

GX[®]

THE GUARD EXPERT

>> LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

"OUR GRATEFUL NATION IS FOREVER INDEBTED TO YOU..."

>> PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

P. 6

>> ON THE ROAD

SADDLE UP
INSIDE TEXAS'
NEW SPECIAL
FORCES
COMPANY

>> SPORTS

**GETTING
OFF-TRACK
WITH DALE JR.**

BEHIND THE BADGE

THE THIN GREEN LINE OF
THE MILITARY POLICE

>> GX HERO

**FROM IRAQ,
WITH LOVE**

MAJ DAVID HOWELL
P. 102



THE NATIONAL GUARD  PRESENTS



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“At 9:57, the passenger assault began.”

>> The 9/11 Commission Report

On the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, no American force directly engaged the enemy—except the passengers of United 93. These men and women walked onto the flight as citizens and took on a national threat like Soldiers. We at GX honor these individuals and all who step up in the face of terror or disaster. This type of heart is clearly in line with history’s most courageous heroes and the same drive that spurred the Minutemen into action.

I received a letter from a deployed combat Soldier who wrote that Tom Petty’s 1989 hit “I Won’t Back Down” captures his spirit best. The song declares, “You can stand me up at the gates of hell, but I won’t back down.”

I’ve traveled the country in every direction, meeting with Guard Soldiers—and at the same time, many police officers and firefighters. I’ve seen this spirit exemplified, and I am humbled by it. We offer our pages here as a showcase for this brand of hero.

And as another 9/11 anniversary passes, another hurricane season hits and the fight for Freedom continues, please know that your sacrifice—your fight—is appreciated and honored. We are so very blessed to have a Guard force that doesn’t back down and will stand up for all of us—whether it’s an enemy attack or rebuilding a town. You are all heroes.

Thank you for your service!



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



ON THE COVER
SPC Michael Bielat of the 933rd Military Police Company, Illinois Army National Guard, exemplifies the qualities of a Guard MP.

PHOTO BY MATTHEW GILSON

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Publisher: Mitch Powers
Founding Editor: Ed Brown
Editor-at-Large: Chris West

Editor-in-Chief: Keith Kawasaki
Design Director: Andrew Nixon

Deputy Editor: Christian Anderson
Contributing Editor: Camille Breland
Guard Advisor: Ken Weichert
Field Editor: Clint Wood
Senior Copy Editor: Julie Zeitlin

Contributing Writers: Jason Hall, Johanna Altland, Ken Weichert, Stephanie Weichert, SFC Ken Suratt, MAJ Elaine M. Gullotta, SFC Donnie Moseley, CPT Darrin Haas, SSG Raheem Lay, SFC Lloyd Bowers, SSG Alex Purdue, SGT Amy Weiser-Willson, Judith S. Harris, Daniel T. Riggle, Amanda Powers, Fred McGhee II, 1LT Robert Conner
Contributing Illustrator: Dan Panosian
Contributing Editors: Emily McMackin, Jamie Roberts, Megan Pacella, Bill Hudgins
Contributing Art Director: Kerri Davis
Contributing Designers: Lynne Boyer, Ben Stewart

Mail: *GX: The Guard Experience*
c/o Iostudio, LLC
565 Marriott Dr., Suite 700
Nashville, TN 37214
Voice: (866) 596-4558
Fax: (615) 256-6860

Email Contacts:
EDITOR editor@GXonline.com
SUBSCRIPTIONS subscriptions@GXonline.com
GENERAL INFO info@GXonline.com

Editorial Inquiry and Submissions:
editor@GXonline.com or voice:
(866) 596-4558, fax: (615) 256-6860

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Mailbag



Christian,

Hope things are going well with you all.

The article in *GX* got the Dixie Thunder Run a lot of coverage, and we really appreciate it. I am attaching a photo that was recently taken at a recruiting school that I attended in Little Rock, AR. While I was there, people saw the article. We had about 72 people in our class, and a lot of them wanted a Thunder Run shirt. In the photo, we all have our Thunder Run shirts on, representing 15 different states.

—SFC Tony Shackelford

Mississippi Army National Guard

.....

SGT Ken,

Thanks for your fitness videos on www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness! I used your video clip called Push-up Improvement Plan #01 to increase my push-ups from 42 to 75 in six weeks.

—SSG Ken Chandler

Florida Army National Guard

.....

Christian,

You guys did a great job with our Java Angel! The layout turned out very well, and the response from our troops was awesome! One of our recruiters ordered about 100 extra copies, and they got snatched up quickly!

Thanks so much for everything.

You are the man!

—Tech. Sgt. Cheresa D. Theiral

NCOIC Internal and External Communications,
Colorado National Guard Public Affairs

Clint,

Great coverage from you over the past couple *GX* mags. You are just kickin' butt, and I am glad to see *GX* promoting you!

Take it easy!

—1SG Douglas A. Schultz Jr.

