

GX[®]

VOLUME TWO ISSUE TWO

THE GUARD EXP

GREAT GUARD EMPLOYERS

GOING BEYOND
THE CALL OF DUTY

GUARD JOBS

GUARD EXPERIENCE
CAN LAND GREAT GIGS

GUARD HISTORY, NY STYLE

THE 7TH REGIMENT,
FIRST TO BE CALLED
"NATIONAL" GUARD

MAN ON A MISSION

**"The strength of the Army National Guard
depends on Soldiers like you."**

»» LTG H Steven Blum

CHIEF'S FREEDOM CHALLENGE

FOR RRNCO'S



ALWAYS READY. ALWAYS THERE.

01 FEBRUARY - 15 JUNE 2005

Our nation depends on its military to keep it safe, secure, and prosperous. With the current operations in Iraq and around the world, our armed forces, especially the Army National Guard, are in the spotlight, engaging in battle, keeping peace, and delivering humanitarian aid. At home, Guard soldiers are being deployed in significant numbers, bravely giving of themselves in defense of their families, friends, neighbors, and employers. Just as our team has achieved the decisive victory on the ground in Afghanistan and Iraq, so too, we must achieve victory in our mission to achieve the ARNG FY05 End-Strength objective. For more information about the Chief's Freedom Challenge contact your Recruiting and Retention Commander.

The strength of the Army National Guard depends on soldiers like you.

H STEVEN BLUM
Lieutenant General, US Army
Chief, National Guard Bureau

11 ACCESSIONS 01 FEBRUARY - 15 JUNE

2 ACCESSIONS
EACH MONTH
FEBRUARY & MARCH



DIRECTOR OF ARMY
NATIONAL GUARD
COIN & LETTER OF
COMMENDATION

2 ACCESSIONS
EACH MONTH
FEBRUARY, MARCH & APRIL



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ON JULY 4TH, 2005



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WASHINGTON D.C.



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AWARD TROPHY



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MAN ON A MISSION

LTG H STEVEN BLUM



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- IRAQI ELECTIONS
- AMERICAN HERO BAND
- NEW AIR GUARD DEPUTY DIRECTOR



"THE SIGN OF PEACE AND VOTING. TOGETHER IT IS VICTORY."

- Atheer Almudhafer, of VA, declared after casting an absentee ballot at a MD voting station, January 28th. Defense Dept. photo by TSG Cherie A. Thurlby, U.S. Air Force.



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GUARD EQUIPMENT

UP-ARMORED HUMMVEES
BARRETT .50 CALIBER RIFLE
LIQUID ARMOR

GET YOUR GUARD GEAR

EXCLUSIVE NATIONAL GUARD APPAREL

NEW
GREAT FOR
MOTHER'S
DAY!



PGMA01

NEW
DON'T FORGET
FATHER'S
DAY!



PGDA01

PROUD GUARD MOM & DAD

"Proud Guard Mom - Army National Guard, Est. 1636" Baby-doll T-shirt

"Proud Guard Dad - Army National Guard, Est. 1636" T-shirt

Whether you are a mother or father in the Guard OR the mother or father of a Guard Soldier, these heavyweight, poly-cotton t-shirts are great for showing off your pride! S,M,L,XL,XXL Cream (Mom), Olive (Dad)

\$15.50

NEW
WOMEN'S
STYLES



TTA01

"TANK TOP" IMPRINT:



"Tank Top" Tank Top T-shirt
Finally, women's styles and fits in Guard gear! Tank tops are heavyweight, poly-cotton. S,M,L,XL,XXL White
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NEW



GHA01

"GUARD HARD" IMPRINT:



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GGA01

GGB01

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“...today’s Guard member is always ready.”

Fellow Soldiers and Families,

I am proud to say that I think today’s Army and Air National Guard are the most professional ever assembled. You have lived up to every task that has come your way and I know it takes a special kind of citizen to put his or her life on hold and answer their country’s call to colors.

At a time when many people would not realize the sacrifices that take place when you are a Guard member, the volunteer spirit is at an all-time high. Time and again, when we need to send a unit into harm’s way, the roster is filled in no time and with no complaints. And just like the minuteman of our past, today’s Guard member is always ready. Take the Florida Guard for example, last year, the same week many of them returned from Iraq, they were mobilized for hurricane relief. No one complained, they just did their job. For reasons such as these, I am always ready to tell the Guard story anywhere and anytime I get the chance.

Recent travels have given me not only a new appreciation for our great organization but also a better understanding of our challenges and how to better shape our way ahead. For instance, General Blum and his staff are working on new bonus incentives for active Army Soldiers considering joining the Guard. Our recently fielded enlistment bonuses doubled our reenlistment numbers in the first month.

My travels have also brought me in contact with many of our Civil Support Teams (CST). The CST’s are America’s front line of defense should there be an incident inside the borders of the United States. They will be the first military on the scene and they are highly skilled and well equipped to quickly pinpoint the cause of the emergency and communicate with civil authorities. It is a new and very non-traditional unit, so we are learning as we go along. I am committed to evaluating the rank structure, and the way we handle promotions and training. We are creating an environment full of opportunity for them to further their careers—it’s about doing the right thing and creating the chance to succeed.

Finally, I wish to commend the many great American employers who have stood by our Soldiers. Employers, as you will see in this issue of GX, realize they may be called upon to sacrifice in America’s defense. However, they are also swiftly realizing that what they get in return is a tremendous employee. An employee who is drug-free, alcohol-responsible, and knows how to treat superiors and subordinates. Plus, leaders are forged in the



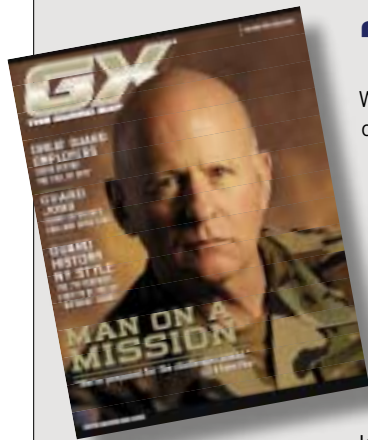
ABOVE: CSM John J. Leonard, Jr., Office of the Chief, NGB

Guard. In the civilian world, there are few leadership schools, and today’s employers realize when their businesses need leaders, their Guard member employees are ready to step forward.

Permit me to emphasize once again how proud I am of the way your generation, and your families, have stepped up to the plate. It isn’t all about pay and benefits and entitlements. There’s a big push right now motivated by patriotism—I see a strong desire to defend freedom every day. Your generation is as strong as ever; bright, committed, and when the chips are down, there’s no whining, you love the flag and it shows. I want you to know you can count on General Blum and myself to keep pushing to make sure you and your families receive everything you should in recognition and appreciation of the sacrifices you make and the protection you provide for us all.

Sincerely,

John J. Leonard, Jr.
Command Sergeant Major
Office of the Chief, NGB



“The Guard Is Family.”

We hear this phrase time and again at GX. It means the connection we all have through the Army National Guard is unique, and we respect it like a family bond. We may not be the ones headed overseas to take the fight to the enemy, but our Soldiers are going. That means we’ll do whatever it takes to help them be the best Soldiers possible.

In an interview with LTG Blum a few months back, the Chief said, “The Guard family is like a three-legged stool. There’s the Soldier, their family, and their employer. Without any one of these legs, the stool falls.”

In this issue of GX, we’ve decided to focus on one of those legs: the Guard employer. We wanted to showcase not just the giants like Home Depot, who are going above and beyond to support their Soldiers, but also the small employers like Best Nurses Too, Inc. who dig extra deep to make sure their Soldier doesn’t worry about his or her job while deployed.

As SSG Timothy Larkin, VAARNG, put it, knowing your employer is pulling for you “is one less stress factor that you’ll have to deal with.”

Soldiers who aren’t worried about their job can focus on their mission. That focus could make the difference in a battle for some street corner in Iraq. That street corner could make the difference in the neighborhood, which makes the difference in the town, which makes the difference in the region, which helps bring the Global War on Terrorism closer to an end.

We all have parts to play in this struggle, and Guard employers, like the family members of the Soldiers themselves, are critical to supporting the Soldiers of the Army National Guard. And the more we support them, the sooner they can all come home.

GX GETS SCHOOLED BY 7TH GRADERS

In our profile of the 278th RCT, we incorrectly identified the symbolism of the 3 stars on the Tennessee flag. They represent the three regions of Tennessee - East, Middle and West; *not* that Tennessee was the third state to join the Union after the original thirteen. We were corrected by SSG Tommy Denson (TNARNG/194th EN BDE) and his 7th Grade World Geography Class from Gibson County School District near Jackson, Tennessee. We consider it a particular embarrassment to make this mistake about our home state, and we plan on taking it up with our high school civics teacher.

GX REDRAW THE MAP

In our Victory Map (pp 50-51 this issue) we have taken the liberty of distorting the world map to allow more space to feature the exploits of the Army National Guard where they are most active. Randolph Finder of the NGB in D.C. called to note with alarm our apparent disregard for geography. In addition to the distorted map, some of our arrows pointed to activities in Iran when they were intended to indicate Iraq. As we assured Mr. Finder, these were honest mistakes and not wishful thinking.

ON THE COVER

LTG H Steven Blum has issued a challenge for every Soldier to help the Guard achieve its full fighting strength. LTG Blum’s mission is to reach the Guard’s strength goals for 2005, and he needs your help to do it. (p. 32)



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

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GX magazine is **not** an official publication of the Army National Guard.

Freedom (noun): the state or quality of being free, especially from the control of some other person or some arbitrary power.

To most people, freedom is the ability to choose their own leader, to vote for laws, to practice their own religion and to be able to say whatever they believe.

This, however, is not exactly how the Soldiers of our Armed Forces define the term. When asking Soldiers what freedom means to them, they will probably say that freedom is a great blessing that most Americans tend to take for granted. Most Americans may think that they are born with this right to be free and that they are supposed to have this right because they are an American citizen. To a Soldier, freedom is not a right, but a privilege.

Soldiers know that freedom is not the result of a birthright, but a selfless sacrifice. Soldiers spend many long hard hours in training, travel thousands of miles from home and risk their lives for the opportunity to defend the freedom of their fellow Americans. They are willing to leave behind their families and possibly lose their lives, not only for the people they know and love, but also for the millions they don't know and will probably never meet.

“Soldiers know that freedom is not the result of a birthright, but a selfless sacrifice... for the millions they don't know and will probably never meet.”

Communities throughout the United States are showing their appreciation for a “job well done” with welcome home parades and ceremonies. Never in our history have there been so many combat veterans returning home as members of the National Guard. The knowledge gained from the deployments is vast and must not be wasted. Lessons learned must be incorporated into our training so that units deploying in the future are fully prepared.

There are many things that returning Guard members can do to continue defending freedom now that their deployment is over. One of the most important is to remain a member of the National Guard. You have defended your country and have earned the rights and benefits that belong to veterans. Go to your local VA office and register for all the benefits you have proudly earned.



ABOVE: CSM Steve Boatwright, 115th Signal Battalion, ALARNG

As a returning veteran, you owe it to yourself to become a member of the American Legion and the VFW. Take the time to become involved in these great organizations that work hard to ensure all veterans continue to receive benefits.

If you are not already a member of your State Enlisted Association, make sure you become a member as soon as you can. Your State Association, as well as the Enlisted National Guard Association of the United States, is working hard to ensure your rights and benefits are protected as well as adding new ones. Now more than ever, Congress needs to hear from National Guard Soldiers.

Freedom doesn't come free, and without the sacrifices of our brave Soldiers, freedom would only be a dream.

Sincerely,

Steve Boatwright

**Steve Boatwright
Command Sergeant Major
115th Signal Battalion
“First in Duty”
Alabama Army National Guard**



A GUARD MUM

I am a proud mum of a Illinois National Guard Son, who has been mobilized down to Fort Polk, LA for JRTC. Through your magazine, I have been able to know and understand what he has been doing. The picture of the medics emerging from the smoke with the wounded in tow touched my heart. Because I knew and was proud that my son helped to train those soldiers from 56th BCT, 36th INF out of Fort Hood, TX. GO GUARD! Thank You—Leah Sullivent

GX: We're proud to be able to tell the stories of the amazing men and women in the Guard. Your son is a true patriot, and you must be very proud.

FAMILY MATTERS

I just received the latest issue and it had a lot of great tips about homecoming and information on deployment and other issues. As a mother, I would love to see some articles about how to help children deal with deployment.

GX: Thank you, Kim. In this issue we're starting a new family section [see pages 52-55] and we hope to include more for the Guard kids, too. We appreciate your encouragement and welcome any suggestions you may have.

SHARP EYES

I am a Guard member currently serving in Afghanistan, and my wife sends me the GX magazines when she receives them. My question is simple, on page 84 of [the last issue] there is a picture of some soldiers who are, according to the caption, patrolling in Iraq. If the caption is correct, then why are they wearing miles gear, and why do they have blank adaptors on their weapons? The picture of the sign directly below the picture of the soldiers... made me catch on to the gear. Iraq is a little more than 1864 miles from Tennessee.—Steven Torpey

GX: Good eyes, Steven. You must have qualified as a sharpshooter. In that photo, the Citizen-Soldiers of the 278th of Tennessee were in fact in training in California.



A homecoming parade in Bethel, Ohio for the 216th Engineering Battalion, OHARNG.

Photo by Lois Luyster

We would also like to note that the photo of the soldiers on page 50 was taken by SPC Joseph Ryan. Thanks for continuing to send us such great photos!



Deployment (again)

People treat me like shattered glass,
like they must be careful,
or the slightest touch
will send pieces flying.
I don't know why.
I remember when that was how I felt.
I fixed my gaze on the floor,
My hair in my eyes
Watching each step as if
Counting them
Would make the days pass quickly.
I was so fragile without you.
But, not this time.
Last time I couldn't get past myself.
But this time,
This time I am proud.
Puffed up so much it lifts my head
And lightens my step
The pride of those chosen few
Who boldly serve a cause
Bigger than themselves.
Pride in you
Pride in our country,
Our home and
Our small piece
in a very big puzzle.
Do I miss you?
More than anyone will ever know.
But I will not fall to pieces.
Not today.
Today I will take his little hand,
And prop her on my hip,
And carry the future
While you protect it.
Holding my head
Higher than ever before.

BELOW: Poet Lindsey Irvin with husband, 1LT Tim W. Irvin, ALARNG, and family



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

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



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ORARNG SGT AWARDED SILVER STAR

Courtesy of Deputy Public Affairs Officer Kay Fristad and MAJ Arnold Strong, ORARNG

ORARNG SGT Matthew Zedwick, 24, of Bravo Company, which has been attached to the 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry Regiment, was awarded the Silver Star in a ceremony February 8th. MG Pete Chiarelli, the Division Commander, after pinning the award on him, told him, "Young Sir, my father won the Silver Star in World War II, and he was my hero. I am so very honored to be in your presence. I salute you." While it is traditional to salute the officer presenting an award, MG Chiarelli raised his hand in salute to SGT Zedwick.

The Silver Star is one the highest awards a Soldier can be awarded, after the Medal of Honor.

"I am so very honored to be in your presence. I salute you."

- MG Chiarelli, Division Commander, as he pinned the Silver Star on SGT Matthew Zedwick

SGT Zedwick was a driver in a four-vehicle combat patrol north of Camp Taji when a vehicle-borne IED hit and destroyed his HMMWV, killing his gunner, SPC Eric McKinley, and severely wounding the vehicle commander, SGT Sean Davis. Despite sustaining extensive wounds himself (13 pieces of fragmentation entered his body), SGT Zedwick pulled SGT Davis from the flaming vehicle and immediately went back for SPC McKinley.

ABOVE: (L-R) CSM and Senior NCO Brunk Conley, 2nd Battalion, with SGT Matthew Zedwick, ORARNG.

Photo by SSG Rebekkah Mae Bruns

The burning HMMWV subsequently became the target of intense small arms fire. SGT Zedwick instinctively returned to the injured SGT Davis, despite the increasing barrage of enemy fire and insured that he was safely behind cover. With SGT Davis' safety established, SGT Zedwick again ran back through the enemy's assault to the HMMWV to attempt to retrieve SPC McKinley. Unable to do so, SGT Zedwick retrieved weapons and the radio before rounds started cooking off in the flaming vehicle. Again facing heavy enemy fire, SGT Zedwick returned with the sensitive items and continued to administer aid to SGT Davis and defend against the enemy ambush until they were both medically evacuated. **GX**



RE-UP BONUS WINDOW EXTENDED

The 90-day window for Re-enlistment/Extension bonuses is extended to a 12-month window for Soldiers who are mobilized and serving OCONUS in a combat zone.

Soldiers who are currently mobilized, serving in a designated combat zone and within 12 months of their original ETS date, may re-enlist or extend to obtain the Re-enlistment/Extension bonus.

Soldiers who are currently serving under stop-loss and have passed their original ETS date may execute an immediate re-enlistment by completing a DD Form 4 series and the proper bonus annex. Bonus start date will be the execution date of the DD Form 4.

Soldiers who have not passed their ETS date but are within the 12-month window may complete a DA4836 and the proper bonus annex. Payments for the new contract will not take place until the day after the original ETS date.

