Mexican border. Training went well, and the officers and men waited anxiously throughout the long fall and winter of 1917-18 for orders to ship out for France. Their anticipation turned to anger and frustration, however, when word was received that spring that the 34th had been chosen to become a replacement division. Companies, batteries and regiments, that had developed *esprit de corps* and cohesion, were broken up, and within two months nearly all personnel were reassigned to other commands in France. Reduced to a skeleton crew of cadre NCOs and officers, the 34th remained at Camp Cody just long enough for new draftees to refill its ranks. The reconstituted division then went to France, but by the time it arrived in October 1918, it was too late to see action. The war ended the following month.

NEXT ISSUE: Mobilization and Preparation for World War II



COMPANY PRIDE Members of the 34th line up to form their crest at Camp Cody, New Mexico on August 18, 1918 © NEWMAN PHOTO 1918

GX Red Bulls Coverage



They're not just from Minnesota, you know.

Although the brigade headquarters of the 1/34th BCT is located in Minnesota, we shouldn't forget that the Brigade currently draws strength from no less than sixteen different states. Some of these Soldiers are members of units based in other states and others are members of the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR).

The roster of the 1/34th currently includes individuals and units from (in alphabetical order) California, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Oklahoma, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Washington and Wyoming. However, this is not necessarily the final list of all participating states. Additional Soldiers from other states may be brought in to fill in any vacancies.

The GX Team had the opportunity to meet with and interview IRR Soldiers from several states. Many of them were somewhat taken aback by the unexpected return to duty, but all were determined to excel at the missions to which they were assigned. We were also allowed to accompany units from other states as they went about their training at Camp Shelby.

Troop C of the 5117 Cavalry out of New Jersey is currently attached to the 167th Cavalry out of Nebraska, who is attached to the 1/34th BCT . . . got all that? These Jersey boys were providing

INTERSTATE STRENGTH The 1/34th is comprised of Soldiers from sixteen different states (map at right)

security for the Civil Affairs Team as they performed their duties in a simulated Iraqi town. All of these men expressed an extremely high level of confidence in the training they had received, their fellow Soldiers, and in their leadership.

We also visited with several companies of Soldiers in the 133rd Infantry. This unit is based out of Iowa, and when we visited, they were the only unit active in the area. They were stretched thin for the missions they were tasked with, but the commanders seemed to handle everything with ease.

To meet some of these Soldiers, go to GXonline.com, where we have posted recorded greetings from as many of the Soldiers as we could. Take some time and get to know them, they are an important part of the 1/34th.

LOCK AND LOAD SGT Anthony Evans, NJARNG, stands ready during real-time training exercises.



>>> force to discourage anyone from getting too aggressive.

After the cordon was in place, the company leaders met with the local Sheik and through their interpreter, explained what was about to happen. At the same time, they enlisted his cooperation. On the way out of town, the mayor was apprehended and taken in for questioning. The locals, as predicted, were none too happy, and they promptly marched to the gate of the FOB and began a very loud and aggressive protest. Even knowing that this was a training exercise, the crowd's anger was very intimidating. This event looked as if it could have easily gotten out of hand. Fortunately, the Soldiers had the Sheik on their side. He led the protest, allowing the villagers to vent their anger and at the same time keeping them under control.

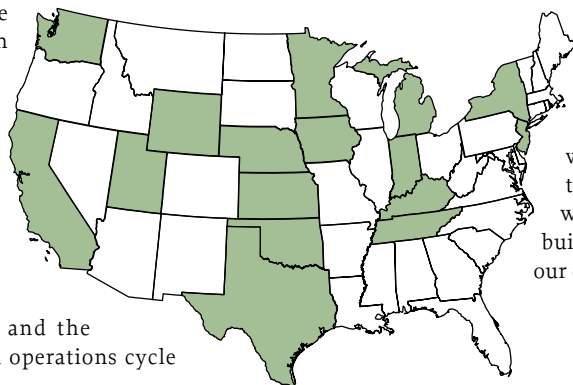
When the crowd would surge forward, the Sheik, at the Soldiers urging, would back the villagers away from the gate, keeping actions from escalating. After a time, the Sheik was allowed to come inside the wire and discuss the issues with the company commander.

During discussions with the Sheik, it became apparent that he was not only glad to have the mayor gone, but also that he would be willing to work with American troops in the future. He even went so far as to provide additional intelligence about local insurgents in the area. This new information was sent in, and the planning and operations cycle began again.

This type of immersion training is critical in preparing our Soldiers for the transition into an entirely foreign culture. It helps brace them psychologically for what they will face on a day to day basis once they are in country. It also prepares our Soldiers

for the new type of war that they are fighting, a war where tactical diplomacy is as important as their skills with a rifle.

This is how we are winning the war in Iraq, one village at a time. By building better



relationships with the Iraqis and helping them not only with security, but also with their day-to-day problems, we will eventually build a trust between our countries. **GX**

www.GXonline.com
Click on the Red Bulls banner.



By building relationships with the Iraqis, we will eventually build a trust between our countries.

BUILDING BLOCKS Developing interpersonal relationships with local Iraqis is critical to the mission.



CIVIL AFFAIRS TEAM The Civil Affairs Team (CA) is an important part of the overall struggle to win the hearts and minds of the Iraqi people. They are responsible for interacting with local leadership in order to assess the locals' needs and coordinate any required support.

These assessments are known as SWEAT-MS. That rather cumbersome acronym stands for the major areas the team is looking at in any given location: sewer, water, electrical, academic, trash, medical, and security. Each town will have different needs and concerns. It's the job of the CA team to determine what they are and then, in most cases, pass on its recommendations to one of the Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) providing direct assistance in the area.

In the past, Civil Affairs was a duty that was assigned to a Soldier in addition to his or her normal responsibilities. However, with the increased emphasis on building relationships with the Iraqi populace, these jobs are becoming the primary mission of the personnel conducting these operations. COL Elicerio, the commander of the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team (BCT), is a firm believer in the importance of building positive relationships with the Iraqis, and as a result, he has chosen to

devote additional resources to this team, ensuring it has the tools and personnel it needs to do its job.

For example, all members of the unit are studying Arabic and doing extensive additional reading and research in order to better understand the culture, religion and government of the people they are working with.

MAJ Kulzer, the commander of the CA team, explained some of the challenges his team faces. "Historically, the U.S. and Britain don't have a great reputation for long term relationships. It's up to us to change that. Ultimately, it's all about earning their trust." In order to do that, the CA team has to understand the complex web of relationships between the many ethnic, religious and political groups in Iraq as well as their relations with various international governments and organizations. This is an incredibly complex problem. Issues on the ground can date back hundreds and even thousands of years. Keep in mind: this is the Fertile Crescent, the birthplace of western civilization. There is more cultural history in each handful of sand than the entire North American continent.

The CA team members are also visiting power generation plants, sewage treatment facilities and anything else that might come in handy once they are in country. At each stop, they gather valuable knowledge and

add to a network of experts that together should be able to quickly address any problems the team might face.

SOMETIMES IT'S ABOUT THE GOATS It's not all about history and politics though. Sometimes, it's about goats. That sounds a little funny to American ears, but it's extremely serious to Iraqis. Goats are one of the main forms of livestock in this part of the world, and the well-being of a herd can be directly tied to the well-being of a village. In order to be able to help, the CA team visited a local goat farm near Camp Shelby, MS. Here the Soldiers not only learned about goat farming, but they also enlisted the help of an American expert that they can call on whenever they need. If there is a problem with a herd of goats, professional help will only be a phone call away.



THE FUTURE IS NOW

An estate plan can protect you, and your loved ones, from financial and emotional turmoil

Courtesy of USAA Magazine

Only wealthy people need an estate plan. So goes the common misperception that the goal of estate planning is to reduce the amount of taxes due upon a person's death.

The truth is, we all need an estate plan, regardless of our wealth. Estate planning helps arrange for the care of minor children, distribute personal assets and property, and, if you should become incapacitated, can help make your wishes known about your finances and care.

Before you start drafting documents, however, you need to know what you want to accomplish with the plan, your financial assets and liabilities, as well as what you may want to give to loved ones. "It doesn't matter if your assets are \$1,000 or \$100 million, the first step should always be to gather the facts," says Russell Fishkind, chair of the Trust & Estate Department at Wilentz, Goldman & Spitzer, P.A., a New Jersey-based law firm.

CHOOSE WISELY Naming the right people or institutions to carry out your wishes is essential to any estate plan. Think long and hard before you make any choices, especially when it comes to naming a guardian for your children.

"If you leave your children to a guardian who is unwilling or unable to raise them, it often results in judicial intervention," Fishkind says. "So you may have had a will, but here we are in court litigating over the guardianship of your children." And it's important to choose someone your children respect and are comfortable with. "Often, the parents don't think about it from the kids' perspective, but that should be a factor," he adds.

WHERE THERE'S A WILL, THERE'S A WAY

A will is the foundation of any estate plan. Simply put, a will specifies who gets your property when you die. It names an executor of your estate and provides an opportunity for you to specify who gets your property when you die. For those with minor children, a will lets you name their legal guardian. It also names an executor, the person responsible for managing your estate.

A will may not be the most effective way to ensure that your last wishes are met. A will must pass through probate, the process whereby a state court publicly confirms the will's validity. This can take months.

Most people don't realize that a will only partially ensures that your assets are preserved for your future needs and those of your heirs. Without proper planning, many of your assets that are only addressed in the will can be unnecessarily lost to court costs, legal fees, unforeseen conflicts with heirs, and taxes.

TRUST IN A TRUST A more effective way to ensure that your assets are managed according to your wishes, while you are alive and after you die, is to create a trust. A trust is for anyone who wants to make sure his or her assets are protected and managed according to his or her specific wishes. In a trust, those wishes are clear, direct, and unalterable.

Created in tandem with a will, a trust can take several forms. The most common are a testamentary trust and a living trust. A testamentary trust is created through a will and takes effect after you die and the estate passes through probate. A living trust takes

effect while you are alive. It can be revocable or irrevocable. A revocable trust gives you the flexibility of changing or dissolving the trust at any time. An irrevocable trust cannot be changed or terminated, regardless of circumstances.

INCLUDE ALL YOUR ASSETS Wills and trusts govern assets that are subject to probate. Assets held in a qualified retirement savings plan, such as a 401(k) or an IRA, are not subject to probate. Because of this, you need to name beneficiaries of these accounts so that they work with your estate plan.

One of the most common mistakes is when parents name their minor children as contingent beneficiaries for their 401(k)s or IRAs. "Don't name minor children as beneficiaries," Fishkind advises. "Anybody who has minor children should consider adding age-terminating trusts to their will.

Why? An age-terminating trust ensures that your children don't receive too much money at too young an age. For example, you could pass a third of your assets to them at age 25 and the balance at age 35. The same thinking applies to life insurance, as a child or young adult is more likely to mismanage a



million-dollar life insurance payout, or even \$250,000.

CHOOSING AN EXECUTOR OR TRUSTEE The distribution of your assets can be affected by your choice of executor or trustees as well. In fact, the choice of trustees can make or break the execution of a will. For example, you may think it makes sense to name your spouse as executor of your estate or as the successor trustee of a living trust. But what happens if your spouse is distressed and unprepared to manage financial affairs? For these reasons, you may want to consider naming a corporate executor or co-trustee. Co-trustees usually have the same authority, and share the responsibility for the trust. Most trusts state that co-trustees must consult with the other trustees before actions are taken on behalf of the trust.

A corporate trustee can professionally manage assets, help the family complete the necessary paperwork, and take care of the estate in accordance with the deceased's wishes. By working with a corporate trustee, you and your spouse can build a rapport with the trustee so that the surviving spouse and extended family members are not totally overwhelmed.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



ESTATE: The total of any property and assets you own minus any liabilities such as loans or debts, at the time of your death.

EXECUTOR: A person or an institution, such as a law firm, named in a will as being responsible for managing the deceased's estate.