Alpha Troop 1/134 Cavalry
Nebraska Army National Guard



My husband, SGT Robert Hazlett, and his brother, SGT Danny Hazlett, are both serving overseas in Operation Iraqi Freedom. They left in September 2008 and are set to return in September 2009. They have both been deployed once before.

I receive *GX* magazine and found a lot of articles about the 56th Stryker Brigade, which my husband is affiliated with.

I am very proud of my husband and what he does for his country and his family. He and his brother leave supportive families behind. Danny has a wife and son. My husband and I have four children. And they come from a large family—11 kids! They make their parents very proud.

My father was in the Army National Guard for over 20 years. My sister and her husband are in the 28th Infantry Division Army Band. My father-in-law was in the military. So we're a very supportive family when it comes to keeping this beautiful land strong and fearless.

I'm very proud to be an Army wife. Not a day goes by that I don't wear my OIF bracelet. It has been a hard time for them and for us back home, but we stay "Army strong" and pray that they return safely.

—Amy M. Hazlett

Correction: In *GX* 6.3, "The Caffeinated Hero," the photo on pp. 78–79 is by Tech. Sgt. Cheresa Theiral, and the photos on pp. 80–81 are by Master Sgt. Deb Smith.

Letters from the Front



225th Engineer Brigade:

Continued Service

THE PRIVILEGE OF DEPLOYING TO IRAQ and participating in the rebuilding efforts will go down as one of the best periods of time in my life. I am humbled to see that the engineering efforts across Baghdad are indeed making a difference in the quality of living for the Iraqi citizens.

The civilian skill sets coupled with military training is largely why National Guard Soldiers are excelling in this environment. This combination makes the vast array of challenging missions assigned to Guard units achievable. I know this to be a fact, because National Guard units like ours are making things happen daily across Iraq.

Our unit has proudly served the state of Louisiana during periods of natural disaster such as hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and recently Gustav and Ike. As the provincial Engineer Brigade in Baghdad, we can also be proud of the difference we have made by, with and through the Iraq army. We truly are helping in the rebuilding of Iraq as well as making a dent in the War on Terrorism.

I miss my family, but would not trade this experience for anything in the world. Being deployed to this country has been a privilege, and it has opened my eyes and made me realize how blessed we are to be Americans!

>> SGM Tim Adam

WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE FUTURE

would hold or how things would be when we got to Iraq. There was a cloud of uncertainty hanging over our heads as we went into the unknown.

But I always take comfort in knowing that no matter what, I was deploying with a great group of people whom I knew would always look out for each other and help each other. We are a family.

I know that when this deployment is over, I will look back on it with fond memories. I am proud of what each Soldier with the 225th Engineer Brigade has to offer the National Guard and the rest of the world.

>> SPC Devin Byrd



BEFORE MY FIRST TRIP OUTSIDE THE WIRE, I wondered how the civilian population responds to us in our battle rattle.

Surprisingly, for the children of Iraq, the money spent in gear, training and menacing military vehicles does not translate into fear. For them, the sight of the Soldier is a welcome event. The convoy becomes a parade, just like Mardi Gras for the Louisiana Soldiers, complete with tiny, dirt-stained hands raised up hoping for candy, an opportunity to wave, to laugh and even get in trouble for leaving classrooms. But just as a student in the U.S. might ditch school for their favorite band, these children, too, risk punishment, and giggle as we pass, then hurry back to class.

The children squeal with enthusiasm at the chance to have their picture taken, though they will never receive the photo. I can't really articulate or comprehend their excitement for these invisible photos, seen only by others and never by the subjects. To me each picture becomes a lesson in humility for all I have in my life, with every snap of the shutter.

On one mission, I held the small hand of a girl, maybe 8 years old. We walked through the streets of Jamilla Market surrounded, not by Soldiers, but by dozens of excited children, no different from those at home. I looked down at her beautiful, dust-covered face, and I wondered: Does this child know? Does she understand the Iraq she lives in?

These encounters are a gift, a reality check to the simple beauty of the look of hope ... of joy ... of purity; a world devoid of the complications of politics, questions of war, fears of economic recessions or arguments over the cost the oil.

What can I possibly give them worth more than what they have given me?

As my husband would say, "From the mouths of babes, we learn so much." And while the language barrier might prevent speaking in a common language, communication reverts to the beginnings of time: a smile, a wave, a thumbs-up.

At the most basic level, we are the same—humanity in the pursuit of happiness. And while our standards might be higher than the bare feet and tattered clothing worn by the children, we must remember: It doesn't take a constitution to guarantee that right.

>> SGT Rebekah Malone

COMING INTO THIS DEPLOYMENT, I had no idea of what to expect as a platoon sergeant for the 225th Engineer Brigade PSD Team. I knew that there would be great challenges to face in the upcoming year, and that it would be a totally different experience than I was used to. I was assigned a group of Soldiers from different units all over the state of Louisiana, only one of which I knew before deploying with this group.