Questions? Contact:
SFC Donald L. Gay
DSN 327-7738 or 703-607-7738
donald.gay@ngb.army.mil

OPERATION SCHOOL HOUSE COALITION DELIVERS SUPPLIES TO KABUL SCHOOL

By U.S. Army Reserve MSG D. Keith Johnson
Office of Military Cooperation - Afghanistan
Public Affairs.

Coalition Forces and the Afghan Army, as part of Operation School House, recently delivered donated school supplies to the Leisa BiBi Maro School in Kabul, Afghanistan.

Operation School House is a group effort started in 2004 by the FLARNG 265th Air Defense Forward 2 and other volunteers from the Kabul Compound.

"Today, we donated materials that were sent to us by many participants, but the biggest donors were the St. Frances DeSales High School in Columbus, OH, and the Longleaf Elementary School in Melbourne, FL," said FLARNG SFC Cindy Southard, the Directorate of Public Works noncommissioned officer in charge for the Kabul Compound.

Leisa BiBi Maro School has approximately 5,500 students in grades 1 through 12. Because the school has more students than can fit in the classrooms, several classes are held outside or in tents. Water is hand pumped from a well. Bathroom facilities consist of four holes dug in the ground.

ABOVE: Afghan boy returns to class with new backpack

Photo by U.S. Army Reserve MSG D. Keith Johnson

Schneider National Carriers provided additional backpacks and supplies. Schneider collected 153 backpacks from employees in Akron and Columbus, OH, Indianapolis, West Memphis, AR, and St. Louis.

Kabul teachers also received materials. LTC Joel Sloss of the Defense Operations Sector of Office of Military Cooperation-Afghanistan, worked with the parents of students at Ocee Elementary School in Alpharetta, GA, to provide for the teachers. LTC Sloss is a fourth grade teacher at Ocee.

Teachers received 20 chalkboards, 20 reams of paper, math manipulative kits, and a lap blanket to help cut down the chill during the winter semester.

One girl expressed her concern, in English, that even though supplies were needed, upgrades to the facilities were needed even more.

"Good for her. What this country needs are more females like her willing to speak out," said SPC Carlos Ramos-Miranda, a member of the 265th. **EX**

LTG BLUM ENCOURAGES EMPLOYER SUPPORT

By MSG Bob Haskell, National Guard Bureau
Photo by MSG Bob Haskell

In January, the chief of the National Guard Bureau went to Disney World to encourage organizations providing civilian construction job opportunities to continue their support of troops waging the global war on terrorism.

LTG Blum pledged the Guard Bureau's support for programs such as Hire a Hero that has been started in Florida, the AFL-CIO's Building and Construction Trades Department (BCTD) and Helmets to Hardhats.

For more information, visit:

www.helmetstohardhats.org

NEW WRISTBANDS HELP FAMILIES

As our troops are being asked to shoulder more responsibility and danger, their families also feel the burden. Often it is financial.

Taking heed of this problem, a Southern California man, Armen Eloyan, has promised to raise over a million dollars to help the families left behind cope with everyday problems. Eloyan has volunteered his own money and time to launching a "One Nation" wristband campaign for Operation Homefront.

Operation Homefront was established to channel volunteer and monetary aid to the families of troops stationed in Afghanistan and Iraq. The program has successfully helped thousands of military families deal

GAARNG FIRST IN NEW COMBAT UNIFORMS

GAARNG will be the first command in the U.S. Army to wear the newly designed Army Combat Uniforms.

The Army is issuing the new uniforms, which are nicknamed "ACU," to 48th Brigade Combat Team Soldiers. They are scheduled to deploy to the Middle East in May.

"It's easier for the Soldier to blend into the environment," said SFC Jeff Myhre, the product manager for clothing and individual equipment, comparing the new uniform to the older dark green, black, brown and tan camouflaged uniform.



The ACU, with its tan, gray, and light green digital pattern uniform, is designed to enhance Soldiers' performance by providing better ergonomics and durability in combat situations.

Soldiers praised the comfort and feel of their new uniforms. "They feel like pajamas," said SPC Michael Watson, combat engineer with Company C, 648th Engineer Battalion. **GX**

"They feel like pajamas."

- SPC Michael Watson

ABOVE: SGT David Parrott, of Americus and an administration specialist with Headquarters Company, 48th Brigade Combat Team, poses in the new Army Combat Uniform at Fort Stewart, GA. Photo by SGT Jeff Lowry, Georgia National Guard

with everything from car repair to extremes like homelessness.

The wristband campaign consists of selling red silicone "One Nation" wristbands with 100 percent of the proceeds going directly to Operation Homefront. So far the campaign has netted thousands of dollars for families, and Eloyan is optimistic about reaching his one million dollar goal within the year. **GX**

PURCHASE A WRISTBAND AT:

1 www.nationone.us

2 www.operationhomefront.net





“The only force powerful enough to stop the rise of tyranny is the force of human freedom.”

- PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH,
STATE OF THE UNION, FEBRUARY 2, 2005

READ THE STATE OF THE UNION ADDRESS AT:

[www.whitehouse.gov/
stateoftheunion/2005/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/stateoftheunion/2005/)

ABOVE: Members of Congress display purple ink-stained forefingers as a salute to Iraqi voters during the State of the Union Address on Feb. 2.

Photo courtesy of whitehouse.gov



By Donna Miles
American Forces Press Service

To most, amputation means a lifetime of restrictions and dependence. Not so for patients being treated at the amputee care center at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, TX. Most see their loss of limbs suffered in Iraq or Afghanistan as temporary setbacks.

SGT Dustin Hill, a National Guard air defense artilleryman from Galva, IL, loves the outdoors. His dream is to be able to go fishing before next winter — no simple wish, considering he lost his right hand,

NEW CARE CENTER FOR INJURED SOLDIERS OPENS

By Samantha L. Quigley
American Forces Press Service

A new center is helping to make sure Soldiers with severe injuries have all available resources.

The Military Severely Injured Joint Operations Center in Arlington, VA, which officially opened Feb. 1, will tie together military and other government programs, such as the Army Disabled Soldier Support System and similar programs in the other services, and those run by the departments of Labor and Veterans Affairs.

“The purpose of the center is to bring things together to ... make sure everyone has a single telephone number that they may call ... if they have a question, a problem, an issue that has not been properly resolved,” said David S.C. Chu, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

Help is available to servicemembers or their families at (888) 774-1361, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. When calling the center, a servicemember or family member will be assigned a care manager to serve as a permanent point of contact.

“When Kevin was injured, I was incredibly alone,” Patti Walker said of her husband SFC Kevin Walker of the 24th Infantry Division. “This center would have helped me more than I can ever tell you. It’s going to be a very good vehicle for military spouses.” **GX**

For more information, call:

 **888.774.1361**

AMPUTEE CENTER OFFERS NEW HOPE

fingers on his left hand, his right eye, and most of an ear and his nose when a suicide bomber attacked his patrol outside Baghdad last September.

After three months at the U.S. Army Institute of Surgical Research’s Burn Center in San Antonio, SGT Hill is now at the amputee care center. He just started walking independently. Now he’s looking forward to receiving a myoelectric robotic prosthesis for his right hand and a new artificial eye he’s been promised that will match his left one perfectly.

COL Robert Grantville, director of amputee services at the center that opened its doors Jan. 14, said SGT Hill is fairly typical of the patients receiving treatment. Most refuse to allow the loss of a limb to keep them down.

The center at Brooke offers orthopedics, physical medicine and rehabilitation, occupational therapy, physical therapy, and advanced prosthetics, all designed to help patients return to full activity.

“We use a multi-disciplinary approach to treat the person: their physical condition, their emotional and psychological condition, and their spiritual condition,” he said.

“They have the best doctors and nurses, and everyone cares about you here,” SGT Hill’s mother said. **GX**

For more information, visit:
www.bamc.amedd.army.mil/

LEFT: SGT Hill and his mother, Liz Kelm, at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio.

Photo by Donna Miles

TAKE IT TO THE NEXT LEVEL



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HISTORIC FORT AP HILL IN
CAROLINE COUNTY, VA
JULY 25-AUGUST 3
FOR THE 16TH ANNUAL
NATIONAL BOY SCOUT
JAMBOREE!



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IRAQI ELECTIONS

WHAT HAPPENED AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

A NEW IRAQ TIMELINE FOR PROGRESS

JAN. 30:

Elections for the Transitional National Assembly (TNA)

AUG. 15:

TNA's deadline for drafting a new Iraqi Constitution

OCT. 15:

TNA's deadline for obtaining the people's approval of the new Iraqi Constitution

DEC. 15:

Elections for the permanent government of Iraq

-OR-

If the new Constitution is rejected on Oct. 15, elections will be held Dec. 15 for a new TNA.

Above: Department of Defense photo

"I suspect there have been moments along the way when some of you may have wondered whether or not the effort would be worth the cost, or whether even, the people you were trying to help truly stood with you.

Last Sunday, the Iraqi people answered those understandable questions in a resounding way, just as voters had in Afghanistan last October . . .

Consider the courage it took for the Iraqi people to go to the polls ... to risk becoming targets for bombings or beheadings. And yet the Iraqis voted - millions of them."

- Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense, message to Armed Forces, February 2nd, regarding Iraqi elections January 30th.

Sunday, January 30, 2005 - Iraqi citizens took a united stand for freedom and went to the polls, despite the very real terrorist threat of death.

In his February 3rd press briefing, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld told the inspiring story of a 70-year-old woman who initiated the voting at one of the polling stations. Citizens had lined up but were too afraid to walk in. The memory of 35 years of brutal dictatorship shot a paralyzing pang of last-minute fear through the crowd and stopped them cold. That is, until one elderly woman set aside fear, broke

from the crowd to cast her vote, and set the new standard for courage in Iraq.

Voter turnout was reported at 60% (far greater than anticipated) at the 5,200 polling stations throughout the country. Each station operated under heavy protection surrounded by a perimeter of Iraqi Security Forces, backed up by the Coalition Forces' quick-reaction teams.

Security was tight—and with good reason. The walls of Iraqi cities were painted with the harrowing words: "You Vote. You Die". And approximately 50 did perish, including an Iraqi police chief who gave his life

by tackling a suicide bomber before the bomber could reach the voting lines.

But why is this all so important? The January 30th voting was the first critical step in creating a foundation for the new government. It created a 275-member Transitional National Assembly (TNA) whose main duty is to draft the Iraqi constitution. Think of them as Iraq's version of our Continental Congress (authors of the U.S. Constitution in 1787)—essentially, delegates gathering to write the new law of the land. The TNA plans to have the new constitution drafted by mid-August. By mid-October, it must be approved by the Iraqi people. And finally, on December 15, new elections will be held, based on the new constitution, for a permanent Iraqi government (see sidebar for timeline).

So, what role can the Guard expect to play in Iraq now? As President Bush explained in his State of the Union address, the new focus for our military is the strengthening and support of Iraqi armed forces. Coalition Forces have helped them stand, but now they must be able to protect themselves independently. Fortunately, a strong Iraqi military was part of the plan from the beginning, and Iraqi Soldiers are already proving themselves on the battlefield, and have been for some time. In fact, February 21st marked another historic day in Iraq when the 40th Iraqi National Guard brigade became the first Iraqi Army unit to officially assume control of their area of operation. The 40th's area includes several locations in Baghdad.

"This is just the beginning," MG Peter Chiarelli, 1st Cavalry Division commander, said to the 40th. "No one can doubt your high level of readiness. No one can doubt your resolve. No one can doubt your patriotism."

"Because of the sacrifice of your ... countrymen, good won over evil, freedom over terror..."

- BG Mike Jones



ABOVE: Iraqi citizens line up to cast their vote in Baghdad, Iraq, on January 30th.

USAF photo by MSG Dave Ahischwede

There has been debate over the numerical strength of the Iraqi Army, and as of early February, the Department of Defense places Iraqi forces at well over 140,000 strong with more training everyday. According to Secretary Rumsfeld's briefing, many Iraqis stormed the Iraqi Security Force recruitment centers to sign up for service the day after the election.

Clearly, January 30th marked another milestone in the War on Terror and an historic and revolutionary declaration of freedom for Iraq - an accomplishment largely possible due to the fine work of U.S. Soldiers. In an open letter to all U.S. Armed Forces, BG Mike Jones shared his thoughts. "It isn't over yet, but today there was a resounding victory for freedom ... Know that somewhere in the world, because of the sacrifice of your friends, sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, and countrymen, good won over evil, freedom over terror..."

Secretary Rumsfeld has echoed these sentiments. In his February 2nd message to troops, the Defense Secretary stated, "No one treasures peace more than you who have endured the horrors of war. So to all of you who are serving on freedom's

front lines, and to your families, I offer my deepest appreciation and respect ... May God bless you and may God bless the United States."

A deep gratitude will also linger in the hearts of the Iraqi people and be passed down to future generations. Congratulations to you, America's heroes. You have helped to bring the light of Freedom to a people who have lived for 35 years in the darkness of fear and oppression. **GX**

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WEAR YOUR PRIDE ON YOUR SLEEVE

(OR AT LEAST ON YOUR WRIST)



The American Hero Band allows you to express the pride and appreciation that you feel toward fellow Americans in the National Guard. By wearing the band, you show support for these brave men and women, both past and present, and help encourage future heroes to enlist.



Order your American Hero Band today by logging on to www.virtualarmory.com



SNAP SHOTS



Immigrants from Iraq, Meriam and Abdulla Farok, left, thank SPC Kary J. Duffy, 141st Engineer Combat Battalion, upon SPC Duffy's return to North Dakota from her one-year deployment to Iraq, Feb. 8. Abdulla Farok suffered injuries from chemical attacks in the Kurdish region of Iraq during Saddam Hussein's rule, as well as the loss of his father and his daughter in the same attacks.

U.S. Air Force photo by Senior MSG David H. Lipp



Three Iraqi men were detained Feb. 21 during a raid on homes of suspected improvised explosive device makers in Sabiyah, Iraq. The 2nd Platoon, 3rd Squadron, 278th Regimental Combat Team, led the night mission involving Iraqi Armed Forces, U.S. ground troops, helicopters and M2 Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles.

Photo by SSG Duane M. Brown, 22nd MPAD

AMERICAN HERO BAND RECEIVES RAVE REVIEWS

In GX5, we introduced the American Hero Band - a Guard recognition initiative honoring Guard Soldiers in the form of a metallic wrist band engraved "Honoring an American Hero, Serving in the Army National Guard." We checked in with SGM Bob Cossel, senior marketing NCO for Strength Maintenance Division, for an update on the success of the Hero Bands.

According to SGM Cossel, over 80,000 Hero Bands have been ordered, and he has been overwhelmed by the feedback from Guard families and Guard members. **GX**

AMERICAN HERO BAND FEEDBACK

"My best friend and love of my life is on his way to Iraq. I miss him so much every day. This little bracelet is a nice way to honor his service and to keep him close to my heart."
- Lilu, MT

"My only son is in Kuwait. For some reason this makes me feel closer to him and it also shows how proud I am of him. He volunteered to go in the place of another soldier that had a wife and children."
- Ida Myers, FL

"I'm in the KS National Guard currently deployed overseas. I love my country and want everyone who supports us to know that we appreciate all the support and loyalty ya'll show for us! Thank you and God Bless You All and GOD BLESS AMERICA! HOOAH!"
- SPC Jamie Burwell, KS

ORDER YOUR **FREE** AMERICAN HERO BAND AT:

 www.virtualarmory.com



ABOVE: GEN Peter J. Schoomaker, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army

VAARNG SOLDIERS SAVE ARMY THOUSANDS



LEFT: SFC Paul Kagi, a helicopter mechanic assigned to the 2nd Bn., 224th Aviation Regt., VAARNG, applies a DSCR-developed laminate to the windshield of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter at the Feb. 22 demonstration. Photo by Will Daniel

WARRANT OFFICERS THE FUTURE FORCE

Commanders exert a powerful influence over future career opportunities for Soldiers and, as a result, must assume a leading role in identifying among their Soldiers the best candidates for warrant officer service. Commanders must do their part to ensure that well-qualified NCOs seek the additional responsibilities of warrant officer service. These are the Soldiers who can take their technical skills to the next level of challenge and develop an absolute competence as a manager, developer, and integrator of specific Army systems,

Warrant officers are the Future Force mechanism that will ensure our ability to leverage technology, administer, manage, maintain, operate, and integrate Army systems and equipment effectively across the full range of military operations.

The success of our Army depends upon commanders' efforts to identify our best warriors, technicians and leaders and assure that they are channeled into the career path that maximizes their contributions to our joint, expeditionary mission. Only in this way can we guarantee our continued preeminence among the world's armies.

GEN Peter J. Schoomaker
Chief of Staff, United States Army

By Debra Bingham and Will Daniel
Army News Service

Two VAARNG Soldiers got a chance to see their idea of using NASCAR windshield tear-offs on Army helicopters come to life as they helped apply the laminate to one of the unit's UH-60 Black Hawks Feb. 22.

SFC Paul Kagi and SGT Mike "Moon" Mullen, VAARNG helicopter mechanics, submitted the idea to use a tear-off windshield used on racecars to the Army Suggestion Program five years ago after sand and debris damaged most of their unit's helicopter windshields during a training mission.

The 2nd Battalion, 224th Aviation Regiment deployed to the National Training Center, Fort Irwin, CA, with new helicopters and had to replace about 80 percent of the windshields upon returning home.