GUARDIAN: A person named in a will whose role is to protect the interests of the deceased's minor children.

HEALTH CARE PROXY: Authorizes someone to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to do so. Also called a durable power of attorney for health care.

LIVING WILL: Allows you to spell out the medical treatment you want under specific circumstances. Also known as a medical directive.

POWER OF ATTORNEY: A document that lets an individual appoint another person to act on his or her behalf.

WHO'S MANAGING YOUR MONEY IF YOU CAN'T? It's natural to think of estate planning solely in terms of planning for death. But what happens to your finances if you become mentally or physically incapacitated? In this situation, a revocable living trust can be a powerful tool.

You can create a revocable living trust and name yourself as trustee. As long as you are mentally and physically able, you retain complete control over the assets in the trust. Should you become permanently disabled or incapacitated, the trust becomes irrevocable. Your successor trustee — which can be a family member, a trusted financial institution, or both — steps in to manage your assets according to the provisions set forth in the trust.

A power of attorney is another tool that can be used if you become incapacitated. With this, the principal (the person who signs it) is naming an agent (the person who is receiving the powers) to transact business on his or her behalf, says New Jersey based attorney Russell Fishkind.

There are different types of power of attorneys. A general power of attorney is used to give broad authority to the agent, while a limited power of attorney can give very limited authority for a specific transaction, like selling a house.

A living trust may be preferable to either type of power of attorney, as it is widely accepted by financial institutions, while power of attorneys may not be. A trust also allows you to provide specific investment instructions to your trustee. If you become incapacitated without a trust or a power of attorney, a court will appoint a conservator or guardian to manage your affairs.

Keep in mind that living trusts and power of attorneys are tools for carrying out your financial wishes. For issues related to types of health care you want to receive in the event of a serious injury or illness, or who has the authority to act on your behalf, you must establish an advance health care directive (see "Who do you want making your medical decisions?" below).

WHO DO YOU WANT MAKING YOUR MEDICAL DECISIONS? The plight of Terri Schiavo, the Florida woman whose right-to-die case went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, under-

Have you ever thought about a career in modeling but there was no way to get your foot in the door, even locally? Well how about a photo shoot which carries nation wide exposure?



We are looking for Army National Guard Soldiers...

Under the age of 26 who meet height, weight and hair cut standards. Males and females of all ethnic backgrounds that can be available for up to 30 days during late spring (2006).



Submit a civilian photo from the chest up, with a good smile and a full length photo in uniform(Class A, ACU or BDU) to SRSC, 325 G Street, Smyrna, TN 37167. To get more information about the Army National Guard ad campaign call CW3 O'Neil Williams, at 615-267-7101 or send your email to robert.o.williams@tn.ngb.army.mil

Without proper planning, many of your assets can be unnecessarily lost court costs, legal fees, unforeseen conflicts with heirs, and taxes.

scores the importance of stating—in writing—your desires about the medical treatment you want to receive and who can make decisions for you if you can't do so yourself.

An advance health care directive can prevent doctors, courts, or others from acting in ways that don't meet your wishes. You can also protect your family and friends from having to make difficult decisions based on intuition or guesses. While unpleasant to ponder, it's important to discuss these issues with your family, your doctor, and your attorney to ensure that your medical care preferences and personal beliefs are respected.

An advance health care directive has two components:

Living will: Also known as a health care directive or a medical directive, a living will allows you to spell out the medical treatment you want under specific circumstances, including instructions regarding nutrition and hydration, feeding tubes, pain medication, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Laws differ from state to state, so consult with an attorney.

Health care proxy: Also known as a durable power of attorney for health care, this document authorizes someone to make medical decisions for you if you are unable to do so. It lapses when you regain your ability to make your own decisions.

Due to the 1996 federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), health care providers need written authorization from a patient or a patient's authorized agent before they can release certain personal health care information. All health care proxies must include certain legal language. If you already have a health care proxy, make sure it is updated to conform to HIPAA regulations.

LOCATING THE RIGHT LAWYER To find a qualified estate planning attorney, first ask friends, family, or colleagues for a referral, then consider these resources. Don't hesitate to ask for references.

- > The National Network of Estate Planning Attorneys: nnepa.com
- > The American College of Trust and Estate Counsel: actec.org
- > AARP's Legal Services Network: aarp.org/families/legal_issues/lsn

WHEN IT'S TIME TO REVISIT YOUR PLAN

If you already have an estate plan, congratulations. Knowing that your loved ones will be taken care of after you die brings peace of mind. Nevertheless, a good estate plan needs periodic updates. The following events may trigger changes in your estate plan:

Divorce: Odds are you no longer want your ex-spouse to be the beneficiary of your estate or your retirement plans.

A second marriage: If necessary, take steps to ensure that any children from your first marriage get their fair share.

Birth of a child: You need to name a guardian in your will and consider establishing a trust.

Relocation: If your plan was drafted in one state, you may need to update it to comply with the laws in your new home state.

Changes in tax law: Sometimes the rules change. Make sure your plan adheres to current estate tax law.

Job change: Dramatic salary and benefits changes should prompt you to revisit your will and beneficiary designations.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS



PROBATE: The legal process of settling an estate, which includes verifying the authenticity of the will, creating an inventory of the deceased's assets and liabilities, paying off debts and taxes, identifying heirs, and distributing property.

TRUST: A legal arrangement that allows you to transfer property to a trustee for the benefit of your beneficiaries, without court involvement.

LIVING TRUST: Also known as an *inter vivos* trust, a living trust is established while you are still alive and can be dissolved or changed before you die. An irrevocable trust cannot be altered after it has been executed.

TESTAMENTARY TRUST: Created by a will, this trust becomes effective only upon the death of the person named.

TRUSTEE: The person, persons, or institution responsible for managing the assets placed into a trust and/or transferring property to beneficiaries or heirs.

WILL: The cornerstone of any estate plan, a will specifies how you want your assets distributed when you die and names an executor for your estate as well as a guardian for your minor children.

The truth is, we all need an estate plan, regardless of our wealth



COURTESY OF ARNG



THE ONE PREDICTABLE THING ABOUT A DISASTER.

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A Guide to Distance Education

By Johanna Altland
Grantham University

Distance education, also known as online learning, e-learning or distance study, is education in which nearly all of the interaction between the student and the professor occurs at a distance. Today, most distance education courses utilize the Internet and email and may also make use of course specific software, videotapes, CDs or DVDs.

Over the years, distance education has grown in popularity because of the convenience and flexibility of taking classes online, without ever having to visit a campus. According to a survey published by the National Center for Education Statistics, during the 2000-2001 academic year, college-level, credit-granting distance education courses were offered by 55 percent of all 2-year and 4-year institutions, versus only 34 percent in 1997-1998.

As you can see by the statistics, many schools offer distance education, but not every program is the same. There are some key factors to consider when determining which program is right for you: accreditation, course delivery method, student services, instructor accessibility and quality, and cost.

ACCREDITATION Accreditation is an important factor to think about when considering any college or university, because it indicates that a school is reputable and has met certain quality standards. Accreditation assures students that the institution operates on a sound financial basis, has an approved program of study, has qualified instructors, adequate facilities and equipment, and approved recruitment and admissions policies. Because there are a variety of accrediting organizations, you should look for an institution that has been accredited by agencies that are recognized by The US Department of Education (www.ed.gov).

COURSE DELIVERY MODE Distance education courses are offered in different formats: synchronous, asynchronous, and a combination of the two. You should choose the one that best fits your learning style and

schedule. With synchronous education, learning and teaching takes place at the same time while the teacher and students are physically separated from each other. For example, students and teachers may have to log-in at a set time to take part in an online lecture. With asynchronous education, learning and teaching takes place at different times while the trainer and learner are physically separated from each other. Students can complete their coursework at their own pace when

HOW DO YOU KNOW IF DISTANCE EDUCATION IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

Consider the following questions:

- ★ How much flexibility does your schedule require?
- ★ Do you learn better independently or in a group setting?
- ★ How do you feel about taking courses via the Internet?
- ★ Do you need face-to-face student-teacher interaction?
- ★ Would you rather study at home or in a classroom?

If you need a flexible schedule and cannot commit to spending time in a classroom and you would rather study independently from home, then distance education may be right for you.

Overall, the most important thing to remember is to be an informed consumer—do your research. Choose the Education Benefit that is right for You.

and where it is convenient for them and are not required to log-in at specific times. The instructor prepares the course material in advance and the student is free to decide when to study.

STUDENT SERVICES Because you are not on a campus, it is important to choose a school that provides you with exceptional services like: an academic representative who is available to answer questions and provide

support, a resource center and library, a technical support desk, and an online student forum such as a message board or chat room.

INSTRUCTOR ACCESSIBILITY AND QUALITY

Your instructors should be knowledgeable in their course subjects. To determine the quality of an instructor, research their background and education. Find out if they are responsive to student questions. Many distance education schools provide access to their instructors by email and phone.

COST The cost of distance education can vary greatly from institution to institution and from degree program to degree program. Some factors to consider are: tuition and fees, books and/or class materials, and software and shipping. Some distance learning institutions include all of these additional costs in their tuition.



More and more service members are using their benefits to further their education, but which benefit to use at which time can be confusing. Use the benefit summaries below to guide you in choosing which benefit will best suit your short and long term objectives.

FEDERAL TUITION ASSISTANCE The Guard's Tuition Assistance Program provides funding for a Soldier's continuing education and is available to all eligible Soldiers (officers, warrant officers, enlisted) on active duty, and Army National Guard and Army Reserve on active duty. Tuition Assistance pays up to \$250 per credit hour not to exceed the fiscal year cap. Each military branch has its own eligibility requirements, application process, and fiscal year caps.

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

SCHOLARSHIPS & GRANTS Many scholarships and grants are available for military service

members through local service organizations like the American Legion, or you can use sites like Scholarship Gateway, Scholarship Resource Network Express or Scholarships.com to find thousands of ways to fund your education. **GX**



EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

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. [For more information, contact your recruiter.](#)

Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges (SOC): SOC was created in 1972 to provide educational opportunities to service members, who, because they frequently moved from place to place, had trouble completing college degrees. Today SOC is a consortium of more than 1800 colleges and universities that provide educational opportunities for service members and their families. SOC coordinates associate and bachelor's degrees in a variety of curriculum areas for the Army (SOCAD), Navy (SOCNAV), Marine Corps (SOCMAR), and Coast Guard (SOCCOAST). These degree programs are offered by colleges and universities on or accessible to Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard installations worldwide. [For more information, visit: www.soc.aascu.org.](http://www.soc.aascu.org)

Peterson's Distance Learning: Since 1966, Peterson's has helped to connect individuals, educational institutions, and corporations through its books, websites, online products, and admissions services. Peterson's reaches an estimated 105 million consumers annually with information about colleges and universities, career schools, graduate programs, distance learning, executive training, private secondary schools, summer opportunities, study abroad, financial aid, test preparation, and career exploration. Peterson's web site contains resources such as: test preparation, school information, financial aid resources, and career advancement. [For more information, visit: www.petersons.com](http://www.petersons.com)

United Stated Distance Learning Association (USDLA): The USDLA promotes the development and application of distance learning for education and training, and serves the needs of the distance learning community by providing advocacy, information, networking and opportunity. Their website provides research and statistics on distance education and links to colleges and universities offering distance learning. The USDLA serves distance education and training constituencies including pre-k-12 education, higher and continuing education, home schooling as well as business, corporate, military, government, and telehealth markets. [For more information, visit www.usdla.org.](http://www.usdla.org)