At Fort Hood, TX, the first training exercise we encountered turned out to be a disaster because we were so unorganized, but as training rolled on we turned into a well-oiled machine and blew the training events out of the water.

I arrived in Iraq on a Wednesday night and was told to be ready for my first mission the very next morning. Before I knew it, my squad leaders and I were rolling outside the wire our very first day in Iraq to transport personnel using armored vehicles throughout Iraq. I didn't know what to expect, but went on the mission anyway, using information from the unit that we replaced.

My encounters with the Iraqi Army Soldiers have been very good. They like to be around us, and often question our lives and lifestyles as they tell stories just like we do.

In the position I am in, I get to see a lot of places in Iraq that many people don't know even exist. I am glad to have received the experience I have encountered on this deployment. It takes a special group of Soldiers to pull together and do the job that we are tasked with, and I am honored to be in command of the PSD Team for the 225th Engineer Brigade. I also want to say that I miss my wife, Victoria, and my two kids, Ali and Cole, very much. It's the families back home that keep the deployed Soldiers pushing forward.

Thanks for all the support from home.

>> **SFC Chad S. McNeal**



CURRENTLY, I SERVE AS THE IRAQI ARMY PARTNERSHIP Officer for my brigade. This assignment has been very rewarding because I've had a chance to work closely with several Iraqi leaders and Soldiers.

I've learned that although we have many cultural differences, we also have very much in common. To illustrate my point, I offer two examples. The first involves a recent joint maintenance-training mission conducted at Camp Liberty, where six Iraqi Soldiers received training from Soldiers in the 46th Engineer Battalion. During my visit to the motor pool to observe training, I saw a young U.S. PFC working hand in hand with a junior Iraqi enlisted Soldier.

I watched them for several minutes before they acknowledged my presence, and I was inspired to hear the communication between the Soldiers being translated by the interpreter. Both Soldiers opened up and talked about their families, and the Iraqi Soldier said he feels his training at the U.S. compound will help him be a better Soldier because he is looking to make a career in the Iraqi army. Shortly afterward, they noticed me, and the conversation subsided, but I will never forget the moment of truth I witnessed.

On a lighter note, I recently shared a wonderful experience with Iraqi engineers who participated in a soccer game with U.S. engineers. During a celebratory moment after winning the game, the Iraqi troops pulled out their mobile phones and proceeded to dance to a popular ringtone that would be equivalent to the latest hot song being used as ringtones by U.S. troops.

Later that evening, all Soldiers attended a social function called Sapper Call that brings fellow engineers together for a time of fellowship and fun. In an effort to ensure our Iraqi guests were comfortable, we asked the DJ to research a popular Iraqi song, and it turned out that he played the same song used for their ringtone. Upon hearing the song, the Iraqi Soldiers were very joyful; some even danced.

While simple in nature, these experiences reinforced to me that amid the vast spectrum of cultural differences between U.S. and Iraqi Soldiers, our social divide is not always as broad as it seems ... and can sometimes be bridged by the drop of a DJ's needle.

In years to come, I will reflect proudly on our Guard service, knowing we were valuable team players who made a positive impact on the lives of future Iraqi leaders.