"It's a lot easier to peel this off and put another on than it is to replace a windshield," said SGT Mullen, a 29-year veteran of Army aviation.

SFC Kagi, a 23-year veteran, said he contacted the Defense Supply Center at Richmond (DSCR), which acts as the aviation supply chain manager for the Defense Logistic Agency, for help implementing their innovation.

The idea caught the interest of the Army and other agencies concerned about the increased consumption rate of Black Hawk windshields from operations in the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan. That rate reached the point that demand outstripped the manufacturer's ability to produce them fast enough. The three windshields on a Black Hawk cost \$15,000 to replace.

An integrated team, including the DSCR's Aviation Engineering Directorate, performed engineering and feasibility studies and testing on the laminate. The team determined that the laminate, which costs \$1,100 to apply, prolongs the life of the windshield from six to fifteen months. When the laminate is damaged, it can be peeled off and a new one applied.

In November 2004, the Army authorized the laminate for use on its Black Hawk helicopters in Iraq and Afghanistan. Units can order the laminate and an application kit through the supply chain.

The laminate reduces ultraviolet rays by 99 percent and will last three to six months. Soldiers will be able to apply it with a simple tool kit.

The tear-offs will save the Army nearly \$14,000 each time a windshield replacement is avoided. The Soldiers could earn up to \$25,000 for their suggestion.

"We just wanted to find a solution that would keep the birds flying and save the Army money," SGT Mullen said. **GX**

VA LOAN REFORM

POSITIVE CHANGES FOR GUARD MEMBERS

Thanks to recent legislation, Guard members called up to help fight the war against terror will qualify much more quickly for the Department of Veterans Affairs' mortgage program. Historically, Guard Soldiers did not qualify until they had completed a full six years of service. Under the new rules, as soon as they are called to active duty, they qualify.

There are other changes to the program as well. First, to be in line with the current housing market, the conforming loan limit has been raised to \$359,650. And perhaps, most significantly, the VA guarantee has been raised to 25%. This means that, although the VA does not directly make home loans, it offers a guarantee to the lending institution that is accepted in place of a 25% down payment by the



ABOVE: www.VA.gov

Soldier. There are other restrictions and some fees do apply, so interested Soldiers and their spouses should visit www.VA.gov for all of the details. **GX**



ABOVE: The C-23B Sherpa, designed for Short Take-off & Landing (STOL), can hold 30 troops and operate from unpaved runways.

Photo from globalsecurity.org

OPERATIONAL SUPPORT AIRLIFT AGENCY (OSAA) ARMY FIXED-WING CONFERENCE 23-27 MAY 2005

The 2005 OSAA Fixed-Wing Conference will cover a broad variety of fixed-wing aviation topics and concentrate on the rapidly changing plan for the future of fixed-wing operations in the United States Army. This year's conference will be the premiere event in the Army's fixed-wing program, bringing together some 220-plus personnel from all three components and representatives from every state and OCONUS locations. The conference theme "Army Fixed-Wing Aviation-Forging the Future, Supporting the Fight" illustrates the focus of topics/issues that will have a major impact on the community. **GX**

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Introducing the Just Plain Joe Coffee Company. We're the little coffee company that supports our armed forces. As soldiers, we loved the great full-bodied taste of rich gourmet coffee, but we could rarely afford it and usually couldn't get it at all. That's why we have been shipping free coffee to your loved ones overseas, and it's why we only sell "gourmet coffee at a reasonable price." We believe in veterans supporting veterans. So buy some Just Plain Joe for your family, and send some to your favorite Soldier today!

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STAR SPANGLED Indianapolis, IN

James Arrington of A Company, 216th Engineers, OHARNG, displays the colors as he sets foot back onto U.S. soil. Arrington and the 216th are returning to Camp Atterbury, IN after a year-long deployment in Iraq.

Photo by PAO MAJ Mike Brady.



DISTANCE FROM IRAQ TO INDIANAPOLIS, IN: 6498 MILES





FIGHT NIGHT

Ft. Huachuca, AZ

Just days after turning 21, SPC John Franklin MOARNG (right) makes history by becoming the first ARNG soldier to win an Armed Forces gold medal. His victory helped the Army win the overall military boxing championship.

Photo courtesy of MOARNG



DISTANCE FROM KANSAS CITY, MO TO FT. HUACHUCA, AZ: 1377 MILES



RECON



HELPING HAND

Qalah Musa Bala, Afghanistan

SPC Melissa Ault hands out clothes to children in the mountains of Afghanistan as part of the Guard's humanitarian effort. SPC Ault is assigned to the 33rd Area Support Group, part of the Illinois Army National Guard.

DISTANCE FROM CHICAGO, IL TO QALAH MUSA BALA, AFG: 6974 MILES



RECON

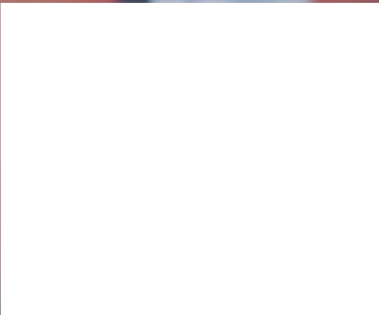


VICTORY LANE

Fontana, CA

Lost in a sea of confetti, Greg Biffle (left) is all smiles as he celebrates his victory at the Auto Club 500 with some champagne and a hug from pit-crew member, Mike Hillman, Jr.

Photo by Jonathan Ferrey, Getty Images



DISTANCE FROM START TO FINISH LINE: 500 MILES

NASCAR
NEXTEL
CUP SERIES
WINNER



RECON

SUBWAY
7 charter

NATIONAL
GUARD

NASCAR
Ford
RACING
JACKSON HEWITT



THE NEW

BONUSES

Photo by U.S. Army/Richard Bumgardner

NON-PRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENT BONUS

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

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

PRIOR SERVICE ENLISTMENT BONUS

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

AFFILIATION BONUS

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

OFFICER ACCESSION AFFILIATION BONUS

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

RE-ENLISTMENT EXTENSION BONUS

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

MOS CONVERSION BONUS

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

GET MORE INFO 

www.virtualarmory.com

EARNED REWARDS

STUDENT LOAN REPAYMENT PROGRAM

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



ABOVE: U.S. troops, members of Coalition Joint Task Force, raise their hands as they re-enlist during a swearing-in ceremony at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Iraq.

MONTGOMERY GI BILL KICKER

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

MAN ON A MISSION

LTC BLUM'S CHALLENGE FOR EVERY SOLDIER



“The strength of the Army National Guard depends on Soldiers like you.”

- LTC H Steven Blum





“OUR NATION DEPENDS ON ITS MILITARY TO KEEP IT SAFE, SECURE, AND PROSPEROUS. WITH THE CURRENT OPERATIONS IN IRAQ AND AROUND THE WORLD, OUR ARMED FORCES, ESPECIALLY THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, ARE IN THE SPOTLIGHT.”

- LTG H Steven Blum, Chief, National Guard Bureau



With the Global War on Terror came an almost unprecedented burden on the Army National Guard. In addition to our State duties, the Guard has taken on a pivotal role in our missions overseas. Representing over 40% of our boots on the ground in Iraq and increasing percentages of our operations elsewhere, the Guard’s need for full fighting strength has never been greater.

By telling your friends, family and associates about the benefits and rewards you’re receiving through the Guard you are sharing a compelling story about America’s greatest military career opportunity.

By sharing your story with the best and brightest from your community – people who have demonstrated the ability to be successful – you will make the Guard better

ABOVE: LTG H Steven Blum at a town meeting with National Guard troops in Iraq.
Photo by MSG Bob Haskell

120 Guard members can cover a lot more ground, meet more prospects, and spread the word much better.

When you share your story, everyone wins.

- ★ You win because your team is at full strength and readiness.
- ★ Your referrals win because Guard benefits are at an all-time high and American pride has never been greater.
- ★ The Army National Guard wins because it has quality prospects enlisting.
- ★ Your country, state and local communities win because they have a unit prepared to serve whenever they are called.

The Guard needs you, every one of you, to spread the word about the choices you have made and the rewards and the pride that come from serving your country. I am proud to serve with you and I remind you that the strength of the Guard depends on Soldiers like you. Tell your story today and help keep the Guard strong.

★★★ EVERY SOLDIER HAS A STORY

BY LTG H STEVEN BLUM, CHIEF, NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

In recognition of this demand, I have issued a challenge for every Soldier to tell his or her story and help the Guard achieve its end-strength goal. My mission is to reach the Guard’s strength goals for 2005 and I need your help to do it.

The strength of the Army National Guard depends on dedicated Soldiers like you. In fact, as a Soldier, you’re the most valuable recruiter the ARNG has. Leads provided by Soldiers and family members are consistently more productive than ones from other sources, according to Recruiting and Retention NCO’s (RRNCO’s).

for each of us. Look for people of vision who are willing to develop a life plan and who can see how the Army National Guard will help them achieve their goals.

Maintaining strength is everyone’s responsibility and when every Soldier tells his or her story you’re helping to spread the good news of the Army National Guard.

While there may be one RRNCO per company, there are at least 120 soldiers in that unit, many who live, work, go to school and contribute every day in their community. The RRNCO assigned to your unit can be in only one place at a time;

**AT TIMES LIKE THIS IT'S GOOD TO KNOW THERE'S
A STRONG NATIONAL GUARD IN YOUR COMMUNITY.**



Natural disasters do more than make headlines. They affect the lives of millions of Americans every year. And so does the National Guard. Whether it's a wildfire, tornado, hurricane or earthquake, the Guard is there. Always has been. And with the support of dedicated Americans, the Guard will always be the force America's communities count on.

Can your community count on you to keep the Guard strong? Visit our web site today or call us. We'll give you lots of reasons why you should become a Citizen-Soldier.

Learn more about the National Guard. Visit us at www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com • 1-800-GO-GUARD



JOIN THE NATIONAL GUARD
The National Guard offers college and career training benefits. Go online to find out more.



RAISE is an acronym that stands for Reach, Ask, Inform, Share, and Energize. In order to contribute to Army National Guard strength, all you have to do is remember to:

R

REACH

... out to as many qualified candidates as possible. Don't wait for the annual recruiting drive. Keep your eyes open 24/7 for quality prospects. Get involved in civic and community organizations; when you join a civic organization, you get an opportunity to perform positive service for the community, build a personal network of influential people, and advertise the value of the ARNG. Be there, in uniform, displaying your pride in serving.

A

ASK

... prospects what they are looking for in life, and how the Guard can help them get there. Studies show that the more people know about the ARNG, the more likely they are to join. When talking with prospects, listen to every word they say. Effective listening will help you discover information about the prospects' plans that will identify areas in which the ARNG can help them.

I

INFORM

... everyone about all the incredible advantages of joining the Army National Guard. Talk about the benefits you've used, like the salary, education programs, or the Montgomery GI Bill. Be an ambassador for your unit. Let everyone know you are proud to serve your country, state, and local community.

S

SHARE

... your own experiences and what the Guard has meant to you. Let others know of the awesome mission of the ARNG. Most people want to be a part of something greater than themselves. The mission of providing properly trained soldiers in case of a national or state emergency can attract those looking for a rewarding challenge. Let others know what the Guard has meant to you, and what it can mean to them.

E

ENERGIZE

... people to take action ASAP. Motivate them to call 1-800-GO-GUARD, visit the web site www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com, visit the local armory, or talk to the RRNCO. The sooner they check out the opportunities the Army National Guard has to offer, the more likely they are to join.

THE TEAM

REMEMBER TO FOCUS ON THESE KEY POINTS WHEN TALKING WITH PROSPECTIVE GUARD MEMBERS:



TRADITION

Be a proud part of America's longest-enduring military force. Since 1636!

HONOR

In serving your community and country whenever and wherever you're needed

EXPERIENCE

Get hands-on knowledge in many valuable skills in the Guard.

TRAINING

For your education, your career, and your life.

EDUCATION

Learn about yourself and your world while you earn money for college. (see pages 30-31)

ADVENTURE

All the excitement you'll ever need. Find out what you're made of!

MONEY

For college, for life, for whatever your future holds. (see pages 30-31)

GUARD STORIES

Below are some of the great stories shared by Guard members like you at www.gxonline.com:

PV2 Cabral, MAARNG, 17

Why did you join the Guard?

I joined the Guard because of Tuition Assistance. But the main influence on why I joined the Guard was my father, he was in the Portuguese Military back in the Azores.

If you could tell someone one thing about joining the Guard?

You will not find any other family that will love you more and that has your back at all times whenever you're in need of help.

SSG Kulnis, Ohio, 37

How did you feel about your service after returning from deployment?

My time in Iraq is not finished yet, however, I have always been proud to be a part of the United States military. As a young boy, all I ever wanted to do was to serve my Country just as my father and uncles had done.

Why did you join the Guard?

When I separated from active duty, I felt an emptiness inside and was unsure of what it was. A Guard recruiter called me one day and asked me if I was willing to give it a try. Once I spent a weekend in the field with the soldiers I might be serving with, I realized the camaraderie and sense of belonging is what I missed and I have not looked back since.

If you could tell someone one thing about joining the Guard?

It is not for everyone, but you get out of it exactly what you are willing to put in... and then some.

PV2 Marquez, WIARNG, 18

Why did you join the Guard?

I wanted money for school and to have some fun.

If you could tell someone one thing about joining the Guard?

We get some awesome weapons!

SPC Schroer, KYARNG, 22

How did you feel about your service after returning from deployment?

Very proud. I felt like I learned alot about myself and the world around me. It feels good to say I am a Soldier and a veteran.

If you could tell someone one thing about joining the Guard?

Come prepared when you go to talk with a recruiter. It's a life changing decision not to be taken lightly.

TIPS FROM THE TOP ★★

SHARE YOUR STORY

WITH THE PUBLIC

As one of your Nation's proud Warriors, you are admired within your community. If you make yourself available, you will have chances to share you story with large audiences: local schools, scout troops, church and civic groups all invite Soldiers to speak. Take pride and stand up. Don't feel like you have to be a professional presenter, just tell your story like it is.

WITH YOUR FRIENDS

However, some Soldiers may not be comfortable with speaking in public. That's OK. If you're not comfortable on a stage, you will still have plenty of opportunities to speak with people in your daily life. When given the opportunity, any opportunity, just tell the truth. Talk about how you feel representing your community and defending your country. Tell them how you feel when you wear the uniform and what it means to you to be part of such a great team. Just talk about what the Guard means to you just like you would to your best friends and family.

NOW IS THE TIME

If you are between the ages of 17 and 24, you need to tell your story. Young men and women all across America are deciding right now, this very day, about serving in the Army National Guard and they want to hear what you have to say. Don't think just because you may be new to the Guard that you have less to offer. You are the Guard, you are the future of the Guard and your story is valuable.

SHARE YOUR ENTHUSIASM

If you have returned recently from BCT or AIT you will find many people in your community and circle of friends that are curious about your experience. Just remember, one of your biggest concerns may have been whether you could make it through BCT. Well, you did and so can many of your friends. Tell them what it was like, straight up and pull no punches. Your enthusiasm is contagious, your bravery and courage will attract the very finest this country has to offer.

MAJ White, NCARNG, 40

How did you feel about your service after returning from deployment?

I still love it greatly. My Guard unit is a close unit and I considered it my extended family when I deployed.

Why did you join the Guard?

When I originally enlisted as a PFC in 1989, it was primarily as a way to assist in paying for my college. After enlisting and going through basic and AIT, I continued on for patriotic reasons.

If you could tell someone one thing about joining the Guard?

It will be a hard but enjoyable and enlightening career, one they wouldn't swap for anything in the world.

SSG Weier, WIARNG, 23

Why did you join the Guard?

A family friend said at my Eagle Scout Court of Honor, "I would love to have a Eagle Scout in my foxhole with me."

The rest was history.

If you could tell someone one thing about joining the Guard?

Make sure you understand all of the responsibility involved, and whatever you do make sure it is your best!

SPC Sitek, INARNG, 25

Why did you join the Guard?

Originally it was for the college money, but after serving for a few years I have decided to make a career out of it. I enjoy serving my country.

If you could tell someone one thing about joining the Guard?

It is the best decision you will ever make. You will learn values and skills that you will not obtain anywhere else. I have met a lot of people who either did not join or got out and wish they would have enlisted or stayed in. It is the opportunity of a lifetime.



To share your Guard Experience:



www.gxonline.com/mygx

★★★ TIPS FROM THE TOP

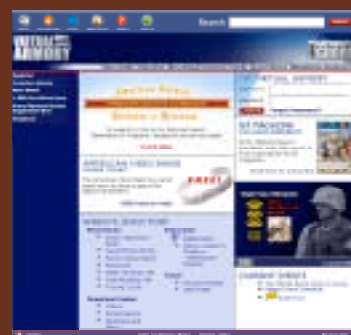


LEFT: LTG Blum showing his coin, and then presenting it, to a member of the Iraqi National Guard

Photo by MSG Bob Haskell

@SITE SEEING

BE SURE TO VISIT THESE GREAT WEB SITES OFTEN FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ABOUT THE GUARD. TELL YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY, TOO.



WWW.VIRTUALARMORY.COM



WWW.1800GOGUARD.COM



WWW.GXONLINE.COM

TIPS FROM THE TOP

★★★

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO ANSWER THE CHALLENGE?

Here are some simple, yet powerful, ways you can show your pride in the Army National Guard and strengthen your team.