TEDDY ROOSEVELT & THE ROUGH RIDERS

PART 2: “The Battle of San Juan Hill”

by Chris West

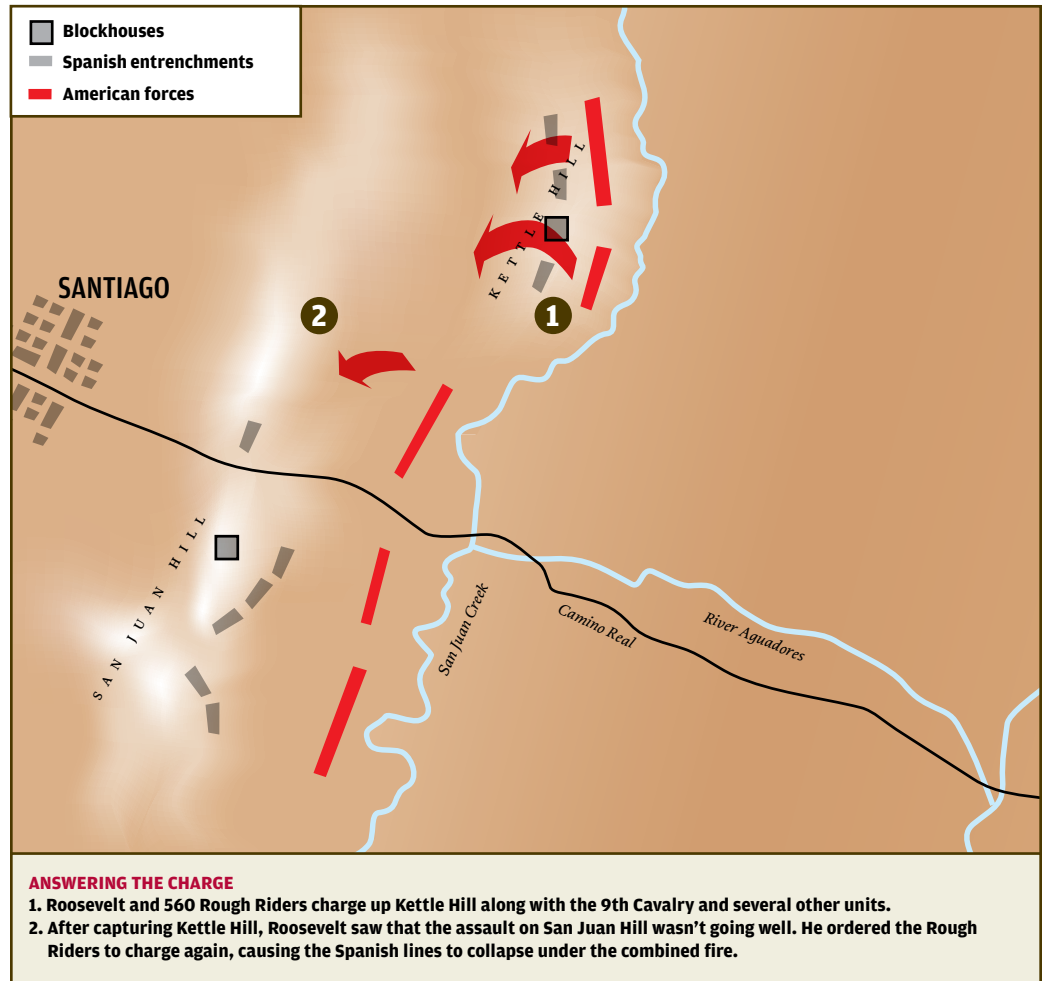
In this two-part series, we are taking a look at some of the lesser-known facts surrounding Theodore Roosevelt and his “Rough Riders,” the 1st Volunteer Cavalry Regiment. There are many myths surrounding the formation of this unit and its role in the Battle of San Juan Hill. We hope to dispel a few of those notions and replace them with the fascinating true story of what happened when the Rough Riders made their charge.

THE AMERICAN ARMADA On June 14, 1898, Roosevelt and the Rough Riders (560 men all told) left Tampa, Florida, as part of the largest armed force at that time to ever leave American soil. Sixteen thousand men, along with their equipment and supplies, had been shoved into a motley assemblage of ships ranging from modern ocean-going liners to Civil War era paddle steamers. These men were off to defeat the Spanish and to free the people of Cuba.

After six days of wallowing across the Gulf of Mexico at a leisurely four to seven knots, the armada finally arrived on the southern coast of Cuba close to the modern day location of Guantanamo Bay NAS. Their goal was the capture of the city

of Santiago. The plan called for the American Invasion force, led by the corpulent General Shafter, to land at the village of Daiquiri and move west, securing the fishing port of Siboney. They would then move up the road leading to Santiago, some twelve miles to the north. This area was known to be extremely well protected. One ridge line in particular, the San Juan Heights, was going to be a tough nut to crack. The Spanish Commander, General Linares had entrenched his troops on these heights as the last line of defense for the city of Santiago. If he could hold off the Americans for a few weeks, he was confident that malaria, dysentery and a host of other tropical diseases would stop them in their tracks. However, if the U.S. forces could break through, they would capture Santiago and, by extension, Cuba and the entire Caribbean theatre.

At 9:40 AM, the naval bombardment of the shore began. Before long, the bands on board the ships had begun playing the most-requested song of the expedition: “There’ll Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight.” Under the protective guns of the Navy, the landings went relatively smoothly, and by nightfall over 6,000 troops were standing on Cuban soil.



DRIVING FORWARD On June 24th, American forces began moving through the mountainous jungle on the road to Santiago. Local “insurrectos” (insurgents) had warned the Americans that a force of 2,000 Spanish soldiers was laying an ambush on a ridge called Las Guasimas. The Rough Riders, along with another unit of dismounted cavalry, were assigned to advance on the position and drive the Spanish off the high ground. COL Wood and LTC Roosevelt took their 560 Rough Riders up a trail that eventually reconnected with the road near Las Guasimas while a force of 470 Regulars marched straight up the road.

Before long, the Rough Riders were fighting their first battle. They performed admirably. By engaging and turning the enemy’s foremost flank, they were able to bring their entire force to bear on the ridge. The blistering crossfire laid down by the cavalry units drove the Spanish from their trenches and allowed a final charge to take the ridge. General Wheeler, an ex-Confederate General now in command of the advancing force, was heard to shout “We’ve got the damn Yankees on the run!”

Roosevelt’s performance in this battle, coupled with the glowing reports filed by the reporters who accompanied him, immediately

made him a favorite back home. In short order, there was talk of promoting Roosevelt to the rank of Brigadier General, followed quickly by Republican plans to nominate him for Governor of New York. To hear the papers tell it, the Rough Riders had single-handedly captured the ridge. Roosevelt was much more modest about his role, joking about the difficulty of running with a sword banging around between his legs and his policy of shooting at any target that wasn't a tree.

The Americans continued north and prepared for the real test: the assault on San Juan Heights. The plan called for a force to take El Caney, a fort protecting the northern supply route to Santiago. At the same time, the other two divisions would launch an assault on the Heights. Once El Caney was captured, that division was to link up with the American right flank and participate in the final assault. The battle was scheduled to begin at dawn the next day.

No sooner had the plans been completed when Roosevelt was notified that Generals Wheeler and Young were ill with fever. Command of the Cavalry Division fell upon General Sumner, and Sumner's command of the 2nd Brigade was handed to COL Wood. This left Roosevelt in sole command of the Rough Riders. He wrote in his journal "to my intense delight, I got my regiment." He had received the rank of Colonel just in time for the decisive battle of the Spanish-American war.

CHARGING KETTLE HILL The Rough Riders were assigned to take Kettle Hill, not San Juan Hill, a promontory that provided flanking support for the main battlements on the Heights. Their role in this assault, much to Roosevelt's furor, was to support the attack by the Regulars.

As the Rough Riders and the rest of the troops moved into position, they came under murderous fire from Spanish troops in their elevated redoubt. Forced to cross a creek at a single point, American troops were cut to pieces. The toll was so high that the mud turned red and the water in the creek flowed purple. From then on, this crossing was known as Bloody Ford. Fortunately the Signal Corps had brought an observation balloon to the front, and before it was shot down, it was able to reconnoiter another crossing. This relieved the bottleneck at Bloody Ford. Unfortunately, it also gave the Spanish cannons a precise location of the advancing column.

Roosevelt, the only Rough Rider on horseback, led his men into position, took cover and began the long wait for the orders to charge. Finally, after a brutal wait of several hours under constant enemy fire, the order was given. Roosevelt wrote: "The instant I received the order I sprang on my horse, and then my 'crowded hour' began."

The charge up Kettle Hill bogged down quickly, with the Regulars unable to make significant progress. Facing down a reluctant Captain of the Regulars, Roosevelt ordered a charge. The Captain refused, and Roosevelt told him in no uncertain terms, "Then let my men through, sir." As the 9th Cavalry, the famed African-American Buffalo Soldiers, tore down a barbed wire fence, the Rough Riders charged through, whooping and shouting like madmen. The remaining 9th, followed by the rest of the Cavalry division, were close on their heels.

Roosevelt rode his horse through the storm of Mauser bullets to within forty yards of the peak of the hill before he was forced to dismount and proceed on foot. In the end, Roosevelt and his orderly reached the peak of the hill first, driving the Spanish before them. Roosevelt's own recollections of these events are more truthful than poetic and describe a mad charge that was perceived through sweat-fogged spectacles and the chaos of war as series of brief impressions and events. Yet throughout it all, he felt as if he had found his proper place. As he wrote later, "All men who feel any power of joy in battle, know what it is like when the wolf rises in the heart."

THE REAL STORY OF SAN JUAN HILL After capturing his objective, he turned his attention to the Infantry charge up San Juan Hill. The attack didn't look to be going well from where Roosevelt stood, and



PICTURE OF VICTORY Teddy Roosevelt poses for a picture shortly after his return from Cuba. Notice the insignia of the US Volunteers and the 1st CAV.

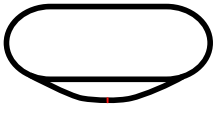
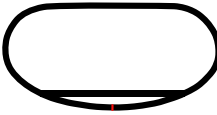
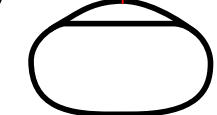
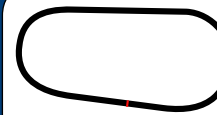
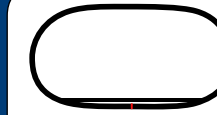
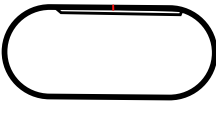


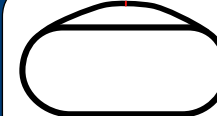
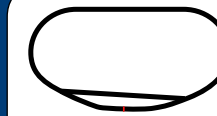
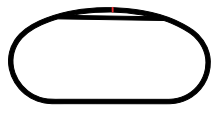
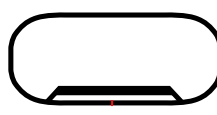
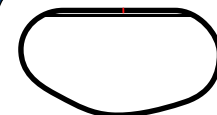
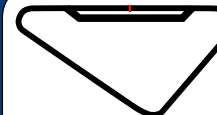
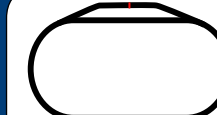
he decided that "Obviously the proper thing to do was help them." Roosevelt commanded the Cavalry Division to commence a continuous volley-fire at the heads of the Spanish on San Juan Hill. This continued for ten minutes until Gatling guns took over from below, and the infantry began its final rush.

Roosevelt, seeing this, leapt over the wire and began a charge to the next hill. Looking back, he discovered that only five men had followed him. Turning back, he admonished his men. "What, are you cowards?" he bellowed. They responded: "We're waiting for the command." In his haste, Roosevelt had forgotten to order his men forward. With a loud, "Forward, MARCH!" the Rough Riders, with the remaining Cavalry, charged down Kettle Hill and up San Juan Hill as the Spanish lines collapsed under the combined assault of Infantry and Dismounted Cavalry. When they reached the top, they found themselves overlooking the city of Santiago. They were now in position to lay siege to Santiago and secure Cuba. Roosevelt, by leading the two charges, now found himself the senior officer in command of the highest crest at the extreme front of the American line.