>> **MAJ Willus Hall**



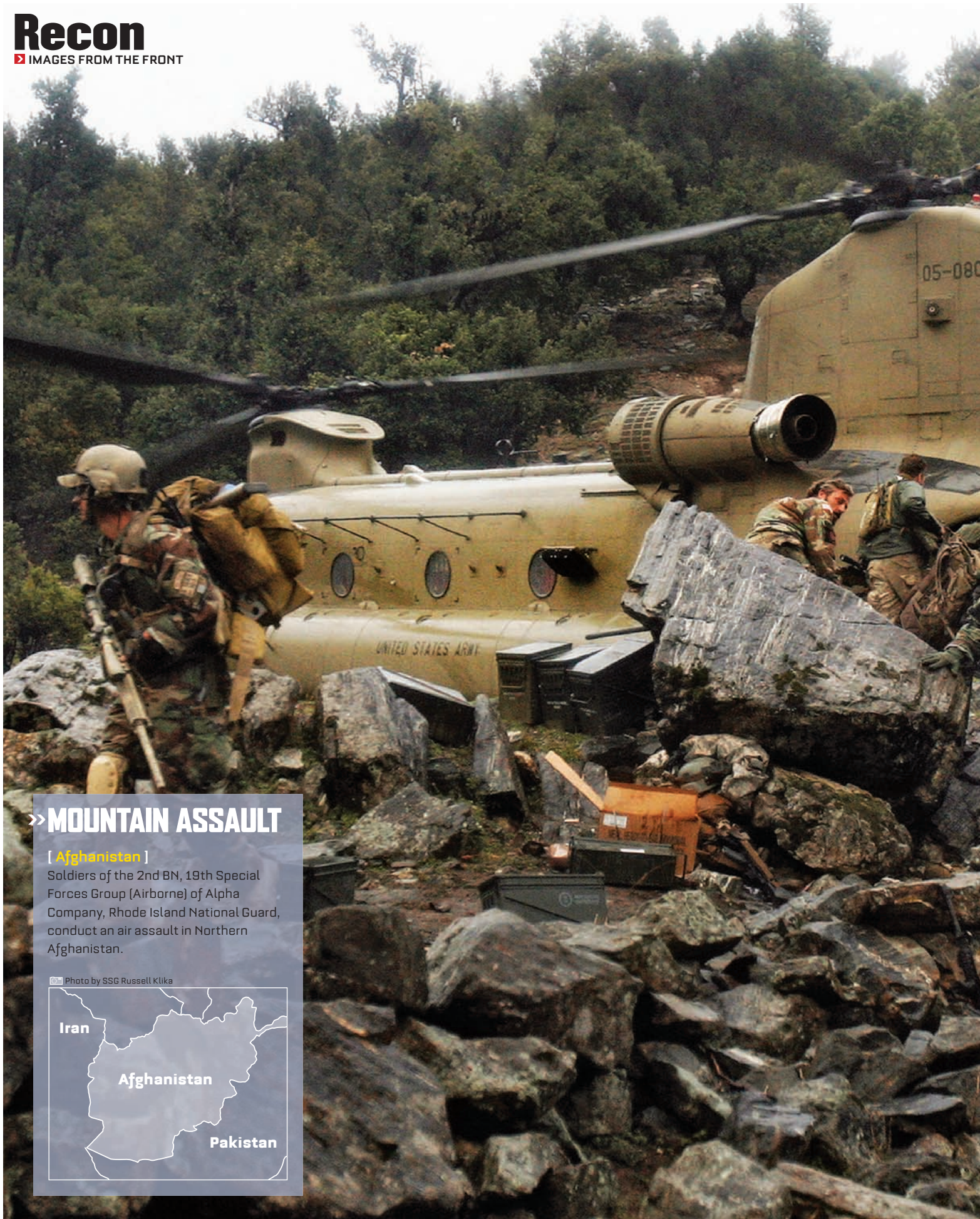
MY UNIT HAS BEEN IN IRAQ SEVERAL MONTHS NOW.

I recently returned home for leave, and what I realize is, I miss my husband and my family more than anything. While home on leave, I had the ability to reach out and touch my husband ... hold hands, steal a kiss. We were never far apart for the entire time.

I noticed that I missed two additional things that struck me as odd. First, the instant contact of cell phones at home is hard to "relearn." After months here, I grew accustomed to using only landlines. At home, I would say, "I'll call when we get home." My husband would hand me the cell phone and say, "Call now."

Secondly, I have always considered myself a "girly girl." I like shoes, handbags, manicures and pedicures. My profession may be progressive, but I have always maintained a hint of the girl. I miss open-toed shoes that show off my recent pedicure and just the feeling of being a girl.

>> **LTC LaDenna Piper**



» MOUNTAIN ASSAULT

[[Afghanistan](#)]

Soldiers of the 2nd BN, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne) of Alpha Company, Rhode Island National Guard, conduct an air assault in Northern Afghanistan.

Photo by SSG Russell Klika









» BATTERIES NOT INCLUDED

[Fort Sill, OK]

An M109A6 Paladin 155 mm Self-Propelled Howitzer spews smoke after firing drills.

Photo by Adam Livingston





» WRECKER CREW

[**Kabul, Afghanistan**]

Soldiers from Bravo Company, 634th LTF, Illinois National Guard, stationed in Kabul, Afghanistan, painted Dale Jr.'s number on their wrecker to show support for his team.

Photo by SPC Leslie Durbin, Bravo Company 634th Logistic Task Force









» I SEE YOU!

[**Camp Adder, Iraq**]

SPC Christopher Leonard mans a .50 caliber machine gun on top of a "mine resistant ambush protected" vehicle, or MRAP, at Camp Adder, Iraq. Leonard is a force protection specialist and MRAP trainer in the 628th Aviation Support Battalion, Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

Photo by SGT James Waltz





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TN Soldiers deploy to Iraq.

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Small town pulls together support.

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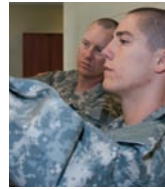
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First student arrives.

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"WE HOPE WE NEVER HAVE TO USE OUR WEAPONS. IF THAT DAY COMES, I HAVE COMPLETE CONFIDENCE IN THE CREWS AND THEIR SYSTEMS' ABILITY TO ELIMINATE THE THREAT."

>> COL GREGORY BOWEN, COMMANDER, 100TH MISSILE DEFENSE BRIGADE



WE GOT YOU COVERED

Commander Confirms the Guard Can Defend Against Attack

By MAJ Laura Kenney,
100th Missile Defense Brigade (GMD) Public Affairs
PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, CO

The unit tasked with the mission of defending the U.S. against ballistic missile attack—the only unit of its type in the nation—gained a new commander when COL Gregory S. Bowen assumed command in a ceremony held here.