★ Stripes for Buddies

Want to be a PFC before you even complete Basic Training? A Private (E1) who refers just one qualified person who enlists, will advance to Private (E2). If a Private (E2) refers two qualified applicants (a total of two, not two additional) who enlist, he or she will advance to Private First Class (E3).

★ Join your Unit Recruiting

Team (URT) and help your Recruiting and Retention NCO. If your unit doesn't have a URT, tell your RRNCO you want to start one. The URT is a group of soldiers from your unit that is specially trained to assist the RRNCO in gathering leads and pre-screening potential applicants to your unit.

The URT is important, because in reality, your RRNCO can't be everywhere at the same time. And in many cases, your RRNCO recruits for more than one unit at any one time. So, to make sure that you always get the best and brightest for your unit, you need to pitch in, generate leads and assist at community functions. Get the word out.

★ Wear your uniform proudly in public: supermarkets, sporting events, restaurants, concerts.

★ Add a Guard Banner to your email. (www.1-800-Go-Guard.com/downloads/downloads_em.html)

★ Put a Guard Bumper sticker on your car.

★ Make a quality referral to your recruiter once a month.

★ Join a civic organization as a member of the Guard: Rotary, Optimists, Elks, Masons.

★ Download a Guard Screen

Saver for your computer. (www.1-800-Go-Guard.com/downloads/downloads_ss.html)

★ Volunteer 2 hours of your time, once a month, at the local homeless mission, meals on wheels, YMCA, etc and wear your Guard t-shirt

★ Visit the Virtual Armory regularly for valuable and informative updates on how to increase strength in your unit. www.virtualarmory.com

★ Ask your school, employer, or community organizations in which you are a member to let the Recruiting and Retention NCO visit and talk about opportunities in the Army National Guard. **GX**

TOURS OF DUTY

NEW CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Did you know that there are full-time positions available with the Army National Guard? Some soldiers volunteer to go on Active Guard and Reserve status (AGR) or Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) providing support to various Guard, Reserve, and Active Component organizations.

The Guard offers several programs. One might be right for you depending upon how long you want to signup for and where you would like to serve.

NOW HIRING

FULL-TIME POSITION AVAILABLE

If you are a member of the National Guard just coming off active duty and still wanting to work full-time in the military, or you're just looking for something new, one of these jobs may be right on target for you.

- Experience Required
- Great Benefits
- Possibly Relocate

Photo by SSG Russell Lee Kliska

★ AGR {LONG TOURS}

AGR soldiers serve full-time and enjoy the same benefits and entitlements as Active Component soldiers, including full commissary and post exchange privileges, medical care for themselves and their immediate family and the opportunity for immediate retirement after 20 years of Active Federal Service. Title 10 is for soldiers interested in pursuing generally federal level opportunities outside their states—usually in the Washington, D.C. area or outside the United States. Title 32 offers long tours working at the state level.

★ ADSW, TTAD, COTTAD {SHORT TOURS}

These are short tour opportunities for soldiers to contribute to their state's and country's security while enhancing their own military training and readiness. These fall into three general categories—Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW), Temporary Tour of Active Duty (TTAD), and Contingency Operation Temporary Tour of Active Duty (COTTAD) tours. ADSW tours usually support study groups, training sites and exercises, short-term projects, or administrative or support functions. TTAD is used in situations where the Active Army has a mission requirement for which no Active Army soldiers with the requisite skills and experience are reasonably available. However it may also be used to perform a wartime (support) mission in contingency situations (which makes the tour COTTAD). ADSW, TTAD and COTTAD tours are normally limited to 179 days or less in one fiscal year.



www.arng.army.mil/soldier_resources/guardjobs/

TOURS OF DUTY

NEW CAREER OPPORTUNITIES IN THE NATIONAL GUARD

OPERATION SILVER SIEGE

We are sending officer recruiting teams to seven FORSCOM installations this summer to focus on transitioning and/or recruiting commissioned and warrant officers into the Army National Guard. They will seek out and present the opportunities, benefits and incentives that are offered by the Army National Guard. The teams will coordinate with each state to assist transitioning officers with finding an assignment. In addition, these teams will promote commissioning programs and opportunities to those enlisted soldiers who may qualify for a warrant officer appointment or other commissioning program.

These teams are augmenting the Reserve Component Career Counselors at the installations. We are soliciting interest in supporting this program.

APPLICANTS SHOULD MEET THE FOLLOWING QUALIFICATIONS:

- **MOSqualified**
- **Noflagging actions**
- **PassAPFT and HT/WT**
- **Currentphysical and HIV**
- **Rank:cannot exceed CW3 or CPT**

CONTACT:

- **CW2JEFFERY LEE**
703-607-3517
(jeffrey.lee@ngb.army.mil)



AMEDD {MEDICAL RECRUITING}



The National Guard Bureau has a wonderful opportunity for specialty recruiting. The Guard Bureau will be hiring eight medical recruiters and eight chaplain recruiters. They will be posted throughout the country. We are looking for four chaplains and four chaplain assistants. We also need four medical officers and four medical NCO's. These teams will be used throughout the country to recruit chaplains, doctors, and dentists.

CONTACT:

- **CW2JEFFERY LEE**
703-607-3517
(jeffrey.lee@ngb.army.mil)
- **CPTKEITH DOMERESE**
703-607-2014
(keith.domerese@ngb.army.mil)



Photo by SSG Russell Lee Kliska

SUMMER IN D.C.



The Strength Maintenance Division is looking for extremely detail-oriented personnel to work Chaplain and AMEDD packet processing issues, support officer and enlisted accessions, and other specialized projects. This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to impact the entire Army National Guard and live near our nation's capital. ADSW tours for 90 to 120 days are open for E-4 thru E-7, W-1 thru W-3, and O-1 thru O-3.

CONTACT:

- **CW2JEFFERY LEE**
703-607-3517
(jeffrey.lee@ngb.army.mil)

Photo by Misham F. Ibrahim, Photodisc



FOR MORE ON AGR, ADSW, TTAD, AND COTTAD OPPORTUNITIES, VISIT:



www.arng.army.mil/soldier_resources/guardjobs/



DRIVERS AND TECHS NEEDED



The U.S. Army Entertainment Division (USAED) is seeking traditional ARNG Soldiers with experience in any of the following: stage/concert technology, communications, electronics, and transportation for possible attachment to USAED for the 2005 tour season. Attachments are considered a Temporary Duty Assignment (TDY) and will not exceed 180 days.

The USAED, Community Recreation Directorate, is the primary coordinator of entertainment activities for the Army world-wide.

Positions are open to the ranks of Staff Sergeant and below. Soldiers in AGR (Title 32) status are not eligible. Applicants must be fully deployable (but not currently on mobilization alert) as each program deploys to various OCONUS location.

CONTACT:

- **SGTLYTTLETON YATES**
703-806-4933
(lyttleton.yates@cfsc.army.mil)



GREAT GUARD EMPLOYERS

GUARD SOLDIERS SHARE STORIES ABOUT SUPPORTIVE AND ENCOURAGING EMPLOYERS AND TIPS ON HOW TO MAINTAIN THAT RELATIONSHIP.

2004 SECRETARY OF DEFENSE EMPLOYER SUPPORT FREEDOM AWARDS RECIPIENTS

Last year, these great companies proved their dedication to Army National Guard employees by offering benefits above and beyond what's required of them.

American Express

Bank One Corp.

Colt Safety Fire and Rescue

Adolph Coors

General Electric

Harley-Davidson

The Home Depot

Los Angeles County Sheriff's Dept.

Northrop Grumman Corp.

Fisk Corp./OneSource

Building Technologies

Saints Memorial Medical Center

Sprint Corp.

State of Minnesota

Strategic Solutions, Inc.

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.

Photo by Picturequest/Stockbyte

Presbyterian Hospital, Dallas, TX

SGT Leslie W. Brock Jr.
TXARNG

While [deployed], I received numerous e-mails inquiring how I was doing, how my fellow soldiers were coping, along with lots of prayers, thoughts and messages to continue to serve proudly, come home safely as well as their individual appreciation and admiration for the job that I do as a soldier and as an Army Medic... I received several copies of the Emergency Department's newsletter to keep me abreast of what was going on and requests to fill any needs for sundries and/or comforts from home.



Eaton Hydraulics, Searcy, AR

SSG Charles F. Vaughn
ARARNG

Eaton not only promises the same jobs, pay, allowances, promotions and benefit packages for their employees upon return; they also have agreed to continually pay our salaries while we are deployed for an indefinite period of time.

They support the local Family Readiness Group Fund Raisers by buying their cook books and purchasing 500 T-Shirts and giving one to each employee at the plant for a special day, care packages have been sent to Iraq, they have dedicated a Wall of Honor for all Guard or Reserve members called to active duty, not only employees but also any employee family members. They do special recognition with a plant-wide dinner, for all employees (and spouses) returning from active service. Through the use of the plant monthly newspaper, they kept plant employees advised of Guard members' whereabouts and e-mail addresses and sent us a copy

of the paper so we know what is going on at work while we are gone. They gave the Family Readiness Group 50 tickets to the Arkansas Twist ball game so the children of any Guard members could go to the game.



ABOVE: SSG Charles Vaughn and plant manager, Chief Davidson

LEFT: One of 500 "Operation Iraqi Freedom" Shirts given to the employees of Eaton Hydraulics.

Nielsen Media Research

SGT Tim Larkin
VAARNG

When the order finally did come for my unit to be mobilized, every part of Nielsen was there for me. From our Human Resources and Finance departments all the way down to my Regional Manager and direct supervisor. At the last company meeting I attended, I was praised and told to stay safe... "just call us when you are ready to come back..."

I assure you, dealing with the loss of an employee on such short notice is no easy task in an industry like Nielsen's--yet they did it with a smile on their face and a pat on my back.

Furthermore, just as I was preparing to leave country, I got a letter from our corporate headquarters that went something like this:

"As a gesture of our thanks and recognition of your commitment, we have decided to continue your salary for the first six months of your deployment."

TIPS FOR EMPLOYERS

As an employer, there are many ways that you can show support for Guard employees, such as providing differential pay, extending insurance benefits or forming a family support group. In addition, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) offers many resources and suggestions for helping and supporting your soldiers.

ESGR invites you to attend one of their programs:

BRIEFING WITH THE BOSS

Briefings with the Boss provide an informal forum in which local employers, unit commanders, ESGR members, and community leaders meet to network and discuss issues that may arise from employee participation in the National Guard.

BOSSLIFT PROGRAM

Bosslifts bring employers and supervisors to military training sites where they observe National Guard and Reserve members on duty as part of the Total Force. This provides the employer a better understanding of what their Reservists learn when they are away from their civilian occupation with their military units.

For more information, contact us at:

»» WWW.ESGR.MIL
»» 1-800-336-4590
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hitachi Automotive Products, KY

SFC Tony W Simpson
KYARNG

When the National Guard needed help with recruiting this past SEP I turned in an AGR packet. [Hitachi] has my 3-years orders now, and I am still officially an employee. I received an ARCOM for being a PLT SGT in Iraq, and my immediate supervisor, Donna Murphy, called and congratulated me. It meant alot. I still accrue vacation. Everything the plant gives across the board, like bonuses and quality awards I receive. Hitachi is very patriotic all the way up to the front office and the Japanese staff as well.



ABOVE: CPT Brett Saffell in an armored vehicle he helped secure in an Afghan Disarmament Program

Miller Brewing Company

CPT Brett Saffell
INARNG

After only four weeks of employment, before I'd even moved my family and household to Milwaukee, I was mobilized for deployment to Afghanistan. Miller was extremely helpful to my wife as she moved our home to Milwaukee, ensuring that she received all the pay and benefits we were entitled to, assisted with our move, and offered her advice on looking for employment. She found friendship and support in my co-workers, even though

It is a relief to know that back at your civilian job you are not forgotten and that your service to the nation is appreciated.

**- CPT BRETT SAFFELL
INARNG**

she had not previously met them. Despite the short length of time I worked for the company prior to mobilization, Miller has been extremely generous in their corporate policies regarding pay and benefits and my co-workers have been very supportive of both me and my family.

I know my company (the Miller Brewing Company) cares about me as a Guardsman. However, the other soldiers on my team have also received packages and support from my employer since the beginning of our mobilization. It gives me a warm feeling to know that Miller doesn't just care about me, but they also care about the other soldiers in my unit that I depend on.

It is extremely reassuring to hear from your employer when you are deployed overseas. It is a relief to know that back at your civilian job you are not forgotten and that your service to the nation is appreciated.



Department of the Navy

1LT Ed Salau
NCARNG

My employer is the Dept. of the Navy, and I have never had a problem serving in the Guard. In fact, I have been deployed for approximately 18 months right now, and my employer is still reserving my desk for me. In November, I lost my leg in an ambush in Iraq, and my boss [Brad Lupton] went above and beyond. When my wife wanted to meet me at Walter Reed [Army Medical Center], in DC, my boss donated 22 days of his personal leave to her, so she would be able to visit without creating a financial burden.

Sun City, AZ Fire Department

SSG Bradovich
AZARNG

My department [Sun City, AZ Fire Department] is approximately 70 people. Of those people, six people are currently serving, including me. We are never questioned about our time spent training or volunteer time. My department pays differential pay no matter how long we are deployed. They still pay our retirement, still pay for my family's insurance, and pay overtime or permanently hire people to cover my shift while I'm deployed.

BELOW: 1LT Ed Salau in Uch Teppa, Iraq after the completion of a well digging project.

Photo courtesy 1LT Ed Salau



YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Army National Guard Strength Readiness is in your hands.

Today's recruiting environment requires that uniquely qualified Non-Commissioned Officers, who are capable of winning the confidence of college-bound students and their parents, step up to the plate and represent the Army National Guard as Recruiting and Retention NCO's.



If you have a positive self-image, integrity, self-confidence, and a competitive spirit, then you may have what it takes to be part of a team of highly skilled, polished, military sales professionals.

Helping young Americans pursue their personal and professional goals and seeing the pride on their parents' faces is a gratifying and rewarding experience.

If you've served in the U.S. military or are currently in the Army National Guard at the rank of Sergeant/E-5 or equivalent, and are interested in a career as an Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention NCO, contact your local Recruiting and Retention Supervisor log on to www.virtualarmory.com or contact your local Recruiting and Retention NCO.



**The Right Force. The Right Career.
The Right Opportunity.**

KNOW YOUR OPTIONS

In addition to our readers suggestions on employment opportunities, we have found the following:

HELMETS TO HARDHATS

The non-profit program helps servicemen and women land career-making slots in the construction industry helping with job placement and training.
www.helmetstohardhats.com



SCHNEIDER NATIONAL

The largest civilian employer of separating military, this transportation company's workforce is comprised of 25% veterans.
www.schneiderjobs.com/drive_military.html



OPERATION CAREER FRONT

The Home Depot is working closely with the U.S. Departments of Defense, Labor and Veterans Affairs to provide exciting career opportunities for current and former members of America's military community.
<http://www.careers.homedepot.com/military>

LABOR READY.

Dependable Temporary Labor

IN TRANSITION

Labor Ready is working to offer temporary employment opportunities to Guard members and their families who are transitioning between jobs, relocating, or looking to supplement their income. And if you're offered full-time work, there are no fees charged to you or your employer. Just call 1-800-24LABOR.



EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

"I KNOW OF NO OTHER TIME IN OUR NATION'S HISTORY WHEN SO MANY EMPLOYERS HAVE VOLUNTARILY OFFERED THIS LEVEL OF SUPPORT AND BENEFITS."

- SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, DONALD RUMSFELD

Law Enforcement

CSM Robert Foesch
ORARNG

Law enforcement continues to be a "growth industry," and I have found that having a military background can prepare you for a job as a Police Officer.

Jobs with the Army National Guard

SPC Mark McDickinson
ARNG

The full-time positions within the Guard are worth looking into for all National Guard members. I was selected for a full-time position as a recruiter and it has helped me and my family.



AWARDS

As a Guard Soldier you are aware of how important your employer's support is to your ability to serve your nation. An encouraging boss or generous company policy can make all the difference. They, like you, will make sacrifices to accommodate your training and any deployments you are called for. However, where you will receive ribbons, awards and your nation's gratitude, the only thanks your employer will receive must come through you. In addition to being a good communicative employee, you can show your appreciation by nominating them as a Home Front Hero or for a Patriot award through ESGR.

BE A STAR EMPLOYEE

ABOVE: SGT Tim Larkin with members of the Afghan National Army in Shindand, Afghanistan.

Open Communication

SGT Tim Larkin
VAARNG

Employees should be as up-front as possible with their employers. Give as much advance notice to your boss as possible (even if it IS only one day). Keep your employer informed throughout your training and mobilization missions. They can be as much a part of your 'home team' as your family—and if they are pulling for you, that is one less stress factor that you'll have to deal with.

Initiate Contact

CPT Brett Saffell
INARNG

I would recommend that deployed Guard members also initiate contact with co-workers and managers at home. As a soldier, you personalize what your co-workers see on the news regarding the actions of the military overseas, and most people are greatly interested in hearing your perspective.

Plan Your Schedule in Advance

CPT LeeJay Templeton
SDARNG

Employees need to communicate with their employers as soon as they know when they will need extra time off. Drill and AT

schedules are released well in advance of these events. Soldiers should have their employers recognized whenever possible. We all have to remember that not only do soldiers and families make sacrifices, but our employers do, too, especially during deployments.