Already there was talk of the Medal of Honor (President Clinton bestowed the award on him posthumously in 2001), the Governorship of New York, a Senate seat and possibly more. In the end, his well-publicized victory and newfound status as one of the most famous men in America would catapult him into the highest office in the land.

Roosevelt's Rough Riders have been celebrated as the main players in the Battle of San Juan Hill, and while they played a key role in the victory, it is important to remember that they made up a small part of the overall force.

In the end, the U.S. Army forces assaulting San Juan Hill accomplished something that most military students would consider impossible. They attacked over open ground and captured a high redoubt using weapons inferior to the securely entrenched enemy. Roosevelt's Rough Riders led the way to this victory by being the first to break the Spanish line on Kettle Hill and by being the first to take the crest of San Juan Hill. **GX**

 <p>ATLANTA 1.54 miles 24° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	 <p>CALIFORNIA 2.0 miles 14° turn banking D-SHAPED OVAL</p>	 <p>CHICAGOLAND 1.5 miles 18° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	 <p>DARLINGTON 1.37 mile 23°-25° turn banking OVAL</p>	 <p>DOVER 1.0 mile 24° turn banking OVAL</p>
 <p>HOMESTEAD-MIAMI 1.5 miles 8° turn banking OVAL</p>	 <p>INDIANAPOLIS 2.5 miles 9° turn banking OVAL</p>	 <p>KANSAS 1.5 miles 15° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	 <p>LAS VEGAS 1.5 miles 12° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	 <p>LOWE'S 1.5 miles 24° turn banking QUAD-OVAL</p>
 <p>MICHIGAN 2.0 miles 18° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	 <p>NEW HAMPSHIRE 1.06 miles 12° turn banking OVAL</p>	 <p>PHOENIX 1.0 miles 9°-11° turn banking OVAL</p>	 <p>POCONO 2.5 miles 6°-18° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	 <p>TEXAS 1.5 miles 24° turn banking QUAD-OVAL</p>

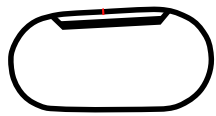
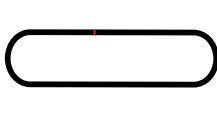
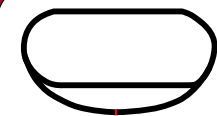
ARE ALL THE DIFFERENT NASCAR NEXTEL CUP TRACKS MAKING YOUR HEAD SPIN?

HERE'S YOUR GUIDE TO THE INS AND OUTS—LEFTS AND RIGHTS—OF THIS SEASON'S RACE TRACKS.

by Kenneth White

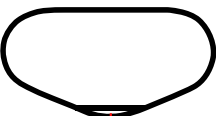
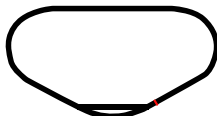

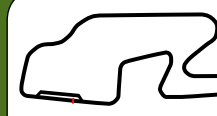
SPEEDWAYS

Between 1 and 2.5 miles in length, these tracks are a balancing act between speed and cornering. A strong car can move through the field very quickly. Greg Biffle's favorites are Texas, Michigan and Atlanta.

 <p>BRISTOL 0.53 miles 36° turn banking OVAL</p>	 <p>MARTINSVILLE 0.53 miles 12° turn banking OVAL</p>	 <p>RICHMOND 0.75 miles 24° turn banking OVAL</p>	<p>SHORT TRACKS At less than 1 mile, these tracks aren't fast moving, but they are guaranteed to deliver racing excitement. No one comes out of these tracks without a few scrapes and telltale tire marks. Bristol on a Saturday night under the lights is the best!</p>
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ROAD COURSES

Equally hated and loved by race fans, these tracks trace back to the roots of stock car racing, when the bootleggers had to turn left and right. Even the most skilled oval drivers are tested by the varied terrain and sharp, 180° hairpin turns.

 <p>DAYTONA 2.5 miles 31° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	 <p>TALLADEGA 2.66 miles 33° turn banking TRI-OVAL</p>	<p>SUPERSPEEDWAYS Longer than 2.5 miles, these tracks are about the science of speed. Drafting makes or breaks drivers who are racing bumper-to-bumper and door-to-door at 180 mph. One mistake equals a twenty-car pileup.</p>	 <p>INFINEON 1.99 miles</p>	 <p>WATKINS GLEN 2.45 miles</p>
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SOURCE: NASCAR.COM

Fans of NASCAR Nextel Cup racing know there's more to racing than just driving around in circles. Each track has its own personality, its good qualities, and its flaws. From the slide through turn two at the Pocono Raceway to the unforgiving demolition derby of the Bristol Motor Speedway, a good driver can tell you about every bump in the pavement. But what is the real difference between the racetracks?

TRACK SHAPE The first thing to notice about the tracks is their shape. When officials refer to a track as being an "oval," they're talking about more than geometry. An oval is any round track.

Ovals can come in a few different configurations: the standard oval, the tri-oval, and the quad-oval. The distinction between them is made by comparing sharp turns with long, banked turns. At Dover International Speedway, the corners are long and banked at a high 24 degrees. It's the quintessential oval. A tri-oval has three distinct turns—two long curves and one short one, called the dogleg. Pocono Raceway is an easy fit for this category, since it's shaped like a giant billiards rack. Quad-ovals like Texas Motor Speedway are the newest breed of racetracks in the circuit. These tracks are basically tri-ovals with a short straight in the middle of the dogleg.

Of course, even the most logical explanations have their exceptions. The four distinct turns of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway may seem like a quad-oval, but it's classified as a regular oval. California Speedway in Fontana is classified as a "D-shaped" oval since it has only one straightaway.

To show you that NASCAR drivers can turn right, too, a couple of road courses are included in the series. Watkins Glen International and Infineon Raceway link stock car racing with its other racing cousins, Indy Racing and Formula One. Race fans have mixed feelings about the road courses—enthusiasts like the legacy and history of road racing, but the lack of all-out speed and passing leave action-oriented fans feeling short-changed. However you feel about road courses, these two tracks have been around for over forty years, and they'll be a part of NASCAR for many years to come.

BANKING By adding banking to the turns of the tracks, races have become much more exciting since the days of flat tracks. Banking allows drivers to enter the turns fast and stay fast all the way through them. A relatively flat track like Martinsville Speedway will slow cars down to 60 mph, while the higher banking of a track like Atlanta Motor Speedway allows drivers to run 170 mph through the corner.

Banking can also increase a track's excitement factor. Drivers are driving a slow 95 mph at Bristol Motor Speedway, but the sense of speed is much greater than the wide-open, 188 mph average speed at Talladega Superspeedway. At Phoenix International Raceway, turns 1 and 2 have 11 degrees of banking and turns 3 and 4 have 9 degrees. Varying the banking pushes the drivers to work the whole track by establishing a higher or lower driving line for each turn.

SURFACE In the golden days of stock car racing, the first track was carved out of the beach in Daytona. Later tracks were built with dirt, and even an airport runway was used as part of an early road course. The Indianapolis Motor Speedway was once paved with bricks, earning it the famous nickname, "The Brickyard." Today, most tracks are switching to an advanced asphalt designed to withstand the high heat generated by the cars' tires and the cold of winter that would crack prior surfaces.

Dover International Speedway is one exception to this trend. It was paved with concrete in 1995, giving it a unique white appearance—and making the skid marks stand out more. Bristol Motor Speedway is the other all-concrete track in the series.

While the details of surface materials can be left to the engineers, drivers have to be aware of a track's grip in order to ensure maximum cornering speeds. Chicagoland Speedway is one of the tracks paved with newer, polymer-based materials, and crews trying to take advantage of its powerful grip have quickly found their tires worn to shreds. Five drivers cut tires there in the 2005 season.

FAVE TRACKS Once you find a track you like to watch, it doesn't take much to find similar tracks you may also enjoy—be they road courses, short tracks, or the speedways. You may think that some of these tracks are exactly the same, but drivers can tell you their personalities are all different. Some are fun and some are unforgiving. No matter which style of racing you like, at the end of the season, all the races count. **EX**

TRACK FACTS

Fastest Qualifying Speed
1987 212.9 mph Talladega Superspeedway Bill Elliott

Slowest Track (average speed)
Infineon Raceway 81 mph

Fastest Track (average speed)
Talladega Superspeedway 188 mph

Oldest Active Track
1909 Indianapolis Motor Speedway

Newest Active Track
2000 Chicagoland Speedway



WHICH CLUB WOULD YOU USE?

Would you use your putter on the tee box or use a sand wedge to putt? Using the wrong club can destroy your game, just like using the wrong leadership tool can destroy your organization.

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SERVICES:

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- APIC application/ Strategic plan reviews
- Mobile Training Teams on most subjects

"The personnel at the ORTC have put in extra time and effort to help our state with the development of our strategic plan."

MG William D. Wofford
AR ARNG

"ORTC has worked with our state on several occasions and we will continue to use their valuable experience in helping us achieve our strategic planning goals"

COL William (Todd) Boyd
NC ARNG, Chief of Staff

For more information contact the ORTC or view the web site.

**Comm: 501-212-4623; DSN: 962-4623
Email: ortc@pec.ngb.army.mil**

www.pec.ngb.army.mil



SUN-BAKED SMILES From left, Tim Klinger, Jonathon Newton, Derek Jones and Ramie Colson are taking on the FLW Outdoor Tournament for the ARNG.

GONE FISHIN'

THE NEW NATIONAL GUARD PROFESSIONAL ANGLING TEAM HITS THE RIVER.

by Trisha Blake, FLW Outdoors

The Army National Guard announced the members of its professional angling team to compete in FLW Outdoors tournaments in 2006. This veteran group of anglers consists of Ramie Colson, Derek Jones, Tim Klinger and Jonathon Newton.

Earlier this year, the Army National Guard entered into an agreement that will ensure visibility on all 10 of the FLW Outdoors tournament trails. Through its partnership with FLW Outdoors, the Army National Guard will sponsor a four-member angling team that will compete on various FLW Outdoors tournament trails.

Cadiz, KY, pro Colson is a veteran tournament angler, having fished in 76 FLW Outdoors events since 1995, spanning the Wal-Mart FLW Tour, Stren Series and Wal-Mart BFL. In his career, Colson has notched 18 top-10 finishes including two victories in BFL competition. Last season marked Colson's first on the FLW Tour, and he returns in 2006 with valuable experience under his belt. "I am very pleased and honored to be a part of the National Guard team," Colson said. "We've got a great group of anglers, and hopefully we can make the National Guard proud."

Jones was relentless last season on the FLW Tour, finishing second in the Co-angler Division points race. His runner-up designation was bolstered by two top-10 finishes at Beaver Lake and Wheeler Lake. In 2006, the Chicago native will step up and fish the FLW Tour as a pro. "I'm excited for this season, with it being my first full season as a pro," Jones said. "I'm especially proud to be part of the National Guard team because of what they stand for."

Klinger, a renowned Western pro from Boulder City, NV, has made the top 10 in 15 of his 51 FLW Outdoors events. In 2004 Klinger won \$200,000 at the Wal-Mart Open on Beaver Lake by catching a final-round total of 10 bass weighing 24 pounds, 1 ounce. After a year on hiatus, Klinger is excited about his return to the FLW Tour. "It feels awesome," Klinger said. "I am really proud to be out there fishing and supporting the men and women who protect our country."

Newton, a native of Rogersville, AR, has 11 top-10 finishes in 79 FLW Outdoors events since 1995. In both 2003 and 2004, Newton scored major victories in back-to-back seasons in the Stren Series Central Division. In his career,

he has earned over \$150,000 fishing the FLW Tour, Stren Series (formerly the EverStart Series) and BFL. In 2006 Newton is set to embark on his third season as an FLW Tour pro. "I've been really fortunate, because everything I've worked for is finally coming true," Newton said. "It's an honor to be part of the National Guard team because of what it represents. We're representing our country."