Bowen, a Colorado Springs resident, assumed command of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade (Ground-based Midcourse Defense, or GMD) from COL Michael L. Yowell. Bowen was the first commander of the brigade's operational unit, the 49th Missile Defense (MD) Battalion (GMD) located at Fort Greely, AK, which is armed with the system's interceptors. Bowen stood up the 49th in 2004.

The traditional exchange of the colors marking a change of command took place at the Medal of Honor Memorial Field, with the old and new commanders flanked by the flags of the 54 states and territories their unit protects.

Yowell handed the gold and teal guidon to BG Thomas D. Mills, Commander of Ground Forces for the Colorado National Guard (CO NG), who in turn handed the flag to Bowen, signifying the passing of command.

100TH'S BEGINNINGS

Defending the homeland is historically the mission of the National Guard, and the 100th MD Brigade is a CO NG unit. The 100th was stood up by presidential decree in 2003, at an accelerated rate after the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Its subordinate units, the 49th MD Battalion (GMD) and Detachment 1, located in California, are manned by full-time Guard members of the respective states. The headquarters, located in Colorado, is a multi-component unit with a small contingent of active component Soldiers.

The 100th is assigned to U.S. Space and Missile Defense Command and falls under the operational control of Northern Command for homeland defense. GEN Victor E. Renuart, Jr., commander of NORTHCOM and North American Aerospace Defense Command, attended the ceremony.

FIRE AWAY The 100th Missile Defense Brigade is fully capable of defending America from foreign missile attacks.



MISSILE DEFENSE AGENCY

PROTECTING FREEDOM

"Shortly after I assumed command," COL Michael L. Yowell said, "North Korea began stacking missiles. My combatant command, Northern Command, ordered the brigade into operational status. I had to cancel family leaves and military schools. On the 4th of July, 2006, North Korea launched, and the Soldiers of the brigade in Alaska, California and Colorado stood ready to execute their wartime mission. That launch failed, but the Soldiers of the 100th were ready.

"The vision President Reagan had of a defense for our nation against ballistic missile attack has been proved several times under my watch, and I'm sure will continue to do so under COL Bowen's command."

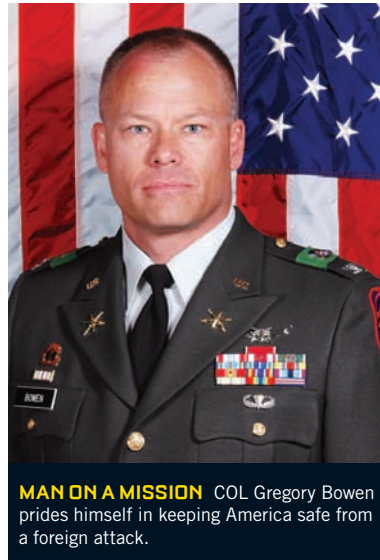
"The Soldiers of the brigade are the reason this system has been and will continue to be successful. It is they whom I'm most proud of, and whom I will most deeply miss."

For the last time, Yowell sounded off with the Brigade's motto:

"Guard ... Engage ... Destroy—For none shall pass."

Bowen took the lectern and briefly described the importance of the unit's mission, and thanked important people in his life. He then told how his 7-year-old daughter, Carmen, was "proud that her dad was in the Army, and that he protected her."

"When I was her age, growing up in North Dakota during the Cold War, I recall doing 'duck-and-cover' drills. While I didn't understand it at the time, I do remember it scaring me," Bowen said. "I don't ever want



my daughter to be afraid of bad things falling out of the sky. So, Carmen, that's why daddy does what he does.

"The rooth is a unique unit with a unique mission," he continued. "We have to be prepared to execute that mission with no notice, 24/7.

"To the Soldiers of the rooth, I want to let you know I have only two priorities," Bowen added. "Priority One is accomplishing our operational

mission, every time, all the time. Priority One-A is taking caring of Soldiers and their families. These two things will focus our efforts as we move forward." **GX**

Q&A

By Christian Anderson

GX INTERVIEWS COL Gregory Bowen, commander of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade:

GX: Where were you born and raised?

CB: I was born in Denver, CO, but grew up in North Dakota. At the time, North Dakota had a whole bunch of nuclear weapons aimed at the Russians. I essentially grew up in a missile field. As a kid, in the schools we had to do the duck-and-cover drills routinely. Each of the schools had fallout shelters, and they would line us up and take us down there. They didn't tell us exactly why we were doing it, but it was a scary feeling. That left an impression on me over the years.

GX: Did you grow up with a sense of patriotism?

CB: As a child, I would hear stories from my two uncles who served in WWII. Another uncle served in Korea. My grandfather emigrated here from Germany in 1900 and fought the Germans in WWI. There has been a long line of military service in my family and growing up with that as a backdrop gave me a big sense of patriotism.

GX: When did you decide to join the National Guard?

CB: I knew I wanted to serve somehow, and I was trying to figure out at the time what I wanted to do.