Fly the Colors

SGT Brian Napier
INARNG

I work for the city of Connersville, Indiana as a paramedic... I had a flag flown over our compound on Sept. 11th and had it dedicated to the city of Connersville. I presented it to the city council and the mayor when I went home on leave.

Show Your Guard Pride

1LT Ed Salau
NCARNG

Provide the intangibles that only service-members can offer, like self-discipline, self-reliance, and a commitment to mission accomplishment.



RIGHT: CPT LeeJay Templeton with co-workers, Omaha District, US Army Corps of Engineers

Photo courtesy CPT LeeJay Templeton

PATRIOT AWARD

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

HOME FRONT HEROES

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

»» WWW.VIRTUALARMORY.COM



ESGR

“America’s employers are inextricability linked to our nation’s security. ESGR volunteers strengthen this link. They are the heart and soul of ESGR.”

**- BOB HOLLINGSWORTH
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR ESGR**

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) was established in 1972 to promote cooperation and understanding between Reserve component members and their civilian employers and to assist in the resolution of conflicts arising from an employee’s military commitment. Today the organization operates through a network of more than 5,100 volunteers throughout 55 committees located in each state, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Europe.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering to help Guard Soldiers and their employers, contact ESGR through their website, or call 1-800-336-4590.



▶ WWW.ESGR.MIL



PROGRAM SUPPORT SPECIALIST

The Program Support Specialist (PSS), a new full-time position implemented under leadership of LTG Blum, is an effort by the Guard to support the ESGR volunteers and through them, Guard and Reservists and their employers. The need for the new program was summed up by LTG Blum:

is unrealistic for their workload today. The Program Support Specialist provides a single point of contact for employer support.”

This NGB-funded, specific state level, full-time post works out of the Joint Force Headquarters, allowing support of all seven of the reserve branches. The ESGR State Committees have reported that with this aid, and the accompanying day-to-day continuity of operations, the volunteers are able to function much more efficiently and have more time available to work with Soldiers and in the community. To contact the PSS in your state visit the ESGR website.

“Much of the work of ESGR in the states is carried out by their volunteer staff. This comes from the Cold War model and

BOB HOLLINGSWORTH

GX had the opportunity to sit down with Bob Hollingsworth, Executive Director, National Committee for ESGR. What follows were some of his key comments during the interview:

“As the War on Terror intensifies, the role of ESGR is more critical than ever before. The Department of Defense estimates that increasing retention even one half of one percent will save 1.8 billion dollars per year...A Soldier who feels secure about their job is better equipped to focus on their mission, feels good about themselves, worries less about their family, and will always make for a better, more productive employee... Employers have long realized that hiring and supporting our Guard members and Reservists is a great investment. They are quality, well-trained employees with great loyalty. Most employers can’t hire enough of them.” **GX**



Photo courtesy of ESGR





RECRUIT SUSTAINMENT PROGRAM

OPERATION: RSP WARRIORS

YOUR MISSION:

To successfully travel to your Basic Training post and complete all the challenges of Basic Combat Training.

Are you ready for the challenge?

Are you ready to protect and defend the greatest nation in the world?

★ **\$2000** ★

DID YOU KNOW you might qualify for an early-ship bonus of \$2000 if you ship to training early? Talk to your recruiter to see if you're eligible for this bonus.

ARE YOU READY FOR BASIC?

- » IS ALL YOUR INFORMATION STILL CORRECT? (ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, ETC.)
- » IS YOUR PAY CORRECT?
- » CAN YOU PASS THE ARMY PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST?
- » DO YOU MEET THE HEIGHT AND WEIGHT STANDARDS?
- » HAVE YOU RECEIVED YOUR ACTIVE DUTY ORDERS FOR THIS SUMMER?
- » IS YOUR MANDATORY RETURN DATE CORRECT?
- » HAVE YOU COMPLETED YOUR PRE-SHIP CHECKLIST?

MAKE SURE YOU ARRIVE AT BASIC TRAINING READY TO GO BY TALKING TO YOUR RSP NCO AT THE NEXT DRILL.

VICTORY MAP

PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE



South Dakota

The SDARNG Kids Pen Pal Program is encouraging children of Military Members across South Dakota to communicate with each other. If you are interested in the South Dakota National Guard Pen Pal Program, please call 1-800-658-3930 and request an application. The Family Program office will match up your application with other youth your age, and assign your Pen Pal. You can communicate through email or regular mail.

Minnesota

28 MNARNG Soldiers from A Company, 682nd Engineer Battalion returned home after a year in Iraq.

New Hampshire

NHARNG's 744th Transportation Co. and Charlie Company, 3rd of the 172nd Infantry Regiment Mountain Division returned home after a year in Iraq.

Illinois

166 members of the ILARNG's 1544th Transportation Company came home from Iraq.

Maine

All 164 members of the MEARNG's 133rd Engineer Battalion returned home after spending a year in Iraq.

California

Guard Car Driver #16 Greg Biffle won the Auto Club 500, a 250-lap race on the California Speedway.

California

California Dental Association's (CDA) dentist members have joined a CDA-sponsored registry agreeing to provide dental care to California National Guard Soldiers mobilized for the Global War on Terrorism. Dentists on the registry will accept Soldiers' dental insurance, a sliding fee for reimbursement, or provide necessary treatment on a *pro bono* basis.

For more information, contact MSG Helen Nunez-Cruz, dental project coordinator with the CAARNG at: Helen.Cruz@ca.ngb.army.mil.

Nicaragua

UTARNG will run Task Force Chinandega operations for New Horizons 2005, a cooperative effort between the U.S., Nicaragua and five other countries. They will oversee the construction of four schools and two clinics; TF Chinandega will also set up and operate three temporary medical clinics for Nicaraguans. More than 20,000 people are expected to show up for the medical readiness training exercise (MEDRETE); for many, it will be the first time they have ever received a medical examination.

Texas

Members of the TXARNG's 1836th Transportation Company returned home after a year in Kuwait.

Haiti

AKARNG's 1/207th Aviation Regiment aids in international effort to rebuild Haiti's schools, hospitals, and roads in the aftermath of Hurricane Gene.



SEND YOUR NEWS TO:

 editor@gxonline.com

Iraq

278th Regimental Combat Team captured three insurgents and some small arms in a raid dubbed "Operation Spur Rest." One of the insurgents is suspected of providing financial support for anti-Iraqi Forces, including paying to have improvised explosive devices planted.

Iraq

Coalition Forces destroyed one of the largest weapons caches found in the 278th Regimental Combat Team's area of operations. Explosive ordnance disposal personnel and the 386th Engineer Battalion destroyed more than six tons of ordnance.

Iraq

The 206th Iraqi Army Battalion, 386th Engineer Battalion and other Coalition Forces units delivered school supplies to the Jisr Naft School here Feb. 14. The units also gave the students a class on unexploded ordnance awareness.

Iraq

A new school opened in Moulla. The school will serve 103 children. Troops of the 278th Regimental Combat Team and Iraqi Border Patrol delivered and distributed school supplies to the students.

Iraq

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, passed out candy and school supplies to children while on patrol here Jan. 29. The candy and supplies were a gift from elementary school children in Tennessee.

Philippines

NDARNG's 142nd Engineer Battalion aided in a humanitarian construction mission with the Guam Army National Guard, Navy Seabees, Air Force Engineers, and Philippine Armed Forces. The mission involved building two schoolhouses and a pump house for the community.

Spain

SPC Denise Teela of the VTARNG, participating in the U.S. Army's World Class Athlete program, won the gold medal for the women's 10-kilometer cross-country ski race at the 6th Campeonato Nacional Military de Esqui (CNME). SPC Teela's time was 30 minutes, 5 seconds. The CNME competition is hosted by the Spanish Military Mountain School with the goal of consolidating winter sports' friendships between armies of friendly nations.

Afghanistan

National Guard Soldiers of the 3rd Brigade Embedded Training Team have helped their Afghan National Army counterparts dig wells, distribute school supplies, deliver medical supplies to the Kabul's Children Hospital and distribute supplies to orphanages. They have even taken on road repairs in local districts where American and Afghan soldiers are providing peace and security for the Afghan nation.

Afghanistan

The number of weapons and munitions caches turned in to coalition forces increased nearly 100% between February 2004 and February 2005. Caches are also increasing in size and the amount of useful munitions.

FOR KIDS

OPERATION PURPLE



www.nmfa.org
Operation Purple
703-931-6632

Operation Purple camp offers free one-week summer camps to 2,000 military children, ages 10-16, throughout the world. Children from all branches of the military are eligible to apply. First priority goes to children of deployed Soldiers, recently deployed Soldiers, or Soldiers nearing their deployment dates, although any military child may apply.

Operation Purple, started by the National Military Family Association in Alexandria, VA, is co-sponsored by the Department of Defense, the National Guard Bureau, and Sears through its Sears American Dream Campaign.

Military children camping with Operation Purple outside Ellerbe, NC.



This program has expanded from 12 camps with 1,000 campers last year to more than 20 camps with 2,000 campers for 2005. The camps bring together youth of all military branches and enable them to develop relationships with other kids in similar situations. The campers can learn coping skills for deployment-related stress, mixed with a week of fun activities. Outdoor activities vary according to the camps' natural resources.

The program reimburses up to \$100 of approved travel expenses.

Operation Purple announced the following camps on March 1 with additional camp-

site locations to be announced on the NMFA website.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Elmendorf AFB, Alaska | Riverside, California |
| Buckley AFB, Colorado | Eglin AFB, Florida |
| Garmisch, Germany | Guam |
| Ames, Iowa | Camp Darby, Italy |
| Concord, New Hampshire | Ft. Drum area, New York |
| Ellerbe, North Carolina | Wright-Patt AFB, Ohio |
| Wernersville, Pennsylvania | Brownwood, Texas |

Camp applications should be available on the NMFA website mid-March through April 30. Look for Family Programs/Awards on the home page.



FOR THE FAMILY



There are numerous benefits that add value to being a National Guard member, spouse, parent, or child.

Included in this issue of GX are some of the great programs that we have discovered.

by Kathy R. Williams

FOR PARENTS

OPERATION CHILDCARE



www.childcareaware.org
Child Care Aware Hotline
1-800-424-2246

The National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (NACCRRA) is providing free child care for troops on leave from Iraq and Afghanistan. NACCRRA heads up a national, volunteer network that provides four or more hours of free child care for National Guard and Reserve Soldiers returning to the U.S. for rest and recuperation. The child-care providers meet all local and state child-care regulations. They volunteer and pledge their services to give Soldiers time to attend to family business, take their spouses out on dates, or enjoy other recreational activities while on leave.



Interested National Guard and Reserve members must have their military leave orders and valid military identifications to qualify for the program. Members may call the Child Care Aware hotline or make requests for care through www.ChildCareAware.org. Service members are referred to local child-care agencies that participate in the program. Hotline personnel will work with the requesting members to make arrangements.

For additional information, call their hotline or visit the NACCRRA website.

FOR FAMILIES

HERE'S TO THE HEROES

 www.herosalute.com

Anheuser-Busch is offering free single-day admissions to SeaWorld, Busch Gardens, or Sesame Place to active members of the National Guard and up to three dependents through 12/31/2005. You may qualify by registering on www.herosalute.com or at the entrance/ticket booths at participating parks. You must present valid Department of Defense photo identification. Dependents may attend without their sponsors although an adult must accompany minors. See www.herosalute.com for complete details.

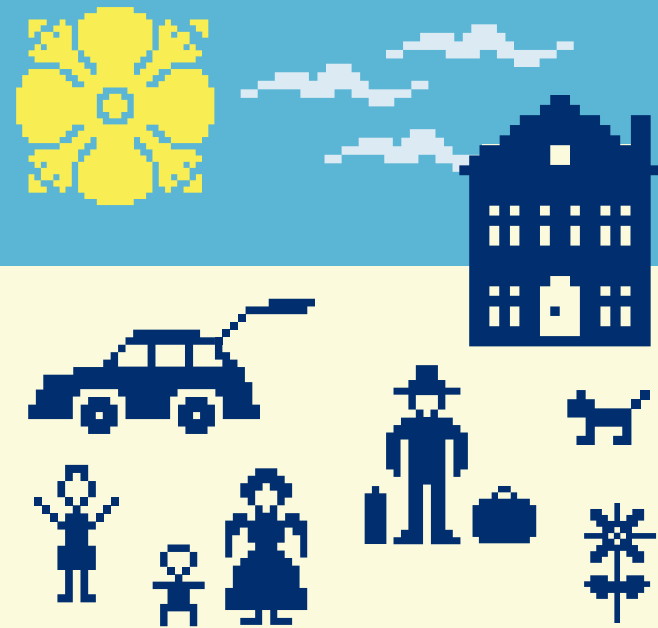


Illustration by Kenneth White

HOTEL REBATES

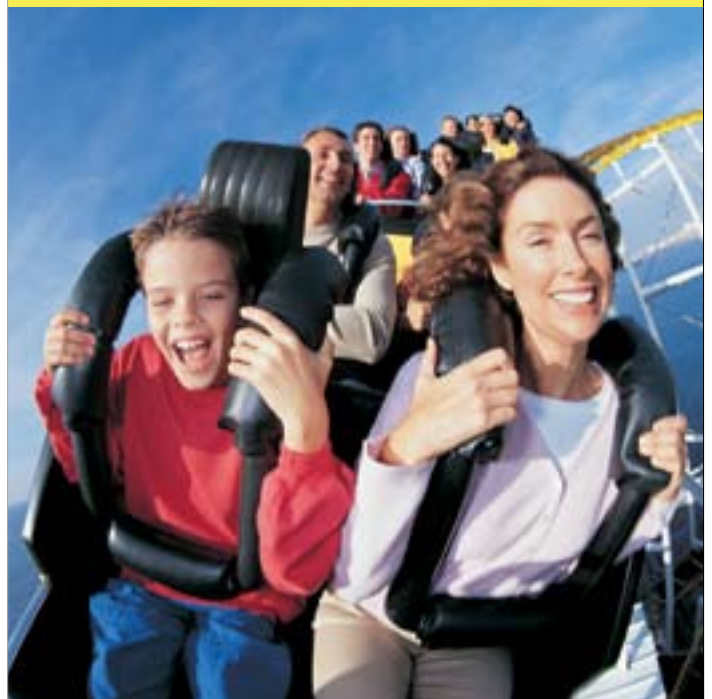
 www.Military-Travel.net
1-800-275-9183

www.Military-Travel.net offers hotel discounts and rebates to all military members and their families. This program is an affiliate of Hotels.com and extends a 5% rebate on hotel costs (issued 14 days after checkout). The rebate is available in addition to the Hotels.com guaranteed low rates. You must go through the website, www.Military-Travel.net, to qualify for this offer. There are no restrictions on the number of times you may use this service.

Reservations can be made online or at 800-275-9183. Visit www.Military-Travel.net for additional information.



Free admission
to Sea World,
Busch Gardens,
or Sesame Place!



SPOUSES TO TEACHERS

FOR SPOUSES

SPOUSES TO TEACHERS



www.SpousesToTeachers.org
800-452-6619



Spouses to Teachers, a project initiated by the Department of Defense in September 2004, assists military spouses in their pursuits of teaching degrees and teaching certifications. The pilot program has been launched in California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Texas, and Virginia.

Finding certification requirements and job information is challenging when moving frequently because of military relocations. The Spouses to Teachers' program counselors can help by explaining options for obtaining certifications. For spouses currently enrolled in bachelor degree programs, counselors can also advise them on tracks that would lead them to teaching degrees.

The program consists of stipends, counseling, and guidance on options and financial assistance. Reimbursements are also available for certification testing.

Spouses are required to present a valid ID card verifying their sponsors' affiliations with the Guard.

Additional states may be added to this program in October, depending upon the pilot project results. For additional information, visit www.SpousesToTeachers.org or call 1-800-452-6619.

Photo by Picturequest/BananaStock

BEST NATIONAL GUARD FAMILY READINESS GROUP

The Department of Defense recently awarded an Iowa Family Readiness Group (FRG) as the best Army National Guard Family Readiness Group in the country.

Representatives from "Keepers of the Flame," an FRG from Carroll, Iowa, attended a ceremony held in the Pentagon's Hall of Heroes in Washington, D.C. This group serves Company A, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry (Air Assault), IAARNG.

The 1/168th deployed in February 2004 to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Illustration by Kenneth White

AANG FAMILY ASSISTANCE CENTERS

The Department of Defense established Family Assistance Centers (FAC) within each state and territory. This ensures that family members of mobilized Soldiers have help when they need it. The FAC consultants provide information about benefits and entitlements for the Soldiers and their families. This can include legal, financial, insurance, and household challenges. If the Soldiers deploy, the centers will provide information about mobilizations. In addition, they can inform spouses about changes in benefits that occur because of changes in their military status.