COL Richard Guzzetta, chief of the Army National Guard's Strength Maintenance Division, said: "These four anglers represent the National Guard's 350,000 members who are serving their communities and their country every day. We are extremely proud of each of them and look forward to a great inaugural season. It is also important to recognize Army National Guard Sergeant Melinda Mize, who was selected to be a part of the National Guard team but is being deployed to Kuwait. Thanks, Melinda for your service, and we'll see you when you return."

For more information about FLW Outdoors tournaments, visit FLWOutdoors.com or call (270) 252-1000. **GX**

DON'T SCARE THE FISH Jonathon Newton reels in a largemouth bass from the deck of the National Guard bass boat.



KATHY R. WILLIAMS

**350,000 SOLDIERS DRIVE THIS CAR.
AND THERE'S ROOM FOR MORE.**



Get behind the No. 16 car driven by Greg Biffle—it was built through teamwork and fueled by pride. For over 367 years, the Guard has answered the call to protect our country and community. If you're ready to answer the call and join an elite fighting force—in the Army National Guard, **YOU CAN.**



YOU CAN

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START Fresh™

“FITNESS ANYWHERE”

FOR A FRESH START TO THE NEW YEAR

By SSG Ken Weichert

PART 2 OF 2

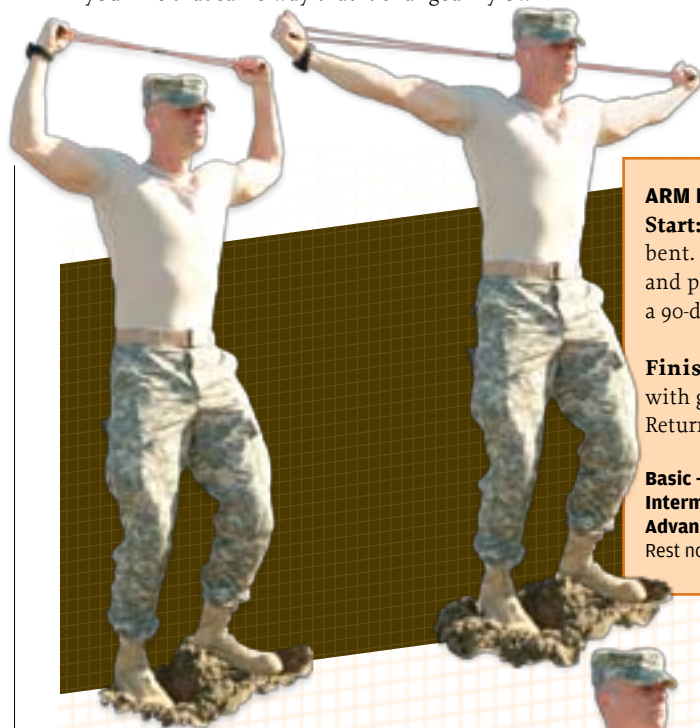
In the last issue of *GX* Magazine we introduced a special style of physical fitness training that can be performed anywhere at anytime with tubing made by SPRI Products. With these new exercises we hope that you are on your way to START FRESH for the New Year! It's a 'fitness anywhere' concept that is certain to change your life that same way that it changed my own!



SSG Ken Weichert, six-time Soldier of the Year and veteran of both Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, began the START Fitness™ program in 1997. Now partnered with his wife Stephanie, Strategic Director of START Fitness and a certified personal trainer, the Weicherts are conquering the fitness industry.



SGT Ken and Stephanie Weichert



TRICEPS

ARM EXTENSION

Start: Stand hip width apart, knees slightly bent. Grasp the handles of the Ultratube and place behind head with arms forming a 90-degree angle, palms in.

Finish: Straighten arms until parallel with ground ending with palms facing up. Return to start and repeat.

Basic – 3 sets of 8 repetitions each
Intermediate – 3 sets of 15 repetitions each
Advanced – 3 sets of 30 repetitions each
 Rest no more than 90 seconds between each set.



Many of our tubing exercises are also featured in our Operation Fit to Fight DVD series, available online:
www.startfitness.com

WHICH TUBING IS TOUGHER THAN THE OTHER?

The thicker the tubing, the more advanced it is to use. Experiment with several levels of tubing in order to discover the type that is right for you.

We have over 100 additional physical fitness exercises with the Xertube and the Ultratube by SPRI Products. We developed this program to provide you a way of obtaining lean muscle strength with light equipment that takes little space. Most of all, it's a great way to get ready for the APFT!
GX

SEND AN EMAIL:
askthetrainer@startfitness.com

XERTUBE AND ULTRATUBE PRODUCTS FOUND AT:
www.spriproducts.com

BICEPS

ARM CURL

Start: Stand in a staggered, narrow or wide stance, place the Xertube under arch of front foot, or both feet, and slightly bend your knees. Grasp handles and position hands at side of body with palms up.

Finish: Bend elbows and curl arms up in front of body to shoulder height. Keep wrists firm and elbows at the sides of your body. Return to start and repeat.

Basic – 3 sets of 8 repetitions each
Intermediate – 3 sets of 15 repetitions each
Advanced – 3 sets of 30 repetitions each
 Rest no more than 90 sec. between each set.



Warning: Do NOT lean backwards during any of these exercises. Always consult your Physician before attempting any new exercise routine or diet.

PART 3 OF 3

OPERATION LIVING FIT™

By SSG Ken Weichert

This issue marks the third and final part of a three part series, *Operation Living Fit™*. We will complete our program on how to maximize the APFT (Army Physical Fitness Test).

On page 67 of *GX 2.6* we provided you one of our weekly arms and chest exercise routines. And on page 70 of *GX 3.1* we provided you one of our weekly abdominal muscle exercise routines. Add both parts in order to build lean muscle strength in areas of your body that you will use for the first two events of the APFT.

Now, the 2-Mile Run!

It normally takes at least 21 days of running consistently for the body to be prepared for a running test of some kind. Having said that, it's time to add a running exercise routine to Parts 1 and 2 of *Operation Living Fit™*. With all three strategies you are certain to achieve the best APFT score of your military career!

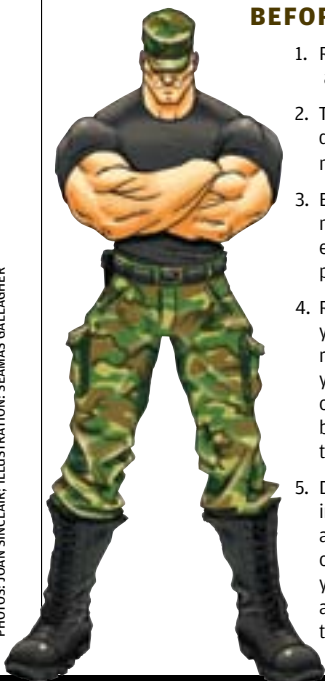


GOING THE DISTANCE
SGT Ken prepares you for your best APFT Score (Army Physical Fitness Test).

Maximizing the Running Event and Putting it all Together

BEFORE YOU BEGIN:

1. Remember to always consult your Physician before attempting any new Physical Fitness routine or diet.
2. The Aerobic and the OFF days are necessary for muscle recovery periods.
3. Be certain to eat 20-60 minutes after each exercise period for proper muscle recovery.
4. Remember NOT to drop your head during your running exercises. Tilt your head up slightly in order to promote better breathing and posture techniques.
5. Do NOT perform any intense physical fitness activities within 48-hours of the APFT. That way your body has rested an ample amount of time for the test.



PHOTOS: JOAN SINCLAIR; ILLUSTRATION: SEAMAS GALLAGHER

MONDAY RUNNING AND ABDOMINAL CIRCUIT TRAINING

Warm-up (Running-In-Place) 2 MIN
Stretching Exercises 8-10 MIN
1/2 Sit-ups (AKA abdominal crunch*) 90 SEC
Run a 1/4 Mile Either around a Track, or the same distance around your Street Block (Outdoor), Or on a Treadmill at a good pace (Indoor)
Rest 45 SEC

Repeat the cycle 5 additional sets (Total - 1.5 Miles of Running and 6 sets of Crunches)

Stretching Exercises (Cool Down) 8-10 MIN

TUESDAY

PUSH-UP MAINTENANCE

Do not compromise your stretching exercises. The three components of Physical Fitness are STRENGTH, STAMINA, and FLEXIBILITY.

Warm-up (Running-In-Place) 2 MIN
Stretching Exercises 8-10 MIN
APFT Diagnostic of the Push-up event 2-MIN (The best performance of Push-ups for "GO TO MUSCLE FAILURE!")
Rest 2 MIN
Crunches 3 MIN
Rest 2 MIN
Run (Moderate) 1 MILE

You can expand your upper body training by stopping every 1/4-mile in order to perform Triceps Dips until near muscle failure each set.

Stretching Exercises (Cool Down) 8-10 MIN

Maximizing the Running Event and Putting it all Together

WEDNESDAY

RUNNING AND JOGGING INTERVAL TRAINING

Interval training simply prepares you for faster speeds when it's really needed during testing periods.

You will see your stamina and endurance improve every week that you endure this strategy. Simply increase the sprinting distances and decrease the jogging distances in future exercise periods. You can also adapt this routine by running against a colleague for every sprint period.

Warm-up (Running-In-Place) 2 MIN
Stretching Exercises 8-10 MIN
Sprint the Stretches and Jog the Curves 2 MILES

OUTDOOR TRACK – 8 Laps on a half-mile
 CITY BLOCK – If you don't have a track you can sprint the long sections of city block and jog the ends for the same distance.
 Or, TREADMILL – if you prefer to be indoors on a treadmill, sprint .075 mile on the treadmill and immediately reduce the speed to a jogging pace for .050 mile. Repeat for 2 miles. Feel free to change up the distance of sprinting and jogging – just be sure to go 2 miles.

Rest 2 MIN
Crunches 3 MIN
Stretching Exercises (Cool Down) 8-10 Min



STEP UP
 Prepare your body with strength and endurance

THURSDAY

STRETCH PERIOD

Reserve this day for a great deal of stretching exercises, or YOGA or PILATES. This way you can rehabilitate sore muscles.

Warm-up (Running-In-Place) 2 MIN
Stretching Exercises 40-50 MIN

FRIDAY

ENDURANCE RUN

The key to conditioning your body for the 2-Mile Run test is to train with more distance. In other words, to be ready for 2-Miles, you have got to practice with 3-Miles.

Warm-up (Running-In-Place) 2 MIN
Stretching Exercises 8-10 MIN
Run 3 MILES (Give it your best!)
Rest 2 MIN
Stretching Exercises (Cool Down) 8-10 MIN



FULL SPEED AHEAD
 Alternate sprinting and jogging as you prepare for the APFT.

Operation Living Fit™ does not end here.