I wanted to go to college and I talked with some friends of mine who were in college and in the Guard. It intrigued me because I could get my education and serve my country. The Guard had some very good tuition assistance programs to get me through college, so that was the hook. I enlisted back in Dec. 1982, and started off as a private in a maintenance company. I enrolled in ROTC in college and I was commissioned into the Air Defense branch. It wasn't until I was a captain that I got involved in missile defense.

GX: What was it like to be commander of the 49th Missile Defense Battalion?

CB: It was a tremendous honor to be the commander of the 49th. From a career perspective for me personally, that was the best job in the Guard. One, I got to stand up a new unit from scratch. Secondly, I had a chance to implement the concepts I had developed as a staff officer. Standing up this unit very rapidly and going on mission was a whirlwind of a tour that was very rewarding.

GX: How has your role changed since you took command of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade?

CB: This change of command has taken me up to the next level. The battalion is focused on the tactical level, and the brigade is more operational. So I have a lot more interaction with the senior leadership than I did at the battalion level. I have more dealings with policymakers, and on the Guard side, I deal directly

with three state headquarters and National Guard Bureau. In this job, I deal more with resources and making sure the units have what they need. I don't get as much troop time as I did in Fort Greely, but that's the way it goes.

GX: Could you sum up the primary role of the 100th Missile Defense Brigade for us?

CB: The mission of the 100th Brigade is to defend the U.S. against a strategic ballistic missile attack. We are defending the U.S. against a limited ballistic missile strike. This is designed against a small-scale threat from rogue nation or transnational actors that get a hold of ballistic missile technology. If somebody takes a shot at the U.S., the 100th Brigade stands ready to defend the country.

GX: If North Korea or any other nation were to take a shot at us, could you stop them?

CB: Yes, we could absolutely shoot them down. This is the National Guard protecting the nation 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. I have crews on duty right now, there are interceptors on duty right now, and if there was a shot out of the blue, we are ready to defend at a moment's notice. We are doing our wartime mission everyday. We hope we never have to use our weapons, but we are ready to use them and protect the U.S. If that day comes, I have complete confidence in the crews and their systems' ability to eliminate the threat. **GX**

Nebraska General Named Deputy

MG KADAVY NAMED NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR

By Clint Wood

MG TIMOTHY J. KADAVY, adjutant general of the Nebraska National Guard since November 2007, was named as the new deputy director of the Army National Guard (ARNG) June 26.

GEN Craig R. McKinley, the chief of the National Guard Bureau (NGB), announced the selection.

“It is truly an honor, being selected and knowing that the leadership at the National Guard Bureau within the Army has given me this opportunity and given me their trust and confidence in doing this,” said the Lincoln, NE native in an exclusive interview with *GX*.

In his new position, Kadavy, who has been in the ARNG since 1984, will be responsible for assisting the director of the Army National Guard in formulating, developing and coordinating all programs, policies and plans. There are more than 350,000 ARNG Soldiers.

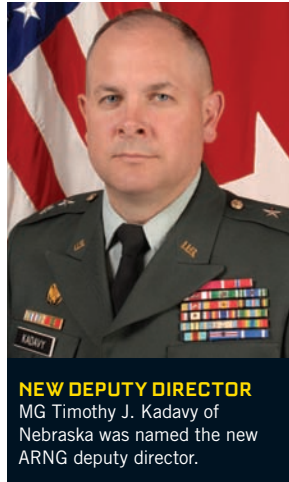
Two of Kadavy’s goals as the deputy director will be to continue to maintain strong pre-mobilization training and determine how to pay for manning issues that the ARNG faces.

“We need to continue to look at the family programs and ensure we’re taking care of our total team,” he added. “Obviously, we need to continue to ensure that the equipment that was promised to the Army Guard arrives and is accounted for. And that we maintain a transparent process, so Congress will be able to determine if what they bought is what arrived.”

When asked how being the Nebraska Guard’s adjutant general is going to assist him in this position, Kadavy explained he knows firsthand the issues and challenges the states encounter on a daily basis.

“You get the understanding of what a move of something right or left, and how much it truly impacts Soldiers and families,” he said. “And also funding. What a lot of people don’t realize is that much of what we do is only partly paid for by the federal government, and that it requires state matches.

“So when a military construction is moved one way or the other, if it’s not aligned with what a state had programmed, then you cause problems for that particular state,” he continued. “I think I’m just going to have insights into that process and also seeing firsthand in pre-mobilization training and having an opportunity to watch that and knowing firsthand, as I said, the impacts



NEW DEPUTY DIRECTOR
MG Timothy J. Kadavy of Nebraska was named the new ARNG deputy director.

HOBBIES:

Running, spending time with his wife and two sons, hiking and pheasant hunting

WEAPONS IN HIS GUN SAFE:

40 caliber Sig Sauer handgun, two 12-gauge shotguns, one 410-gauge shotgun

“WE NEED TO CONTINUE TO LOOK AT THE FAMILY PROGRAMS AND ENSURE WE’RE TAKING CARE OF OUR TOTAL TEAM.”