Alabama	334-271-7283
Alaska	907-264-5346
Arizona	800-233-7758
Arkansas	800-446-4645
California	800-449-9662
Colorado	720-847-8844
Connecticut	800-858-2677
District of Columbia	202-685-9826
Delaware	302-326-7268
Florida	800-226-0360
Georgia	678-569-6457
Guam	671-366-4221
Hawaii	808-732-1823
Idaho	800-543-0887
Illinois	217-761-3413
Indiana	800-237-2850 x 3192
Iowa	800-294-6607 x 4416
Kansas	785-274-1171
Kentucky	800-372-7601
Louisiana	800-541-5860
Maine	207-626-4410
Maryland	877-399-6221
Massachusetts	888-301-3103 x 7222
Michigan	517-702-5116
Minnesota	888-234-1274
Mississippi	601-313-6502
Missouri	800-299-9603

Montana	406-324-3239
Nebraska	800-432-6778
Nevada	775-887-7328
New Hampshire	800-472-0328
New Jersey	888-859-0352
New Mexico	505-853-5668
New York	877-715-7817
North Carolina	800-621-4136 x 6324
North Dakota	800-242-4940
Ohio	800-589-9914
Oklahoma	405-228-5841
Oregon	877-881-5181
Pennsylvania	800-634-1790
Puerto Rico	787-289-1516
Rhode Island	877-440-7994
South Carolina	803-806-4387
South Dakota	800-658-3930
Tennessee	615-355-3996
Texas	800-252-8032
Utah	801-523-4533
Vermont	888-607-8773
Virgin Islands	340-712-7787
Virginia	800-542-4028
Washington	800-364-7492
West Virginia	866-986-4326
Wisconsin	800-292-9464
Wyoming	800-832-1959 x 5099

FOR FAMILIES

GUARD FAMILY WEBSITE



www.guardfamily.org

The National Guard Family Program operates www.guardfamily.org for Guard members and their families. The website contains an extensive on-line community for networking and information. There are also valuable links to resources addressing financial and emotional needs of the Guard family. You can find Guard news, deployments, and points of contact. Additionally, you may sign up for emails notifying you of upcoming events and updates relevant to your interests.

THE NEWS ABOUT GUARD BENEFITS

Since 2002, thirty-eight laws have passed in support of deployed troops and their families, and eighteen new bills are pending as of February 2005.

President Bush is proposing to increase the tax-free death gratuities for troops killed in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other war zones. Currently the payments are \$12,420. Gratuity payments would increase to \$100,000.

The U.S. would also pay for \$150,000 in life insurance for deployed troops. Currently \$250,000 coverage is available for purchase by all service members. This would increase to \$400,000. For troops in combat zones, the government would pay the premiums on the extra \$150,000 coverage.

At the state level, appreciation for activated National Guard troops and their dependents has increased since 2002. States are showing their gratitude for Soldiers by introducing bills that increase benefits to troops in addition to nationwide benefits. **GX**



Photo by Picturamus/Stockbyte

THE

MAGNIFICENT SEVENTH



ark Avenue is known the world over as a home to wealthy tycoons and high-brow socialites, but this prestigious address is also rich in history. Rising from the ground at 643, The Park Avenue Armory proudly stands like an ancient sentinel keeping watch on the sidewalks below, just as it has for hundreds of years. As home to New York's fabled Seventh Regiment, this historic landmark is a reminder of the legacy that is the foundation upon which today's National Guard has been created.

Though the Army National Guard traces its roots to 1636, it was the buildup to the War of 1812 that saw the creation of the first American military unit to call itself the "National Guard" (see sidebar).

In the Spring of 1806, the British Navy was enforcing a blockade of New York City. Eager for more sailors to help fight the war against Napoleon, the British Navy was stopping every ship that left the harbor to search for "deserters." In reality, they were forcing any able-bodied sailor they found, including Americans, to serve in the British Navy.

On April 25, a British frigate named *The Leander* fired on an American merchantman ship as she left New York Harbor. It was bad enough that Britain no longer honored American's rights on

the high seas, and the impressment of American sailors certainly wasn't a trivial matter, but this time *The Leander's* cannon fire had killed someone... an American.

The people of New York City were stunned. In a city-wide call for defense, they formed the first all-volunteer artillery companies of what was to become the Seventh Regiment of New York.

This origin in homeland defense is not lost on the fine men and women who carry on the tradition of the 7th Regiment. The 107th Corps Support Group, under the command of COL Fergal Foley, are the current occupants of the historic Park Avenue Armory and the direct descendants of the Seventh Regiment of New York. Among the first to respond to the attacks of September 11th and proud partners with NORTHCOM during the Republican National Convention last fall, COL Foley sees their role as ever-changing and yet firmly connected to the past.

"We started out defending New York nearly 200 years ago, and we're still doing it today," said COL Foley. "My Soldiers are the finest in the country, and every one of them is proud to carry on the traditions of the New York Army National Guard."

COL Fergal Foley of the 107th Corps Support Group sits in the commander's chair in the Reception Room of the Park Avenue Armory.



The Park Avenue Armory was built in 1890 with money raised entirely by private donations. The Veteran's Room was lavishly decorated under the direction of Louis Comfort Tiffany because he was the best available, and the Silk Stocking Regiment always hired the best. The frieze features vignettes of the history of Warriors from the Stone Age to the Civil War. The ceiling is intricately decorated in aluminum leaf because at the time aluminum was more precious than gold or silver.





WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Marie Joseph Paul Yves Roch Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de Lafayette (1757-1834) was a member of the ancient and honored French nobility. At the age of 20, he volunteered to aid General George Washington in winning America's independence. He proved indispensable in convincing France to back America in her revolution against Britain. On December 7, 1776, Congress awarded him the rank of Major General, which appears to make him the youngest commissioned regular general officer in the American Army.

Forty years later, by invitation of President James Monroe, Lafayette returned to America to visit old comrades and tour Revolutionary War battlefields. To honor Lafayette during his visit, the 2nd Battalion, 2nd Regiment Artillery (later reorganized as the 7th Regiment of New York) temporarily renamed themselves "The National Guard" after the General's French Revolutionary command, the Garde Nationale de France. The name proved to be so popular that it was made official for all militias by Congress in 1903. When Lafayette returned to France for the last time at the age of 67, he took with him barrels of soil from his beloved America. He was buried in that soil when he died 10 years later. An American flag flies over his grave to this day.

In 2002, Congress voted Lafayette an honorary Citizen of the United States, an honor he shares with only five other people: Winston Churchill, Mother Theresa, Raoul Wallenberg, and William and Hannah Penn.

The two most prominently featured portraits in the Colonel's Room are of George Washington and this one of Lafayette, the man connected to the naming of the National Guard.



The historic Park Avenue Armory in downtown Manhattan is the only National Guard armory in the United States that was built entirely with private funds. The historic home of the Seventh Regiment, also known as the "Silk Stocking Regiment" because of their incredibly wealthy membership, is now home to the 107th Corps Support Group.

A stained glass window on the second floor of the Park Avenue Armory commemorates the Regiment's Medal of Honor Winners from the Civil War and WWI.





GUARD EQUIPMENT

**HUMVEES, RIFLES,
AND LIQUID ARMOR, OH MY!**

**“Everyone in the company knows
that their mission is to save lives.”**

- Pony Maples, owner, Military Systems Group

Humvee Photos by Raye Dene Berry

HUMVEES



ABOVE: Pony Maples with the MSG Humvee

Military Systems Group (MSG) has an unusual mission statement that drives everything it does with a fervor that is almost religious in quality. The company's owner, Pony Maples, lays it out in plain terms: "Everyone in the company knows that their mission is to save lives. They work like they are saving lives every day."

This is no empty corporate mission statement. To the staff of MSG, this mission is very real because the products they create save the lives of American troops. Their armor upgrades, weapon mounts and over a hundred other modifications transform a standard Humvee into an armored beast, bristling with mounted weapons and tested to withstand roadside bombs at close range. In other words, it is an insurgent's worst nightmare.

MSG's dedication to bringing Soldiers home safe is nowhere more evident than in the way Mr. Maples tells his stories. His soft southern drawl and gentlemanly manner belie a burning passion for protecting our troops and destroying terrorists. He pulls no punches and makes no apologies, his eyes lighting up with a fierce pride as he tells of the battlefield success of some of his products.

One such story took place in the early days of the war in Iraq (March 2003). Six Humvees were out cutting optical cable in order to disrupt Saddam Hussein's communications network. They were working in a terrible sandstorm with almost zero visibility.

A sudden break in the blowing sand revealed a line of ten enemy trucks at short range, all armed with mounted weapons, RPGs and numerous small arms. The American forces reacted quickly and wheeled their vehicles into an advantageous firing position before the enemy could bring its weapons to bear.

The Americans attempted to open up with four .50 caliber machine-guns and two Mk 19 grenade launchers, but every weapon except one was jammed with sand. Normally, these Soldiers would have

been in trouble, but instead of a standard Humvee with only one mounted weapon, these Soldiers were driving vehicles up-armored and up-weaponed by MSG.

The Soldiers were able to go directly to their back up mounted weapons on the turret and specially designed fighting doors. The volume of fire they produced, combined with their armored platform, settled the matter in short order. In less than three minutes, the enemy had been routed. The American forces had suffered zero casualties.

According to the figures provided by MSG, they have equipped over 1,700 vehicles currently deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. Over the course of three years, two wars and countless firefights, there has not been a single reported product failure.

In less than three minutes, the enemy had been routed. The American forces had suffered zero casualties.

This level of effectiveness is less surprising when you learn that MSG builds their products based entirely on input from the field. They constantly interview returning combat veterans, all of them gunners and drivers. These are the men and women who turn the wheel and pull the trigger. They've done it under fire and they know, better than anyone, what is needed.

This expert input has led to many modifications, but not all are directly related to combat. Well placed handholds provide assistance for encumbered Soldiers getting in and out of a vehicle, door hooks conveniently hold load-bearing vests and hand tools are easily accessible on the hood of the Humvee. These along with dozens of other modifications make a Soldier's life a little bit easier as well as safer.



PREVIOUS PAGE: The MSG Humvee

RIGHT: The Barrett .50 caliber sniper rifle mounted on the MSG Humvee



.50 CALIBER RIFLE



**This weapon
has more uses
than Velcro™**

There are four little words that strike terror in the hearts of insurgents, terrorists and bad guys everywhere: Barrett .50 caliber

rifle. Its reputation for combat reliability, range and precision have made it an indispensable tool on the modern battlefield.

Known in the Army as the M107, this rifle has become a beloved sniper's tool because of its fearsome, anti-personnel capabilities, but that is only part of the story. This weapon has more uses than Velcro.

While it will not penetrate the armor on a main battle tank, the M107 has proven itself very effective against an assortment of hard targets such as light armored vehicles and enemy bunkers. Its precision

allows shooters to effectively destroy a target with minimal risk of additional unwanted casualties.

Perhaps one of the systems most unusual tasks is that of explosive ordnance disposal (EOD). Once a mine or IED (improvised explosive device) has been detected, it must be removed or destroyed. Troops are often required to stand off and try to detonate the explosive with rifle fire. Unfortunately, most weapons do not have sufficient punch to penetrate the thick walls of an anti-tank mine or a 155mm howitzer shell (often used for IEDs), but that is not a problem for



the Barrett's massive .50 caliber cartridge. Personnel are able to maintain a safe distance and quickly and accurately dispose of the threat.

In addition, the M107 has proven itself in many other roles, including patrol overwatch, perimeter security, disabling parked aircraft or missiles, and many other force protection missions. With this impressive array of capabilities, we will likely be seeing more and more of these rifles on the battlefield. **GX**

ABOVE: An American Soldier takes aim with his M107 on Barrett Rifle's test range.

Photo courtesy of Barrett Firearms Manufacturing, Inc.

LIQUID ARMOR

FUTURE TECH

What? You think they're sleeping at Aberdeen Proving Ground? Every day: a new defense system, a new weapon. What's the latest those fabulous eggheads at U.S. Army Research have come up with? Liquid body armor. Yeah, that's right, liquid. Get this, compared to Kevlar vests, it's lighter, more flexible, has superior stab resistance, and equivalent or better ballistic performance.

The secret here is a liquid known as Shear Thickening Fluid (STF). The fluid is a non-toxic substance called polyethylene glycol. Suspended in this fluid are microscopic silica particles that, when subjected to an impact, instantly transition the fluid into a rigid material.

In order to create liquid armor, the layers of a Kevlar vest are soaked in the STF. The Kevlar serves to hold the liquid in place as well as to provide additional ballistic protection. Even soaked, the Kevlar retains its flexibility and can be sewn into garments just like any other fabric. Once testing is complete, this material will likely first show up in Soldiers' sleeves and pants, areas not usually covered by body armor because of its movement restrictions.

Eric Wetzel, the head of the project, points out that body armor isn't the only application possible. "We could also use this material for bomb blankets, to cover suspicious packages or unexploded ordnance. Liquid armor could even be applied to jump boots, so that they would stiffen during impact to support Soldiers' ankles."

"Prison guards and police officers could also benefit from this technology," said Wetzel. "Liquid armor is much more stab resistant than conventional body armor. This capability is especially important for prison guards, who are most often attacked with handmade sharp weapons."

It will probably be a few years before STF-treated materials start showing up on the battlefield, but we just wanted you to know that the folks at Army Research are burning the midnight oil making sure our Soldiers come home safe.

BELOW: An ice pick is unable to penetrate a piece of Kevlar fabric treated with Shear Thickening Fluid. Photo by SGT Lorie Jewell



ABOVE: Shear Thickening Fluid

Photo by SGT Lorie Jewell



BUILD

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF WANTING TO RACE? HOW DID YOU GET STARTED?

I came into racing from the car fabrication side, which is much different from how other drivers are brought up through the system. When I was six or seven, I was welding metal together. By sixteen, I was working at the machine shop with my father. We would go watch the races at the Portland Speedway oval during the weekends.

My first car in high school was a Firebird modified with a Chevy Big Block engine (*laughing*). I won lots of street races. My father and I built our first street stock car, a '74 Ford Torino, and it wasn't long before the shop was testing and racing cup cars at Portland Speedway and the Tri-Cities Raceway. I had a chance to race one weekend at Phoenix in the Northwest Street Stock Tour, and I was completely hooked. Until then, I had been only testing cars.

I built my own cup car and started racing. I did okay, but I was never really serious about it. My car and how it was fabricated received most of the attention, and I was asked to build a street stock car for someone else. I stopped racing and began building cars professionally. Within five years, my dad and I were building forty models a year. The business was extremely successful. We were clearing more than a million dollars just in parts, and I didn't imagine doing anything different.

One of my best customers had a falling out with his driver late in the season, and he asked me to drive for him since I was familiar with the car in testing. I won seven races in my short season and went on to

ING A TRADITION

After carving out a successful niche behind the scenes building race cars, Greg Biffle couldn't imagine doing anything else. Then, he was asked to fill a last-minute vacancy on a local racing team. As a favor, Greg got behind the wheel and stepped into the spotlight that was to become his future.

win seventeen of nineteen races the next year, and about eighty percent of my races the next. In the season after that, I was racing at the Tucson Winter Heat Series. I met Benny Parsons there, and got my break into the Craftsman Truck Series.

WHO WERE YOUR ROLE MODELS GROWING UP?

I can't think of anyone in particular, but during the races at Phoenix, Dale Earnhardt and Ernie Irvin amazed me. They could really drive.

WHAT'S THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE SO FAR BETWEEN THIS SEASON AND THE LAST?

I think we're much further ahead with the car this year. Our setup has come a long way. Our team, on the other hand, has gone through some turnover. We have three new guys on the pit crew, and it's going to take some time to get back to the speed we had last year. When you replace three people in a seven-person team, that's almost half of your crew. It takes some training for everyone to be confident in who's doing what, who's got what tool, you know. It can cost you time in the pits. But I'm confident we'll get there. *(A week after this interview, Greg Biffle won the Auto Club 500 due in part to his crew pushing him from ninth to fifth position with a phenomenal pit stop on lap 202.)*

WAS IT DIFFICULT TO TRANSITION INTO THE "MAJOR LEAGUE" OF NEXTEL CUP RACING AFTER ALL YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE BUSCH AND CRAFTSMAN TRUCK SERIES?

Wow, it was tough. We knew we would have to work hard to get here, but we were surprised how much went into these cars. We really struggled with our setup [for Daytona 2003]. We were consistently two seconds slower than what we needed

to even qualify. Two seconds is huge in qualifying. We were finally able to get the downforce adjusted and get into the race. It was tense.

At this level, so much is dependent on the cars. Even the smallest change can affect

"I appreciate all my sponsors, but racing for the Guard is special. It's unbelievable to see what these men and women do for our country."

the race. The drivers are pretty much equal. They're all great drivers. But you can put the best driver in a slow car, and he can't do anything.

HOW MANY CARS DO YOU USE IN A SEASON?

We have five cars: the superspeedway car; the speedway car (for the mile- to two-mile tracks); the road course car, which is setup much different than the others; and two short track cars—one for the flat tracks like Martinsville and one for the banking tracks.

WHAT STYLE OF TRACK DO YOU ENJOY RACING THE MOST—SHORT TRACK, SPEEDWAY, ROAD COURSE? WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TRACK?

I really love the mile- to two-mile tracks—Phoenix, Michigan, California, Vegas, Darlington—but it's much easier for me to tell you which tracks I dislike. I'm not wild about the superspeedways, Daytona and Talladega. It's not fun. You're packed so tight together. It's just a crapshoot.

HOW MUCH DO YOU AND YOUR ROUSH TEAMMATES SHARE BETWEEN RACES ABOUT CAR SETUPS AND RACING STRATEGY?