This is simply the start of many great things to come. Be sure to email us with any question that you may have at askthetrainer@startfitness.com. Enjoy your workouts! HOOAH!

askthetrainer@startfitness.com

SATURDAY

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Warm-up (Running-In-Place) 2 MIN
Stretching Exercises 8-10 MIN

Step-ups 30 reps on each leg x 3 SETS
Close-Grip Push-ups 30 SEC
Crunches 30 SEC
Normal-Grip Push-ups 30 SEC
Crunches 30 SEC
Wide-Grip Push-ups 30 SEC
Crunches 30 SEC

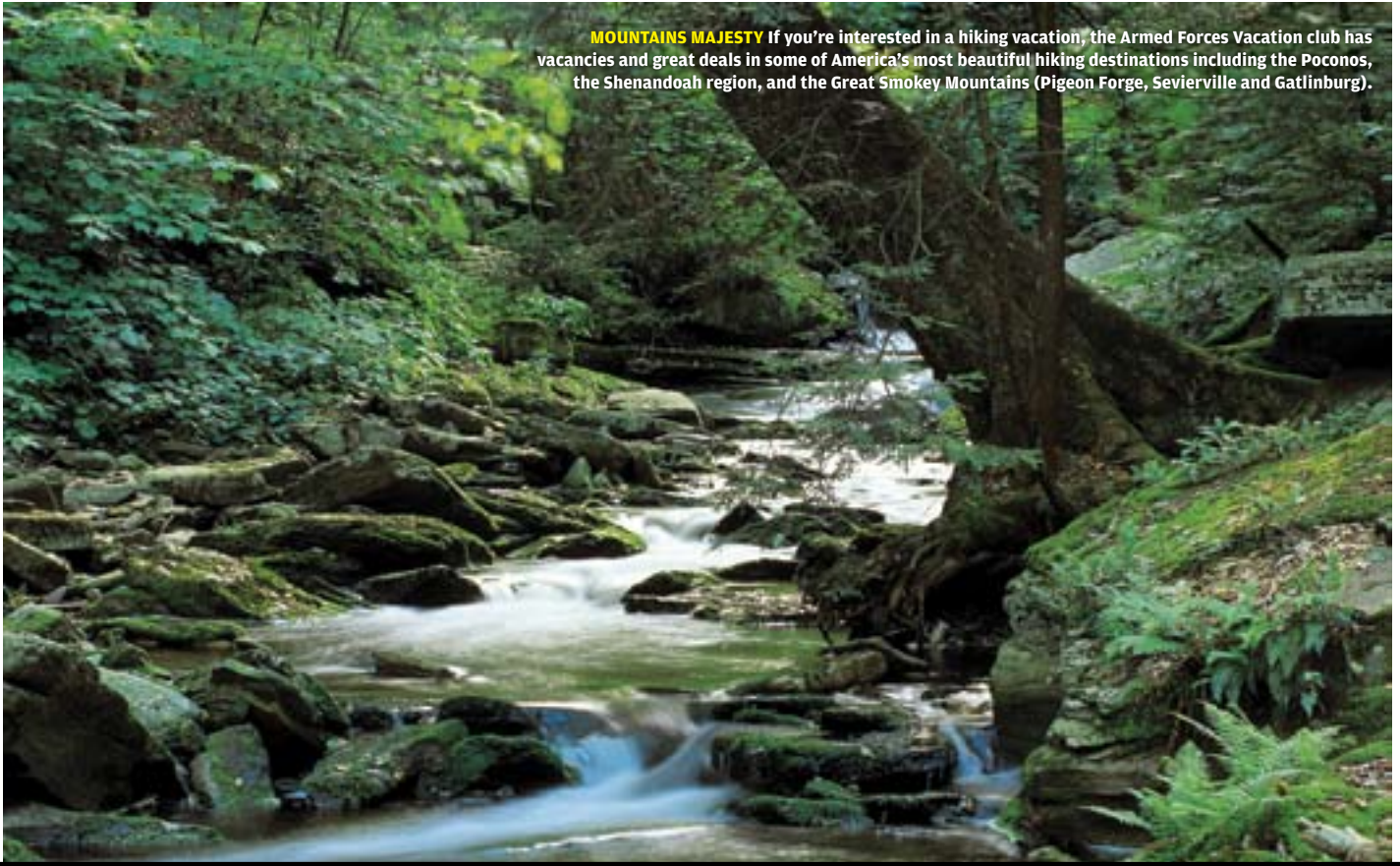
REPEAT THIS CYCLE 3 ADDITIONAL TIMES

Light Run 1.5 MILES outside or on a treadmill
Stretching Exercises (Cool Down) 8-10 MIN

SUNDAY

OFF (RECOVERY DAY)

MOUNTAINS MAJESTY If you're interested in a hiking vacation, the Armed Forces Vacation club has vacancies and great deals in some of America's most beautiful hiking destinations including the Poconos, the Shenandoah region, and the Great Smokey Mountains (Pigeon Forge, Sevierville and Gatlinburg).



START HIKING™

OPERATION YOSEMITE BOUND 5

By SSG Ken Weichert

Hiking Half Dome is no easy feat in one-day. The 17-mile round-trip journey is steep and intense. Only the physically fit and well-prepared experience the adventure without problems. Because of our training and preparation, we were also able to rescue injured and lost people along the way. It was an experience that will live with all of us for the rest of our lives.

SAFETY BRIEFING

The START Fitness™ team has been leading expeditions across California for over eight years. Prior to every special event our Tactical Instructors always provide “Safety Briefings.” In our briefings, we also stress that any expedition can easily turn into a “rescue mission.” The bottom line of the Safety Briefing is to prepare for the worst in order to achieve the best!

Last summer we led a group of civilians to the Half Dome Summit in world famous Yosemite National Park. This mission marked the fifth time I have led new hikers up Half Dome. Coincidentally, it was also the fifth time my teammates and I have discovered and aided lost and injured people while hiking.

THE MISSION:

OPERATION YOSEMITE BOUND 5

My team was comprised of members from my civilian fitness boot camp. Part of the training for missions such as these include intense physical fitness and detailed lectures covering emergency medical, land navigation, and outdoor gear packing training.

My friend and START Fitness instructor, Sensei Lohsen (Sensei is Japanese for “Karate teacher”) and I arrived at the Yosemite View Lodge on a Friday night. The rest of the team began their four-hour drive to Yosemite from San Francisco at 8:00 am on Saturday. Upon

arrival, I issued my Safety Briefing while they ate heartily.

When hiking Half Dome, I prefer to start later in the day in order to avoid crowded trails. The thought is, begin mid-afternoon, summit at sunset and make our way back to the van under the light of the moon wearing headlamps.

At 3 pm we headed to the trailhead to begin an incredible journey. Sensei Lohsen started out with one group and I with another. On this summer day, the weather was a bit hotter than we had anticipated. Shortly after leaving the trailhead, team members from both teams sounded off through two-way radios, “Drink water! Pay attention to your buddy!”

We reached the first stop, Vernal Falls, early. We made adjustments to our gear and took a moment to note the natural splendor of the waterfall.

Finally, we came out of the wooded areas and began the final approach to the summit by way of a narrow trail and cables. The 400-foot cable climb is the most unique experience in the world! On a mountain that would normally require complex climbing equipment, the National Park Service has taken great care to make this peak accessible for nearly everyone.

Sensei Lohsen, led the first group to the summit. By the time they made it to the summit, the sun was setting on the edge of the horizon.

THE GOOD SAMARITAN RULE

At 11:00 pm, when we made it back to the falls we discovered a family wandering around without flashlights, backpacks or water. They had made it to the summit several hours earlier and had been blindly trying to find their way back down the mountain in the dark. They were cold,



OPERATION YOSEMITE BOUND 5:
 Top: Seeley climbs the cables to the 8,836 foot Half Dome Summit;
 Center: The Team at 7,000 feet;
 Bottom: The final “Hooah” at the Motel. . . Mission Complete!

“There will be moments presented to all of us where we will make the critical choice to serve others during their time of need. I believe it is the actions that we take, or do not take, that define our character.”

— SSG Ken Weichert

dehydrated and lost. I noticed the elderly woman with them was walking with a terrible limp.

My teammates looked to me for leadership. Although a few offered to wait with the family until daylight, I decided that it would be best if we carried the elderly injured woman and led the rest of the family members down the remaining three miles of steep terrain. After examining the elderly woman's potentially broken ankles, I was certain she would need emergency care. I feared that additional time in the wilderness could advance the injury beyond repair. Besides, the alternative of leaving behind a group of people exposed to wild animals and the elements could potentially put them further at risk.

I stepped into action barking orders, "I want someone with a flashlight in front and in back of every person without one. I want Mike (the biggest guy on our team) to assist the injured woman. I want Jillian in front of her. I want us to go down in two teams. I will be with the lead team that will sprint down the mountain in order to get the vehicles and drive them to the Trailhead. Sensei Lohsen will take command of the trail team. I want the two-way radios with the team leaders. Line up and let's get these people home!" They met my orders with a "HOOAH!"

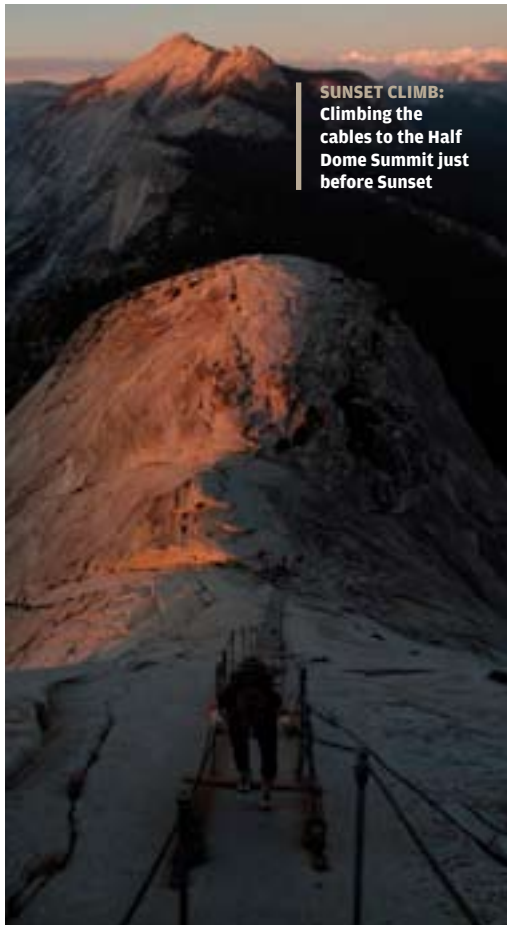
Before taking off down the mountain, individuals from both teams immediately pulled the long-sleeve shirts and jackets off of their backs and placed them over the backs of our new guests. I was awed by their display of selflessness.

RECOVERY

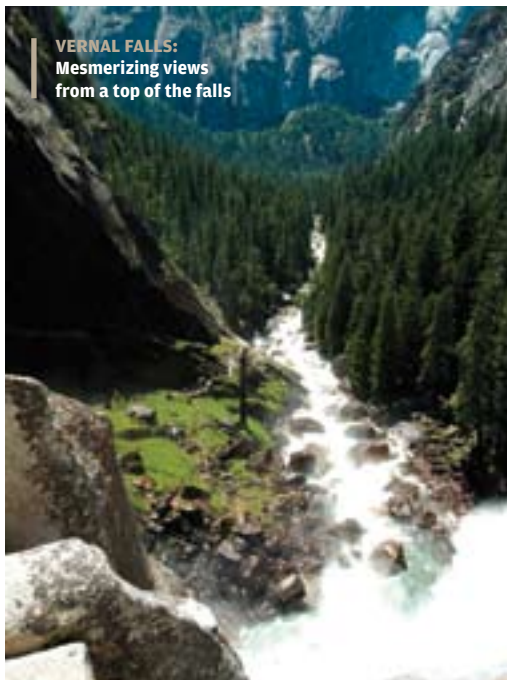
We made it to the motel by 1:30 am and finished the mission with a toast at the lodge pub. One week after the hike and rescue mission, we received a "Thank You" card from the family that we aided. Because my team had placed the needs of others before our own, I felt great about our actions that night on Half Dome. However, I still shudder when I think of people like the family we met that night who are not thoroughly preparing themselves for expeditions such as Half Dome.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The United States military training is second to none! My first military tour of duty was with an active duty Air Defense unit (Patriot). Immediately after that I joined the Army National Guard. I cannot think of a better opportunity to serve our state and our country. In return we receive the same physical fitness and survivability training that our active duty colleagues receive and a great deal of college money as well. Most of all, to be able to use these acquired skills in



SUNSET CLIMB:
Climbing the cables to the Half Dome Summit just before Sunset



VERNAL FALLS:
Mesmerizing views from a top of the falls

the real world is something that makes me proud to be an American!

Finally, enjoy your time outdoors! And, if you wish to join our team this season, simply contact me for more details. HOOAH!