>> MG Timothy J. Kadavy

that we have for the decisions that we make at a national level.”

Kadavy, who prior to serving as adjutant general served as Operations Officer for the Army National Guard Directorate, NGB, Arlington, VA, has extensive deployment experience.

He deployed to Camp Victory, Iraq, in 2006 and served as the Senior Reserve Component Advisor to the Commander, Multi-National Corps, Iraq (MNC-I). From November 2002 until September 2003, he commanded 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry, Northern United States Task Force-Stabilization Force 13 (SFOR 13) in Operation Joint Forge, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Naturally, these deployments allowed Kadavy to witness the impact that the pre-mobilization process has on the ARNG.

“Now it goes both ways,” he pointed out. “You see what happens in the theater and the importance of training. It’s better if you do something five or six times, rather than just once at the post-mob training site. So the more

training we can get pre-mob, we arrive in a better condition to move from maybe the high school level to the college level or the Ph.D. level. Which makes you proficient and really helps with the competence and confidence that you have when you’re executing the mission in theater.”

Along with his warfighting mission experience, Kadavy said he also will bring “a better and newer understanding of Homeland Defense, Homeland Security consequence management” to the ARNG.

Regarding the deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, Kadavy, who said as a youngster he always wanted to drive and shoot a tank, noted that they have made the ARNG a “more experienced force.”

“We understand what is required to support the warfight from manning, equipment and training, and we realize that all three of those components must be there, and then you also have to remember to take care of families,” he said.

He added that these numerous deployments have taught the ARNG its mission, that it is capable of doing its assigned missions, and what to expect in the future in order to ensure units are better trained and better prepared to deploy in combat zones.

Kadavy offered this advice to deploying Soldiers:

“Do what you are responsible for doing. Maintain fitness, ensure that you are individually trained, and get to your MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) qualifications. Get to the schools if you are a sergeant or you’re going to be a leader of some sort, and maintain your weight so that your team can count on you. Pull your own weight.” **GX**

Fast Facts

MG Timothy J. Kadavy’s assignments include:

>> **December 1984–April 1988**—Platoon Leader, Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 167th Cavalry, NEARNG, Fremont, NE.

>> **May 1994–December 1996**—Operations officer, Operational Readiness Evaluations, Headquarters Fifth United States Army, Fort Sam Houston, TX.

>> **July 2004–March 2006**—Chief, Plans Readiness and Mobilization, Army National Guard, Arlington, VA.

New Manpower Chief Vows To Strengthen Army Family

By SSG S. Patrick McCollum, NGB | ARLINGTON, VA



THE SOLDIER'S ADVOCATE Thomas R. Lamont has served as a judge advocate in the Illinois Army National Guard for 25 years.

► **PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA'S** nominee for Assistant Secretary of the Army for Manpower and Reserve Affairs said May 12 at his confirmation hearing that he is aware of the concerns about dwell time, which directly affects families.

"We've seen it with our reserve component," said Thomas R. Lamont, who has served for 25 years as a judge advocate in the Illinois Army National Guard. "These are serious concerns. They all tie together. And I will certainly take your comments to heart in our policy discussions."

Lamont testified before the Senate Armed Services Committee,

saying that if confirmed, "it would be my distinct honor to help ... accomplish the complex and challenging missions our nation asks the Army to perform."

He was confirmed May 18.

"When a Soldier deploys, his family goes to war [too]," Lamont said. "They are confronted with many of the same concerns—housing and education or financial issues that mirror society—but it's exacerbated with the loss of a loved one."

As a result, Lamont said he will make family support a priority.

"I think it behooves us to do everything in our power to ensure the strength of our family support program," he said. "Because if we are able to sustain the volunteer Army, we need to sustain that family support group."

Lamont told the senators he is not "totally familiar" with all the resources currently available to families and won't say that the Army needs more or less.

"Clearly, I think we're always open to doing whatever we can to support our families," he said. "All families share in the sacrifices that

their loved ones are going through." One way to sustain the Army family, he said, was to provide a good education to the approximately 700,000 children who are Army dependents.

"Beyond housing, there is nothing more important than education in the minds of the family support groups at home," Lamont said. "We must do whatever we can to provide them with ... not just an adequate education, but a good education." **GX**

"ALL FAMILIES SHARE IN THE SACRIFICES THAT THEIR LOVED ONES ARE GOING THROUGH."

>> Thomas R. Lamont

VP and Wife Visit 'Space Cowboys'

By Tech Sgt. Cheresa Theiral, Colorado National Guard Public Affairs
PETERSON AIR FORCE BASE, CO

► **VICE PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN** and his wife, Dr. Jill Biden, visited a handful of Colorado Army National Guard troops from the 117th Space Battalion.

The couple's son is a Delaware National Guard Soldier; as a result, Dr. Biden has been highly involved in family readiness events and was interested in speaking to the Colorado Guard Soldiers and Airmen about their military experiences.