The crew chiefs and the drivers have weekly meetings, but it's hard to get everyone there at the same time. We share

most of our information at the race track during Happy Hour, right before the race. It's open book between the drivers and the crew chiefs, sharing what we've learned during practice. We learn more in that fifteen minutes than anytime during the week. And it's really helpful for the race. What you've shared is fresh on your

mind. You've been on the track already, so it really sinks in.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU TO BE RACING FOR THE NATIONAL GUARD?

The National Guard is the best sponsor I could ask for. It means the world to me. I appreciate all my sponsors, but racing for the Guard is special. It's unbelievable to see what these men and women do for our country, especially now—now's when we need them the most. When I'm racing, my heart goes out to them. **GX**



CALIFORNIA DREAMIN'

Greg Biffle battles back from Daytona's disappointment to score a big victory at California Speedway's Auto Club 500

Greg Biffle is not yet a household name, but if his racing in the Auto Club 500 was any indication of what the future holds, that may be changing very soon.

Before the start of the race, Biffle made the bold prediction that he would take the checkered flag. Throughout most of the race, it seemed like this pre-race confidence was nothing more than over-zealous posturing, but with just over thirty laps to go, this up-and-coming driver made a somewhat risky play that would swing the tide in his favor.

Under caution on lap 218, Biffle and teammate Kurt Busch, running fifth and second respectively, decided to stay on the track while most of the other contenders headed to the pits for final tire changes. Busch took the lead, with Biffle close

behind, as the two teammates put some distance between themselves and the rest of the pack. Seven laps after the green flag waved, Biffle made a move on Busch to take the lead.

The Guard Car stayed in the lead until the checkered flag, but not without some difficulty. The crew had been loosening the car

I finally got out front, it was so dang loose that I could hardly drive it!"

Despite grazing the wall a couple of times and a last-minute challenge from Jimmie Johnson, Biffle fought off the demons of Daytona's disappointments and held on to capture the National Guard Team's first victory of the season. "I do have to say

"I do have to say this was the toughest win of my career . . . we had to overcome more today than any other race."

all day to allow for better maneuvering and passing in heavy traffic, but once Biffle found himself cruising solo out in front of the pack, those adjustments made it nearly impossible for him to maintain control of the Roush Taurus. "I had freed up the car so much early on," the winner said, "once

this was the toughest win of my career," admitted Biffle. "We had to overcome more today than any other race. Late in the race, when others were pitting, we made the decision to stay out in front and not try to fight our way back up from the middle. We made the right decision." **GX**



NASCAR driver Greg Biffle's pit crew jumps for joy after winning the Auto Club 500 at the California Speedway in Fontana, CA, Sunday, Feb. 27, 2005.

Photo by AP Photo/Matt A. Brown

STAY AHEAD OF THE GAME



PRESS ON

(FROM BACK LEFT): SGT ERICA POOLE, MS. CHRISTINA PARKER, MSG COREY DABNEY, MS. LUCY HAWKINS, MR. ROBERT FLEISHAUER, WO1 JENNIFER TOSSAS, MAJ MONIQUE VAUGHTER, MR. NATHANIEL JAMISON, SFC ANTHONY JONES (HEAD COACH)

BY SSG BRYON COX, NGB

SFC Anthony D. Jones, along with 19 men and women from the National Guard Bureau's Combined Bench Press Team (NGB-CBT) have competed in three Eastern Regional meets, culminating in three first-place finishes as a team.

In March of 2004, the team competed in its first meet, the Amateur Athletic Union's (AAU) East Coast Regional Championship. Their victory, which included setting eight American National records in the military flat-bench category, qualified them for their second meet in October of 2004: the AAU World Bench Press Championship.

More important than the eight first-place and one fifth-place finishes, nine gold medals, two silver medals, one bronze medal and five world records, victory in their second meet brought the honor of carrying the title of AAU World Bench Press Champions.

The North Carolina Powerlifting Championships and Regional Open Championship presented a new challenge. Unlike previous competitions where they competed in a military flat-bench only category, this contest brought the best powerlifters in the division. Eight medals later, the NGB-CBT claimed its third victory.

Today, the Military Competitions division of the Guard Bureau is looking ahead for the team. They are focused on managing and coordinating events, to include the new budget they've recently allocated for marketing and travel expenses. "We want them to be able to compete and not have to worry about the specifics," said SSG Garry Moubrey, the Military Competitions Liaison.

Currently the NGB-CBT is preparing for its next competition on April 23, 2005, in the AAU Spring Break Classic Bench Press, at the Showplace Annex in Richmond, Virginia. **GX**

CHECK OUT THE NEW
GUARD EVENTS SITE
FOR ALL THE LATEST!



[www.1800goguard.com/
guardevents](http://www.1800goguard.com/guardevents)

THE NEED FOR SPEED

THE GUARD GETS BEHIND THE WHEEL OF DRAG RACING



Inspired by the success of Greg Biffle and the Guard-sponsored, Rousch Racing NASCAR team, the National Guard is now sponsoring an NHRA drag racing team as well.

Through the tireless efforts of S&M Motorsports' owners Mike and Susan Stickler, along with their entire crew, the Guard's stars and stripes are now proudly emblazoned across both an NHRA super comp dragster and a funny car. As third-generation drag racers, drivers Roy and Ross Stickler are primed for victory this season on the white-hot asphalt of drag strips across the country.

In addition to sharing the National Guard's ambition and drive to succeed, S&M also embodies the Guard's commitment to community service. Through volunteerism and philanthropic efforts, the team's owners, employees, and family members actively participate in local youth motor sports and at-risk youth educational programs. The team will be expanding its efforts to a national level soon by participating in a full-fledged ARNG recruitment campaign.

2005 Guard Drag Racing Schedule

4/1-3	Division Seven	Tucson, AZ
5/27-29	Division One	Reading, PA
6/16-19	National Event	Englishtown, NJ
6/30-7/3	Division One	West Lebanon, NY
8/12-14	Division One	Numidia, PA
8/26-28	Division One	Rising Sun, MD
8/31-9/5	National Event	Indianapolis, IN *
9/9-11	Division One	Englishtown, NJ
9/15-18	National Event	Reading, PA
10/7-9	Division One	Atco, NJ **
10/27-30	Division Seven	Las Vegas, NV

* dependent upon prior divisionals
** points final

Photo by Action Photos Racing/Curtis Bosarge, Jr.

S&M MOTORSPORTS AND THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD: ANOTHER WINNING COMBINATION!

Visit www.HoopItUp.com, today.

GOT GAME?

FREE UNIT TEAM OPPORTUNITY FOR GUARD MEMBERS.

You and your team are good. But how good? Here's your chance to show them you're the best. Take the Hoop It Up 3-on-3 challenge.

WHO:

Current Army National Guard members

WHAT:

FREE entry in the Hoop It Up 3-on-3 basketball tournament. Be among the first ten Guard HIU teams in your city to sign up.

WHERE AND WHEN:

Check the locations below and make sure you're there.

HOW:

Visit www.HoopItUp.com for the game schedule, rules and registration. When you register, remember to write "ARNG Comp" in the payment box. Print out the form and mail or fax it in right away.



NEW ORLEANS April 9-10

HOUSTON April 16-17

DALLAS April 30-May 1

ATLANTA May 7

HUNTSVILLE May 14-15

NASHVILLE May 21-22

LITTLE ROCK June 4-5

COLORADO SPRINGS June 11-12

DENVER June 25-26

OMAHA July 2-3

KANSAS CITY July 9-10

MINNEAPOLIS July 16-17

CLEVELAND July 30-31

CINCINNATI August 6-7

LOUISVILLE August 13-14

DAYTON August 20-21

DES MOINES August 27-28

FORT WAYNE September 3-4

SPRINGFIELD September 24-25

PITTSBURGH October 8-9

AUSTIN October 22-23



DIAMOND-GRIP

Photos and illustrations courtesy StartFitness™



STEP 1

Assume the Start Position for the Diamond-grip Push-up by placing your thumbs and first fingers together. Place your hands on the ground underneath your sternum. Straighten your arms and legs with your feet next to each other. Straighten your back and balance your body on your hands and the balls of your feet. Squeeze your rear-end and abdominal muscles and tilt your head up and look forward.

STEP 2

Begin the exercise by bending your arms at your elbows and lower yourself to the ground. The middle of the Diamond should line-up in the center of your sternum.

STEP 3

Once your arms have bent short of a 90-degree angle at the elbows, you have gone low enough. Push away from that point until your arms become straight again. You have completed a full repetition of this exercise once you have performed each of the steps listed.

IMPROVE YOUR APFT

ARMY PHYSICAL FITNESS TEST

DIAMOND-GRIP PUSH-UP:

The Diamond-grip Push-up is often referred to as the Tricep Push-up because it incorporates a great deal of tricep strength in order to perform the exercise.

STRATEGY:

I have been able to improve my Push-up score as part of the Army Physical Fitness Test simply by beginning the Push-up event with a Diamond-grip Push-up. Once I have reached muscle failure while performing this stage of the Push-up event, I then

raise my rear end upward and slide my hands a bit outward in order to reduce the use of my triceps and to incorporate more of my pectoral or chest muscles.

I continue to perform this procedure until my arms are as wide as I can successfully perform this exercise when the clock runs out.

WARNING:

Do not attempt to complete the APFT using **only** the Diamond-grip method.

THEORY: Your triceps are strong and short lasting. Your chest muscles are endurance muscles. Make use of your tricep muscles while performing the Push-up event by beginning the exercise with your hands close together.

BREATHING: Inhale while going downward and exhale while pushing away from the ground. Breathe in through your nose and out through your mouth.

GOT A ?
**ASK
 SGT
 KEN™**



Dear SGT Ken™,

I was wondering if you could tell me how to knock 40 seconds off my run time?

Thanks,
 SPC Ryan McGuire

Dear SPC McGuire,

THEORY: Use interval training to improve your run time. In fact, I have been able to carve nearly two minutes off of my two-mile run time as part of the APFT with interval training. I pick a running track and I sprint the straight and jog the curved sections of the track. This can also be performed on a street course: Sprint the long sections of each block and jog the short sections. This form of interval training allows you the opportunity to gradually boost your overall running speeds. Through consistent interval training and proper recovery periods in your schedule, your body will be able to manage longer sprint and shorter jog periods.

WARNING STATEMENT: Be certain to perform an adequate warm-up (Maybe 20-30 minutes) prior to doing this style of intense physical fitness activity.

SUGGESTION: Take two days of the week to first warm up twenty to thirty minutes and then perform interval training as previously suggested. Then take two days per week to simply jog three miles or more to condition your body for a longer course so that when performing the APFT, the two-mile run will appear to be short and easy.

Consult your physician before beginning this or any new diet or exercise program. START Fitness™ is not associated with the Army National Guard.

Got a fitness question? Email SGT Ken™:

✉ askthetrainer@startfitness.com

SKIPPING BREAKFAST?

Breakfast can set the tone for the rest of the day. It is the key to “breaking the fast,” the fast of an eight-hour slumber.

TOO BUSY?

Try boiling enough eggs for two to three days. Take one portion with you daily in a small unbreakable container like Tupperware®. Tip: For flavor, try adding pepper instead of toppings that are loaded with fat such as butter and mayo.

NEED OPTIONS?

Heart healthy, Quaker Oats™ has recently launched a brand of instant oatmeal that contains half the sugar of the original recipe. Keep a non-plastic, microwave-safe dish nearby. Simply take out one packet a day and heat it up in the microwave!

STILL NOT CONVINCED?

Try cereal. When choosing a cereal, try and keep sugar out of the first two to three ingredients. For the organic food shoppers, try Kashi Go Lean Crunch™! For everyone else, we suggest plain old Cheerios™.



The START (Strategic Army Training) Fitness™ program incorporates the same exercises that are used annually to test the strength and endurance of the National Guard. START Fitness is a program created for Soldiers by Soldiers.

SGT 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. START Fitness™ has been profiled on *Backpacker Magazine*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Washington Post*, and now you can expect it in the pages of *GX*.

For more information, visit:

✉ startfitness.com

You can work out with SGT Ken™! Purchase all three of their workout videos (VHS & DVD) on their website.



ABOVE: (l-r) Stephanie and SGT Ken Weichert



It's the Shoes,

YOUR GUIDE TO BUYING THE RIGHT RUNNING SHOES

by JC Johnson

I ASSUME MOST OF YOU are avid and experienced runners and view it as an enjoyable experience. I, however, follow the theory that you should only run when being chased. No matter how you feel about running, we can all agree that there's something to learn.

If you're looking to improve your run (or in my case, find other motivations besides visualizing large rabid dogs chasing me), I may have found some answers—it's all in the shoes!

HERE'S THE DEAL: When runners strike the ground, they land with 3 to 5 times their body weight—this is bound to cause problems. Every person has a different running style, different feet and different needs for shoes. In fact, injury, fatigue and pain may all be alleviated simply by wearing the right shoe. Your job is to make sure you're doing just that. And with three shoe choices—Neutral, Stability or Motion-Control—it's hard to know where to begin.

FLEET FEET TO THE RESCUE!

HERE'S MY SUGGESTION: Go to a specialty running shoe store (like Fleet Feet), and go through its system to assess your shoe needs. Your friendly neighborhood specialist will determine those based on your foot measurement and foot shape and by filming and evaluating your running style. The specialists then use their super-power of product knowledge to fit you in the right shoe.

Each brand and style has a different level of support, shape (last) and mechanics, so whether your foot is low or high-arched, straight or curved, or you overpronate or supinate, a specialist can determine your perfect shoe. Demographics or where your shoe is worn means nothing—there are no generalizations.

Still curious? Here is a look at some shoe recommendations for the different running styles.

not You

NEUTRAL

PRONATOR/SUPINATOR: For people with normal arches, a stable foot or needing normal support



Asics's GEL CUMULUS

\$90 www.asics.com

Designed for runners who underpronate or have a normal footstrike, this cushioned trainer features gels in the rear, forefoot, and midsole for cushioning.

WE THOUGHT it was comfy and cushy, but it didn't quite cushion the foot as much as we would like.



SAUCONY'S GRID TRIGON 2

\$90 www.saucony.com

The Trigon 2, with CRM, allows runners to customize their ride for the perfect amount of cushioning depending on their body type (Light, Responsive or Durable).

WE THOUGHT it felt so natural—it felt like running barefoot.

MOTION CONTROL

OVERPRONATOR: For those requiring a lot of support to control or reduce the severe overpronation (usually high-arched)



Saucony's Grid Stabil MC 5

\$90 www.saucony.com

Supportive enough to keep the runner free from injury yet comfortable enough to slip into the runner's subconscious so he or she can focus on the run.

WE THOUGHT it kept the foot confined, yet well-positioned.



Brook's Beast/Ariel

\$110 www.brookssports.com

When you need motion control with smooth cushioning, there's nothing like slipping on the most advanced motion control shoe on the market.

WE THOUGHT it had a lot of cushion and immediately corrected the over-pronation

STABILITY

OVERPRONATOR: For people with flatter arches, an unstable foot or who need more support.



Brook's Adrenaline GTS 5

\$90 www.brookssports.com

Brooks' progressive stability technology, incredible flexibility, outstanding fit and Hydroflow cushioning make it the most versatile performance running shoe on the planet.

WE THOUGHT it was comfy, absorbed shock well and allowed the foot to move.



Asics's GT-2100

\$90 www.asics.com

For runners seeking a perfect blend of comfort, cushioning and support, it features technology for optimal gait, support, a full-length midsole to attenuate shock, and a special last to add durability.

WE THOUGHT it was very comfy, secure and stable; and it helped keep the run from being sloppy when when you were tired.



THE PRONATOR:

When the foot hits the ground, the heel rolls inward—this motion absorbs shock and makes the arch appear to flatten, a normal and necessary process.

THE OVERPRONATOR:

This person pronates too much or for too long making the foot remain unstable and less supportive of body weight. Causes could be foot shape or genetically predetermined.

THE SUPINATOR:

The nemesis of the overpronator. If the foot rolls inward, it is overpronating; if it rolls outward, it's supinating (supinators are a rarity—so feel special!).