ALL GEARED-UP

As far as a packing list is concerned, we always plan and execute based on weather, environment, and the length of the mission.

Our team received the following packing list as part of WARNO-02.

WORN :

- Trail Shoes or Boots** (1 PAIR)
SSG Ken suggests: Asics Trail Shoes \$55-\$95
- Athletic Socks** (1 PAIR)
SSG Ken suggests: Thorlo socks \$20-\$25
- Shirt** (1)
SSG Ken suggests: Underarmour \$25-\$30
- Athletic trousers or shorts** (1 PAIR)
- Hat** (1)

PACKED:

- Water** (AT LEAST 1.5 LITERS)
SSG Ken suggests: Camelbak, or T.H.E. PACK made by SPEC OPS, \$60-\$160
- Athletic Socks** (1 PAIR)
- Light Jacket or Pull-over** (1)
- Gloves** (1 PAIR)
- Headlamp or Flashlight** (1)
SSG Ken suggests: BLACK DIAMOND headlamp. \$25-\$45

OPTIONAL:

- Hiking Poles** (1 PAIR)
- Protein Bars**

THE START FITNESS™ TEAM PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING:

- First Aid
- Rations (MRE) and Snacks
- Two-way Radios
- Forest and Parking Permits
- Maps
- Compasses
- Water Purifier

SGT Ken has reviewed many products in each category while hiking more than 150 summits over the past eight years. Prices are approximated.



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For more information visit:
www.startfitness.com

GADGET REVIEW

Nintendo DS

Brothers West

by Chris and Jason West

The arrival of a single Nintendo DS came as a tragic blow to productivity and fraternal bonds at *GX*. The combination of hours spent playing on our newest and shiniest toy and even longer hours spent scheming on how to get the DS out of the other Brother's grubby mitts quickly led to missed deadlines and harsh words from our Publisher. Duly chagrined, we put the DS down long enough to write up a review.

The DS, so named for its distinctive dual screens, is cooler than the dark side of the pillow. About the size of a paperback novel, the system's basic controls are the same as the older Game Boy Advance (GBA) with two significant additions: a touchscreen and a built-in microphone. Although neither of the games we reviewed on this system made extensive use either of these features, the potential for innovative interfaces seems high. The colors are bright, if a bit toony, and both displays are clear and easy to view in any light. Even under the ridiculously heavy use we made of this little beauty, its rechargeable battery seemed to live up to the impressive 6-8 hour life claimed by Nintendo.

We were particularly pleased to discover that the DS could slot and play games from our classic GBA. In fact, it's possible to carry your DS with a new DS and a GBA game slotted at the same time. A small detail, but it's a nice touch, ensuring that when we got tired of getting spanked by the

About the size of a paperback novel, the system's basic controls are the same as the older Game Boy Advance (GBA) with two significant additions: a touchscreen and a built-in microphone.

new Mario Kart, we could immediately fall back on our greatly underrated Pacman mastery to soothe our wounded egos.

Another big bragging point/feature for the DS is its wireless networking (WiFi) capability. Not being big fans of hardware configuration, it was with more than a little trepidation that we approached the WiFi setup feature in Mario Kart. We were shocked, frankly, shocked. With very little prodding on our part, it took less than two minutes for this clever little gadget to find the available wireless network and connect. In no time at all, we were being schooled by 12 year-olds from around the world. (Stupid Koopa shells)

If we had to find something to complain about, and we do, just on principal, it's that the system is a little too large. It can't disappear easily into a pocket when you see the boss coming is



**WATCH OUT
KART RACERS
Bowser Shell has
a roar that will
scare the wits out
of other drivers.**

GAMES

Mario Kart DS

"I hate that little mushroom dude. I won't go into it, I'm just saying. . ." Somehow, despite a couple of decades playing games, we had never spent any time on the long-lived Mario Kart series. The three of you who read this column regularly will know we're more into strategy and shooting games than other genres. We were therefore pleasantly surprised to discover in addition to good basic racing, Mario Kart offers plenty of opportunities to harass and take out opponents with an entertaining arsenal of weapons including turtle shell-looking projectiles, banana peels, ghosts, and bombs. When we started getting into this one, we were grateful that we had only managed to lay our hands on one DS. The convenient "friend code" feature of the WiFi connection allows you to easily connect and compete head-to-head with friends in the same room or on opposite sides of the planet. The urge to hear one's brother exclaim violently when stealing a last minute race victory would likely have overwhelmed us. This family-friendly title is an excellent option for anyone looking for something more than a standard racing game.



COURTESY OF NINTENDO CORP.

what we're saying. Also, the game "cartridges" are so small that we were afraid of smashing them. The old GBA games you could just jam in your pocket and not worry. We would have to recommend some kind of case to carry multiple new games.

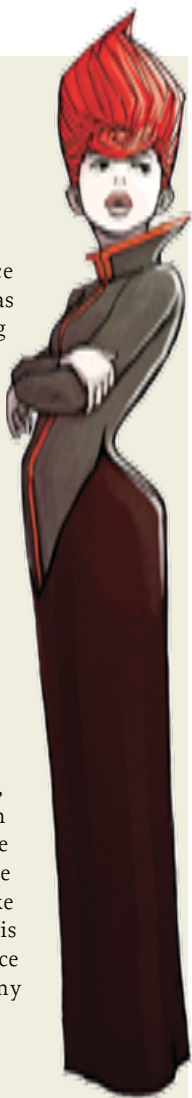
So, mandatory trivial nit-picking out of the way, we can wrap up by heartily recommending the DS. A huge array of titles are already available for this system with some excellent franchises represented including Metroid, Madden NFL, a wide range of the signature Mario line, and the life-sucking Advance Wars. Even though the current gaming experience is excellent, the DS has something more important for a hardware investment: potential. The DS is covered up in potential. Having already publicly embraced our inner geeks, we can go ahead and confess that we are excitedly looking forward to the revolutionary new gaming experience that some designer is currently dreaming up that will take full advantage of all the DS has to offer. **GX**

GAMES

Advance Wars: Dual Strike DS

Ah, Black Hole, our old nemesis. Once again, our classic Advance Wars' enemy has risen, drawing us into the fray and laying waste to our sleep schedule (just one more turn and then I'll turn in). This game has simple, cartoon graphics, only basic sounds, and an occasionally annoying plot line, and yet, it is completely and utterly addictive. It is turn-based strategy at its purest. Straight-forward resource management, excellent unit balance, and a clean interface make this game simple to learn while offering the endless variations of a classic board game like Risk. This newest incarnation of the series offers new units, new CO's, and introduces a certain level of character advancement. The dual screens are put to good use, displaying unit information without obscuring the game map, opening a second front on certain battles, and more. While the graphics and storyline make this seem like a child's game, this strategy masterpiece will appeal to any armchair general.

ADVANCE WAR BLACK HOLE CHARACTERS
Robot-like commanding officer Jugger (left) has firepower and wit. Kindle (right) dresses to kill and is known for her phenomenal urban warfare skills.



COURTESY OF DC COMICS; COURTESY OF NINTENDO CORP.

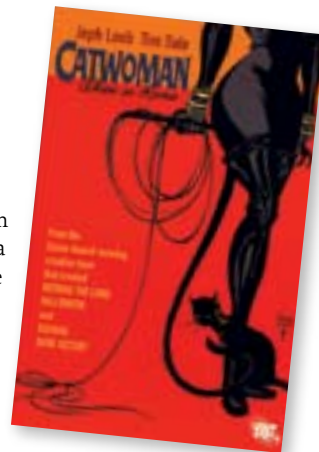
COMIC BOOK VILLAINS

Catwoman: The Feline Fatale

Catwoman has always sort of fallen between the good and evil cracks. She's definitely a villain, but unlike Joker, she's in it for the money, not for the crazy.

Now with "Catwoman: When In Rome," the Eisner Award-winning creative team of Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale deliver an unknown adventure of the Feline Fatale.

If your only Catwoman experience is the unfortunate Halle Berry movie, you owe it to yourself to find out why Catwoman is the only female super villain that matters—to Batman anyway.



More from Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale

CHALLENGERS OF THE UNKNOWN MUST DIE

Fifteen years ago, Jeph Loeb and Tim Sale teamed up for the first time with "Challengers of the Unknown Must Die." It's an odd twist to an obscure group of DC Comics characters, and it's amazing.



BATMAN: THE LONG HALLOWEEN

In 1999, the young writer/artist team of Loeb & Sale were given the chance to interpret the most popular comic character ever, Batman." The Long Halloween" is the result, and not since Frank Miller has someone breathed such life into the Batman universe.

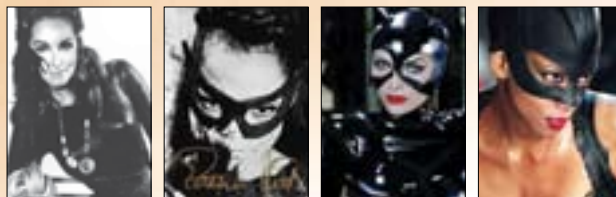


BATMAN: DARK VICTORY

Loeb and Sale followed up "The Long Halloween" with "Dark Victory" (2001). More than a Batman comic, the series is an epic crime story involving every Batman villain you ever heard of as they fight Batman and the mob for control of Gotham City.



CATWOMAN: THE PURRRFECT SCREEN VILLAIN



- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <p>1966
 Julie Newmar
 Most Seductive</p> <p>"What about Robin? Well, I'll have him killed... painlessly!! Well, he is a bit of a bore with his holy this and holy that."</p> <p>Photo courtesy of ABC © 1966 ABC. All rights reserved.</p> | <p>1967
 Eartha Kitt
 Most Purrrfect</p> <p>"The mere thought of pulling a caper without your masked meddling would be most purrrrrturbing to me!!"</p> <p>Photo courtesy of ABC © 1967 ABC. All rights reserved.</p> | <p>1992
 Michelle Pfeiffer
 Most Sympathetic</p> <p>"It's the so-called 'normal' guys that always let you down. Sickos never scare me. At least they're committed."</p> <p>Photo courtesy of Warner Brothers © 1992 Warner Brothers. All rights reserved.</p> | <p>2005
 Halle Berry
 Most Unfortunate</p> <p>"I was supposed to be an artist by now. Instead, I was designing ads for beauty cream."</p> <p>Photo courtesy of Warner Brothers © 2004 Warner Brothers. All rights reserved.</p> |
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“There was a big flash and a fireball right about my knee level. And I said to the other pilot, ‘hey, I think we’ve been hit.’ I tried to move the rudder pedals and the aircraft didn’t respond . . . actually what happened was the rudders were gone. The pedals were gone and so were the bottom part of my legs and I didn’t know that at the time.”—MAJ Tammy Duckworth, 2005

On November 12, 2004, CPT Ladda “Tammy” Duckworth (ILARNG, 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation) was piloting a Blackhawk helicopter near Balad, Iraq when a rocket-propelled grenade struck her aircraft.

“We landed in some really tall grass, about five or six feet tall,” CPT Duckworth relayed in a 2005 interview with Portland’s KATU. “I was looking at it thinking ‘wow, that’s really green grass, that’s really bright green,’ and then I remember trying to reach up to turn off the engines, and just as I tried to lift my hand, that’s when I passed out.”

While at Walter Reed, MAJ Duckworth asked her husband, ARNG CPT Bryan Bowsbey, to pin the Soldier’s Creed for inspiration next to her bed and on her door.

“She is a person of unusual strength and unusual courage,” said LTG Schultz during the promotion ceremony. Just being around her gives you a sense of appreciation for the people who make our Army the organization that it is.”

“This is not so bad,” said MAJ Duckworth of her wounds in an interview with National Guard Bureau Public Affairs. “There is always somebody worse off than you are. I’m just glad it was me and not one of my guys out there.”