POP FILMS

GX SAYS

OUR THOUGHTS ON POPULAR FILMS

MOVIE	WE SAY	VALUES	CONTENT	SOME SAY
	<p>CONSTANTINE Starring: Keanu Reeves, Rachel Weisz Warner Brothers Pictures Rated R</p> <p>WE SAY: This comic book melodrama is the Matrix meets the Exorcist. Watch Keanu reprise his Neo role, except this time he fights demons and his name's not Neo... but it's basically the same thing. We don't suggest bringing the kids.</p>	<p>ENTERTAINMENT: 3 ACTING: 2 STORY: 3 VISUAL STYLE: 5</p> <p>★★★★</p>		<p>If demonic images freak you out, don't even consider this one.</p>
	<p>THE PACIFIER Starring: Vin Diesel Walt Disney Pictures and Buena Vista Entertainment Rated PG</p> <p>WE SAY: If you look at this through the eyes of a 10-year-old child, it does its job as a Disney film—we heard lots of giggling. It has a cute way of bringing military discipline into family life, making it perfect for military families. However, if you're a traditional Vin Diesel fan, probably not your cup of tea.</p>	<p>ENTERTAINMENT: 4 ACTING: 2 STORY: 2 VISUAL STYLE: 2</p> <p>★★★</p>		<p>Vin, we like you better kicking butt, not wiping it.</p>
	<p>BE COOL Starring: John Travolta, Uma Thurman MGM Pictures Rated PG-13</p> <p>WE SAY: This is a compilation of some of the funniest characters ever seen on screen – we're talking laugh-out-loud funny. As preparation for this movie – watch <i>Get Shorty</i> and <i>Bring It On</i>.</p>	<p>ENTERTAINMENT: 5 ACTING: 3 STORY: 3 VISUAL STYLE: 4</p> <p>★★★★★</p>		<p>We're going back for more.</p>
	<p>THE JACKET Starring: Adrien Brody, Keira Knightley Warner Brothers Pictures Rated R</p> <p>WE SAY: We get claustrophobic even thinking about it. The great chemistry between Adrien and Keira and the film's use of visual effects keep you trapped for the whole two hours.</p>	<p>ENTERTAINMENT: 5 ACTING: 3 STORY: 3 VISUAL STYLE: 4</p> <p>★★★★★</p>		<p>Trapped for two hours... yikes!</p>
	<p>ROBOTS Starring: Ewan McGregor, Halle Berry, Greg Kinnear, Robin Williams Williams Twentieth Century Fox Rated PG</p> <p>WE SAY: And we have another great animated film. It's not full of as much adult humor as <i>Shrek 2</i>, but the kids loved it. How can you go wrong with Robin Williams in anything?</p>	<p>ENTERTAINMENT: 5 ACTING: 3 STORY: 3 VISUAL STYLE: 4</p> <p>★★★★★</p>		<p>A robot doing "the robot dance"! Now, that's funny.</p>

MOVIE CONTENT KEY



HISTORICAL



ROMANCE



BLOODSHED



DRAMATIC



BATTLE



FANTASY



TEARJERKER



CHASE SCENE



HEROISM



SPECIAL EFFECTS



CHILLS & THRILLS



COMEDY

POPPING UP IN THEATERS



THE INTERPRETER

Starring: Nicole Kidman, Sean Penn
Universal Pictures

We're interested in seeing a new accent for Nicole Kidman as well as this complex plotline. They actually filmed at the United Nations—that's never happened before.

WHAT MAKES IT POP? Based on the trailer, it doesn't look predictable.

Release Date: **4.22.2005**



KINGDOM OF HEAVEN

Starring: Orlando Bloom,
20th Century Fox Film Corp.

Orlando's first lead in a feature. Picture it: Legolas fighting in the Crusades. It may be another period piece, but who cares?

WHAT MAKES IT POP? Ridley Scott, the director of *Gladiator* and *Black Hawk Down*... this has to be good.

Release Date: **5.06.2005**

BAMBI, A MARINE?



Donnie Dunagan, the voice of Bambi in the 1942 Walt Disney classic... joined the Marines.

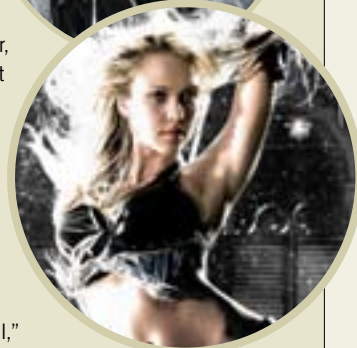
After leaving entertainment, he volunteered in the Korean War and graduated with honors with a degree in civil engineering. Finishing boot camp as a new PFC, Donnie became the youngest assistant drill instructor—and subsequently, the youngest senior drill instructor (a Marine Sergeant by age 19)—in Marine Corps history. He then went into the Navy's Military Law-Justice School for JAG officers, followed by the Army's training program for CIC special agents. He is also the recipient of numerous military combat and valor awards.

During his rise in the Marines, Dunagan spoke little of his childhood role as the voice of Bambi. Now at age 71 and upon Bambi's release to DVD, he finds great pleasure talking about his life in Hollywood, working with Disney.

SIN CITY

by JC Johnson

I'm not complaining, but some comic books have a hard time adapting to film (with a few exceptions of course). Comics work because of the cheesy dialogue and the artwork, which doesn't always translate well to a movie. However, *SIN CITY* is rumored to be the best film ever adapted from a comic book. I think it's because of two people: Frank Miller and Robert Rodriguez.



LET'S START WITH FRANK:

Modern comics have never been the same since Frank. Frank's the mastermind behind "Daredevil," "Ronin," "Elektra," "300," and "Batman: The Dark Knight Returns." In fact, his work on the Batman character inspired the motion picture *Batman: The Movie* (that's why Michael Keaton wore a rubber suit instead of blue polyester jumpsuit.) So now that Frank is at the top of the success pyramid, he has launched his all-crime series, *SIN CITY*.

HOW IT LOOKS: *SIN CITY*'s artwork has no gray, just black and white with the occasional spots of color. It's images are rough, dark, disturbing.... amazing.

NOW FOR ROBERT: Robert is known for making a low-budget film look expensive. This guy directs, writes, edits, composes, and does the visual effects and production design for his films. His films include *Once Upon A Time in Mexico*, *From Dusk 'til Dawn*, and the *Spy Kids* movies (remember the groundbreaking *Spy Kids 3D*).... And he's all about using digital format verses film—apparently, it's cheap.

WHERE ROBERT COMES IN: Robert basically said, "Hey Frank, look at this concept reel. If you like it, you can co-direct." Long story short, Frank liked it and now we have a book that literally comes to life on screen. The movie freakishly looks the same as the book and even has the same dialogue.

HOW'D THEY DO IT? Robert shot most of the scenes in digital format in front of a green screen (remember *Sky Captain?*), and later digitally added the scenes (animations)—meaning, we have one of the first entirely digital movie. Don't believe me? Open the book, read a chapter, watch the trailer... it'll freak you out.

SIN CITY stars Bruce Willis, Jessica Alba, Mickey Rourke, Brittany Murphy, Clive Owen, Rosario Dawson, Benicio Del Toro, Jaime King, Devon Aoki and Alexis Bledel. Other cast includes Elijah Wood, Josh Hartnett, Marley Shelton, Carla Gugino, Nick Stahl, Michael Clarke Duncan and Michael Madsen

SIN CITY Releases on 4.01.2005, Dimension Films
Darkhorse Comics (www.darkhorse.com)

JUDGE THIS MOVIE
BY THE BOOK'S COVER



GOING OLD SCHOOL

THE BROTHERS WEST REVIEW THE LATEST M1911-A1 HANDGUN



ABOVE: Image of M1911-A1, circa 1940, Soldier displaying the proper forward firing method with the M1911-A1
 Courtesy of M1911A1 Manual, War Department, 1940

We're probably going to catch hell for this, but here we go: The M1911-A1 is the greatest handgun ever made. Disagree? Bring it on! Write us at brotherswest@gxonline.com.

During the early 1900's, the U.S. Army was running into a lot of trouble with a Philippino tribe known as the Moro. Prior to an attack, these fearsome warriors would work themselves into a frenzy using narcotics that made them seemingly unaffected by injury. The Army responded by stepping up from the inadequate .38 caliber cartridge they were using at the time to the .45 caliber cartridge with its increased stopping power.

John Browning, one of the greatest gun designers of all time, redesigned one of his semi-automatic pistols for the new cartridge size and further improved it by creating his own round. This pistol entered into Army testing in 1906 and, in 1911, was finally approved as its new sidearm. The M1911 and later the M1911-A1 remained the service pistol of choice until 1985 when the Beretta M9 was adopted to bring the U.S. in line with her NATO allies.

ABOVE: Image of the new and improved M1911-A1, Springfield Armory's Operator
 Photo by Raye Dene Berry

For over seventy years, a time span that encompasses WWI, WWII, Korea and Vietnam, the M1911 has served with distinction. It was, and still is, a favorite among many U.S. Troops, and the decision

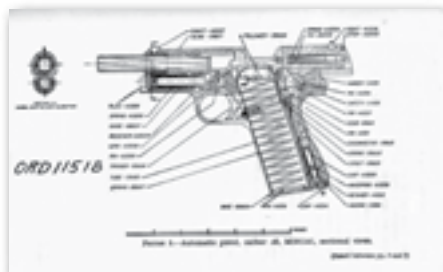
THE M1911-A1 IS THE GREATEST HANDGUN EVER MADE.

to change sidearms was met with great resistance in some quarters. In fact, the U.S. Marines refused to adopt the M9 until they were ordered to do so by Congress. To this day, some Special Forces units choose to carry the M1911-A1.

The kind folks at Springfield Armory sent us their latest version of the 1911: The Operator. This modern take on the 1911 includes a number of improvements to the usability of this old war horse. A beveled magazine well, integrated rail for mounting lights and other accessories, Novak tritium night sights, and a slew of other upgrades make this tricked-out pistol worth a serious look.

The gun was an absolute pleasure to shoot. Perceived recoil was much less than other .45's thanks to the included Pachmayr grip. We had no trouble shooting three- and four-inch groups at 25 yards without a bench rest. Considering that we are largely self-taught, we suspect a trained shooter would be able to tighten that grouping up considerably. In fact, the only complaint we had was that taking the gun apart for cleaning required a screwdriver or allen wrench.

The M1911-A1 has been in service for almost 100 years and to this day is still the choice of many Soldiers, law enforcement personnel and competitive shooters worldwide. Given that, we're standing by our claim that this is the greatest handgun ever made. **GX**



ABOVE: Cutaway of M1911-A1, Illustration of proper handling of M1911-A1
Courtesy of M1911A1 Manual, War Department, 1940

BOOKS

Behind the Lines: Powerful and Revealing American and Foreign War Letters and One Man's Search to Find Them

by Andrew Carroll

This intense, sometimes overwhelming, collection of war correspondence gathered from around the world graphically tells the story of soldiers and their families in their own words. Insightfully organized by topic instead of time period, this impressive work captures the universality of life during wartime. Available May 10, 2005.

Pompeii: A Novel

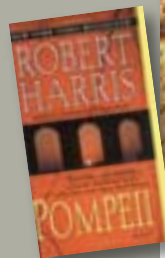
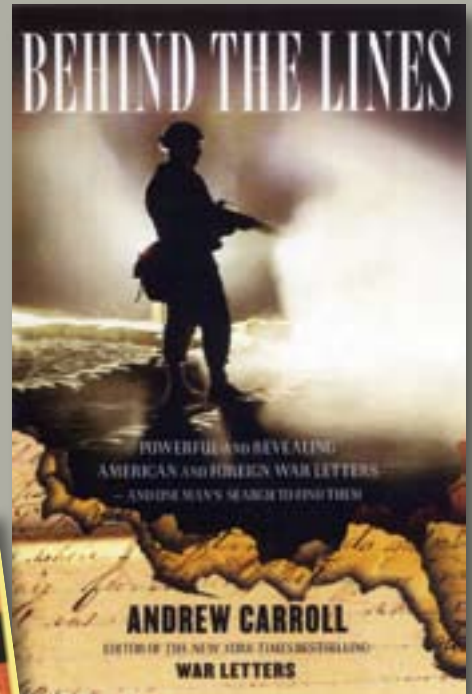
by Robert Harris

Following the classic disaster movie plotline, this historical novel set in 79 B.C. during the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius, is an excellent vacation read. At once exciting and informative, this book depicts the death of Pompeii with vivid portrayals of historic facts and personalities set against a backdrop of epic destruction.

CHECK OUT THIS SITE: booksforsoldiers.com

If you have old but useable books or DVDs, why not send them to a Soldier for a big morale boost.

RIGHT (CLOCKWISE): Cover of Pompeii, cover of Behind The Lines, webshot of homepage for www.booksforsoldiers.com



Welcome to the new Brothers West

Your letters have been received, the people have spoken and the editorial staff has seen the light... can I get a hallelujah? This month the Brothers West are going to try something different; we're cutting back the game reviews and bringing you... well, just about everything else. So, hold on to your helmets folks, this is going to be fun!

We would also like to extend special thanks to all of you who wrote in requesting gun reviews. The last thing the publishers wanted to do was give us weapons, but thanks to your kind suggestions, we are now armed and... oh wait, Mom reads this... armed and very, very safe.

Email comments to:  brotherswest@gxonline.com



ABOVE: (LEFT) The Buffalo moves along Highway 1, outside of Ad Dujayl in Iraq. **(RIGHT)** PFC Richard Ceynar communicates with A Company's command post from inside the Buffalo. U.S. Army photos by PFC Elizabeth Erste

NDARNG 141ST ENGINEER COMBAT BATTALION



THE HEROES' HEROES

The fine men and women of the United States Armed Forces are all America's heroes. However, the Soldiers of the NDARNG 141st Engineer Combat Battalion are the heroes' heroes.

A great deal of ink has already been exhausted on the damage caused and lives lost to improvised explosives (IEDs).

**[T]he 141st went
bomb hunting 24
hours a day, seven
days a week...**

However, not nearly enough has been said, or can be said, about the lives saved from the threat of IEDs, thanks to the bravery of the 141st.

Mobilized in December 2003, the 141st embarked upon Task Force Trailblazer in March of 2004 with the unprecedented mission of "road sanitization."

Operating around three locations throughout Iraq (Tikrit, Balad, and Baqubah), the 141st went bomb hunting 24 hours a day, seven days a week from March 2004 until February 2005. They covered a distance of approximately 400,000 km (equivalent to driving from the Earth to the Moon) - at speeds no greater than 20 mph.

Soldiers traveled inside of the six-wheeled, up-armored Buffalo and the mobile mine detector MeerKat, as well as walked at a snail's pace down the Iraqi roadways, locating and detonating IEDs buried in rubble, bushes, guard rails, and pretty much anything else an insurgent could stuff a bomb into.

The 141st quickly became a thorn in the insurgents' side, consequently drawing heavy barrages of gun fire, vehicle-borne IEDs, mortars, and RPGs. Determined insurgents would even plant dummy IEDs

as bait for the 141st, then attempt to ambush them.

As much as the insurgents hated the 141st, Coalition Soldiers and contractors loved them. The patch of the 141st became a recognized and proud symbol of heroism. One BG said of the 141st, "We love those guys ... It's amazing what they have done."

During their 12-month deployment, the 141st found over 300 IEDs and received over 30 Purple Hearts. In addition, they participated in numerous humanitarian efforts, including construction projects, medical assistance to local villages, and Operation Backpack—where Soldiers delivered school supplies to Iraqi children.

The 141st served as true American heroes, saving the lives of all our other heroes, and in their "free time," rebuilding Iraqi communities. They saved countless lives—and lost four of their own. In those Soldiers' honor, chapels, helipads, and vehicles at Forward Operating Bases at various locations carry memorials in their names.

The 141st came home in February and Task Force Trailblazer is now under the control of U.S. Reserve component Company A, 467th Engineer Battalion from Memphis, TN. **GX**



ABOVE: Chaplain (CPT) Maury Millican and SSG Roy Wilkowski display unexploded ordnance recovered by A Company from a weapons cache buried in a nearby field.

Photographer Unknown

RIGHT: The patch of the 141st



TRAILBLAZIN' GEAR

THE BUFFALO THE MEERKAT

THE BUFFALO

Photo by SGT Matthew Acosta, USA

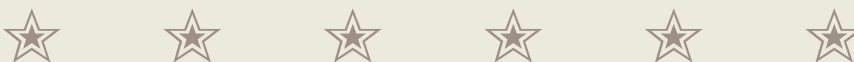
Equipped with a grappling hook, six wheels, and completely up-armored, the Buffalo clears IEDs from the roads. The Buffalo protects against 45 lbs. of explosive weight under the wheels and under the center line of the chassis against up to 30 lbs. Ballistic protection against up to 7.62mm NATO rounds is assured. It has steel wheels to detonate live anti-personnel and bounding mines.



THE MEERKAT

Photographer Unknown

A one-man mobile mine detector, the Meerkat is equipped with a detection system fitted under the vehicle engine bay. It features a 3m-wide array, which uses both metal detection and ground penetrating radar sensors. The V-shaped undercarriage directs the blast away from the vehicle. The Meerkat is protected for the equivalent of 15 lbs. of TNT. Teleoperation is currently in development.



OPERATION BACKPACK

Family members and friends of the 141st donated backpacks to Iraqi school children and the 141st delivered them while patrolling for roadside bombs.

"It's not just us, it's the people of North Dakota; it's the American gesture of goodwill," said Chaplain (CPT) Maury Millican of the 141st.

RIGHT: SGT Chad Smestad helps an Iraqi boy put on his new backpack. "I never expected the kids to be that excited to see us," said SGT Smestad.

Photo by SGT Amy Dobler, 141st



Photo courtesy of Photodisc/ Getty



10 GOATS FOR YOUR WIFE



A Guard member from Kingsport, TN was on duty with an Iraqi guard one night last week. While they were talking about civilian life, the American showed the Iraqi a picture of his wife and children. The Iraqi studied the picture and then said he would give our guy ten goats for his wife.

Later that day, the Guard member called his wife and said:

“Don’t worry Honey; I’m holding out for 30.”



ONE FOR THE ROAD...

PHONE SERVICE IN IRAQ

The number of telephone landline subscribers throughout Iraq is 982,561, and the number of cell phone subscribers is 1,586,549.

This combined total of 2,569,110 is **208%** greater than the number of active landline subscribers before the war.

ABOVE: An Iraqi holds a mobile telephone, connected to a Kuwaiti network, near a portrait of toppled leader Saddam Hussein. Photo by: Akram Saleh/Reuters/Landov



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