MAJ Duckworth, 37, was born in Thailand and raised in Southeast Asia. The Duckworth family came to Hawaii in the mid-80s. After obtaining a bachelor’s degree in political science from the University of Hawaii, MAJ Duckworth joined ROTC while obtaining her master’s degree in International Affairs from

established community service projects in East Timor and Afghanistan and worked to send wheelchairs to areas of Iraq. By the winter of 2004, MAJ Duckworth herself was in a wheelchair.

Yet, instead of collapsing in defeat, MAJ Duckworth challenged our own definitions of strength as she shrugged off her injuries and declared her continued dedication to service and her determination to fly again. MAJ Duckworth’s time at Walter Reed proved merely to be the nesting phase for perhaps her life’s greatest ambitions. MAJ Duckworth would emerge as a nationally recognized symbol of strength and patriotic service.

And as MAJ Duckworth recovered, the Illinois Army National Guard showed us loyalty of Soldiers—the strong family bond that binds them together on the battlefield and even on the home front. Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation, along with Rotary International employees and members of the

LIVING THE CREED

MAJ Ladda “Tammy” Duckworth

By Keith Kawasaki

Co-pilot CWO Dan Milberg of the Missouri Army National Guard carried CPT Duckworth to the Medevac crew that raced down, just feet from the Blackhawk. Initially she was transported to the Combat Surgical Hospital in Baghdad. CPT Duckworth regained consciousness briefly to demand that the medical staff tend to her crew instead of herself. Within hours CPT Duckworth was in Landstuhl Military Hospital in Germany. After a few days, she arrived at Walter Reed Medical Center in Bethesda, MD. CPT Duckworth had lost half of the blood in her body. She lost her right leg from the hip down. Her left leg was gone below the knee, and her right arm was broken in three places.

On Dec. 21, 2004, CPT Duckworth became MAJ Duckworth when LTG Roger Schultz, then director of the Army National Guard, along with several other top officials, promoted the Soldier at Walter Reed.

MAJ Duckworth credits CWO Milberg as the “real hero” of the day. CWO Milberg received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his actions. She also is quick to credit her recovery to the fine medical staff at the Military hospitals; however, many feel it is her remarkable spirit that has lifted her from a disabling catastrophe to her rise as a beacon of optimism and accomplishment.

George Washington University in Washington, D.C. By enlisting into the ROTC program, MAJ Duckworth made her first marks in her family’s long line of military service, dating as far back as the Revolutionary War.

Being in the Military is an honor. So many have come before me who gave in their own way. What’s important is that each one of us gives something back for all the gifts we have for being Americans.

Initially joining the Army Reserve in 1992, MAJ Duckworth switched gears to seek a combat role. She became a helicopter pilot with the Illinois Army National Guard in 1996. By the age of 32, MAJ Duckworth was named commander of an assault helicopter company.

Prior to her deployment in the spring of 2004, MAJ Duckworth worked as a staff supervisor at the worldwide headquarters of Rotary International, in Evanston, IL. She

community, teamed together to make MAJ Duckworth’s home wheelchair-accessible.

By spring of 2005, MAJ Duckworth had enough of idle time and hit the road.

In March MAJ Duckworth went before

Congress on behalf of wounded Military Veterans. Our seriously injured Soldiers are legitimately concerned that, when they transition out of high-end facilities like Walter Reed Medical Center, they will not, in most cases, receive that same level of care in their hometowns. MAJ Duckworth feels that funding for

maintaining the pinnacle of care for service members would keep more Soldiers in uniform and increase morale across the board.

The following month, the USO of Metropolitan Washington recognized MAJ Duckworth at their annual awards dinner. Renowned country artist Wynonna Judd was also honored at the ceremony. In a GX interview, Judd relayed that meeting MAJ Duckworth rendered her speechless—a feat

This is not so bad. There is always somebody worse off than you are. I'm just glad it was me and not one of my guys out there.

that the singer says is not easily done. Judd declared that MAJ Duckworth is “not just a woman surviving; she is thriving.”

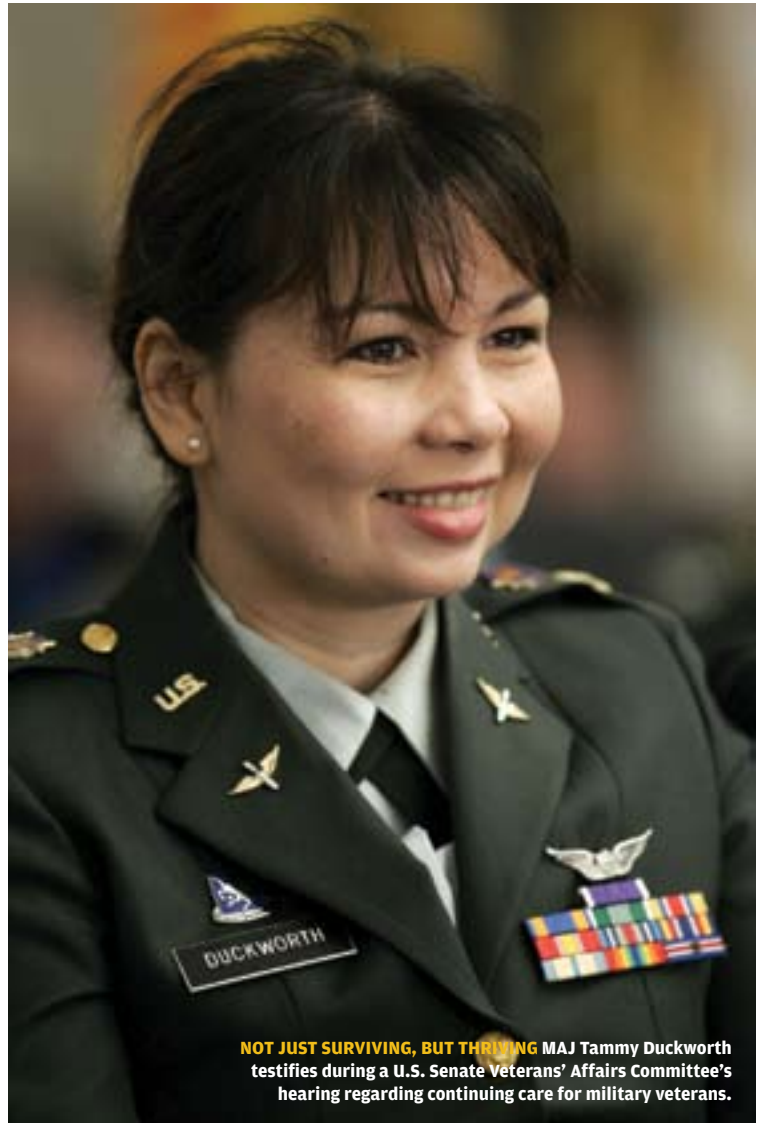
On June 8, 2005, the state of Illinois declared the day Tammy Duckworth Day. “I was just there doing my job,” humbly spoke MAJ Duckworth, according to ABC 7 Chicago.

With all this recognition and fame though, never once has MAJ Duckworth lost sight of her ultimate goal: to fly again. She still attends drill, and through the use of flight simulators, MAJ Duckworth is making her long journey back to the cockpit. She understands the time it will take to get used to flying with prosthetics; however, as always, MAJ Duckworth is undaunted.

And in her “free” time, she is continually busy. MAJ Duckworth returned to Hawaii in September when she was asked to speak at the 2nd Annual International Women’s Leadership Conference in Waikiki.

Governor Linda Lingle, also at the event, relayed to the Honolulu Advertiser: “[T]o have someone like MAJ Duckworth here, who never expected these would be the cards she’d have to play, she had to make a decision . . . and she’s chosen a way that’s going to inspire thousands of people all over the world.”

“Frankly, getting blown up wasn’t a lot of fun and wasn’t my choice,” joked MAJ Duckworth during her speech. Yet, she quickly can turn back to the purpose—jokes aside—sacrifice



NOT JUST SURVIVING, BUT THRIVING MAJ Tammy Duckworth testifies during a U.S. Senate Veterans’ Affairs Committee’s hearing regarding continuing care for military veterans.



NOMINATE A GX HERO

We receive many incredible stories of folks doing fantastic work at home and abroad, but every now and then we receive a story of service that really knocks our socks off. If you know somebody who goes above and beyond in their dedication to your community, our country, or our freedom, please nominate this person to become a featured GX Hero.

A GX Hero can be a Soldier or a civilian. A GX Hero can be any age. The criteria is based on inspiration.

- ★ Do the efforts of your nominee stir a grand tide of patriotism in others?
- ★ Have their efforts changed people’s lives for the better?
- ★ Does their story need to be told?

Our goal is to create the GX Hall of Heroes—a collection of proud and proactive Americans, serving to inspire us all.

Email: Editor@gxonline.com.

Please put “GX Hero” in the subject line.

comes with job. “I am an American Soldier. I serve the people of the United States, and this was a sacrifice that I was willing to make for my organization.”

“In my opinion,” said MG Robert G. F. Lee (HIARNG) to the Honolulu Advertiser, “it’s not a matter of if she’ll be medically qualified [to fly], but when.”

This past November, MAJ Duckworth was onstage again. This time, she was speaking for a Veterans Day ceremony honoring Women in Military Service. And again, MAJ Duckworth’s words, spoken with her matter-of-fact patriotism, renews our own resolve.

“Being in the Military is an honor . . . So many have come before me who gave in their own way . . . What’s important is that each one of us gives something back for all the gifts we have for being Americans,” MAJ Duckworth said to an overflowing audience gathered in Arlington, VA. “I, along with the rest of the Soldiers at Walter Reed, would strap on our new limbs, pick up our weapons and go right back, if we could.”

On December 18, 2005, MAJ Tammy Duckworth announced her candidacy for the Sixth Illinois District of the U.S. Congress. MAJ Duckworth is still retaining her Guard status and says if she is elected and her unit gets the call, she’s going with them. **GX**

NATIONAL GUARD HERO *of the* CARNEGIE FLOOD



ON SEPTEMBER 17, 2004, REMNANTS OF HURRICANE IVAN DEVASTATED CARNEGIE PENNSYLVANIA INUNDATING ITS STREETS WITH SIX FEET OF RAGING FLOOD WATER.

THE HOME TOWN OF SFC RICHARD F. LAWRENCE, 28TH INFANTRY DIVISION (M), PENNSYLVANIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, CARNEGIE, WAS HELPLESS WITH EVEN FIRE ENGINES AND RESCUE VEHICLES IMMOBILIZED DUE TO THE TORRENTIAL RAIN AND FLOODING.

WHILE ASSESSING THE FLOOD, SFC LAWRENCE MET WITH LOCAL POLICE CHIEF, JEFFREY HARBIN, REMARKING THAT HE HAD ACCESS TO A 26-TON TRUCK THAT HE COULD USE FOR RESCUE PURPOSES.



TAKING THE INITIATIVE, SFC LAWRENCE ACQUIRED THE PTL VEHICLE FROM THE ARMORY AND OVER THE NEXT 14 HOURS, WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF LOCAL POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT MEMBERS, RESCUED 236 CITIZENS FROM PRIVATE RESIDENCES, BUSINESSES, AND CHURCHES.



FROM THE LOFT OF THE ALL SAINTS CHURCH THEY RESCUED 21 INDIVIDUALS, INCLUDING, TO LAWRENCE'S SURPRISE, HIS OWN BROTHER.

DURING THE MARATHON SESSION HE RESCUED THE VICTIMS OF AN OVERTURNED CIVILIAN AUTOMOBILE AND PROVIDED FIRST AID AT THE SCENE.

DUE TO HIS ACTIONS ABOVE AND BEYOND THE CALL OF DUTY, SFC RICHARD F. LAWRENCE WAS AWARDED THE PENNSYLVANIA CROSS FOR VALOR. HIS ACTS OF HEROISM REFLECTS GREAT CREDIT UPON HIMSELF AND THE PAARNG.





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