Biden was particularly interested in Army Space Support Team 26 (ARSST), a small contingent of 117th Soldiers preparing to deploy to Iraq. ARSST 26, a six-person unit made up of 117th Space Battalion Soldiers, will support the II Marine Expeditionary Force with space

assets starting in early July. They will be replacing ARSST 27, also of the 117th, which has been in theater since September 2008.

The Soldiers are bringing space-based support capabilities and

"IT'S OUR JOB TO UNDERSTAND SPACE OPERATIONS CAPABILITIES AND LEVERAGE THOSE CAPABILITIES TO BEST SUPPORT THE MISSION."

>> MAJ Tod Fenner, 117th Space Battalion Team Leader



THEY NEED THEIR SPACE Vice President Joe Biden and his wife, Dr. Jill Biden, visited Soldiers from the Colorado Army National Guard's 117th Space Battalion.

products to the warfighters on the ground—in this case, the Marines of Multi-National Force West.

"It's our job to understand space operations capabilities and leverage those capabilities to best support the mission," said Team Leader MAJ Tod Fenner.

Such products and capabilities include up-to-date satellite imagery and GPS accuracy for munitions, communications and space weather

support, all of which will ensure the most accurate information is available to combatant commanders.

"We'll paint a picture of where a convoy may need to drive, or where we may need to perform operations," Fenner said.

The 117th is also affiliated with the Army's 1st Space Brigade, which is part of the U.S. Army Space and Missile Defense Command/Army Forces Strategic Command. **GX**

(BELOW) COURTESY OF COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD; (ABOVE) COURTESY OF NGB

Air Cav!

SQUADRON RECEIVES VISIT FROM LEGISLATORS

Story and photo by Clint Wood | NASHVILLE, TN

How fitting for several media representatives and Tennessee legislators to use a Tennessee Air National Guard (TNANG) asset to visit a TN Army National Guard aviation unit before it left for its Operation Iraqi Freedom mission.

That was the case May 27, when this contingent flew on a C-130 Hercules transport plane from Berry Field to Henry Post Army Airfield in Fort Sill, OK.

The group documented and visited with the more than 600 Soldiers of the 1st of the 230th Air

Tennessee National Guard, and MG William Freeman Jr., adjutant general for the Mississippi National Guard, also bid farewell to the Soldiers.

Hargett told the Soldiers that they are the best representatives of Americans, and said, “Godspeed, and I’ll see you in Iraq.”

Freeman, whose Troop A is assigned to the squadron, told the leadership to take care of their Soldiers, hold them to high standards, share their hardships and set the example.

“God bless our Soldiers, and God bless America,” Freeman concluded his speech.

up the rear cargo ramp, blasted by the heat and inhaling exhaust fumes from the running engines. My first time entering the side door was eventful. I sat across from a suspected insurgent guarded by a Marine with a large knife attached to his body armor. And it was in the sweltering summer heat.

This was the first time that the loadmasters weren’t armed with sidearms. And instead of sitting on jump seats on each side of the aircraft peering out portholes the size of a large pizza pan, they sat on large padded seats in the front of the cargo area, looking out windows the size of the side windows of most SUVs.

This airplane was a WC-130H, used by the Air Force Reserve Command in weather-reconnaissance missions. These planes have computerized weather instrumentation and are capable of staying in the air for at least 15 hours.

The large windows also allowed the guests to see the countryside. It seemed like we were just in a suspended state, though.

SOLDIERS IMPRESSED WITH TRAINING

SPC Michael Winters of E Troop, a former Marine and Desert Storm Veteran, was deploying to Iraq for the second time. “I feel like the old man,” the armament technician for the OH-58D Kiowa said.

He noted that the pre-deployment training the unit received at the fort was better than for his first deployment.

The squadron spent about two months training at the facility—with only one day off.

Training included understanding of the Iraqi culture, combat scenarios and flying missions replicating the Iraq missions.

“[The instructors] stepped it up and gave us information that we can use to keep us safe,” Winters said. “I think it will help some of the younger guys.”

These instructors—or Observer Controller/Trainers (OC/T)—have been deployed down-range. Winters said their quality had practical applications and excellent tactics, and really stressed safety. “Safety is most important,” he commented.

SFC Gary Bailey, a UH-60 Black Hawk mechanic deploying to Iraq for the first time, said he was impressed that everyone learned how to work together as a team. This was the first time the squadron trained together.

As far as the OC/Ts, he said they instilled the attitude of “Watch out for your buddy, and take care of each other.” **GX**



PARADE REST
Soldiers from Delta Troop, 1/230th ACS stands at ease while their commander gives a speech.

Cavalry Squadron with units in Smyrna, Alcoa and Jackson. Among the legislators were state Sens. Bill Ketron, 13th District, Murfreesboro, and Lowe Finney, 27th District, Jackson, and State Reps. Brenda Gilmore, 54th District, Nashville, and Richard Floyd, 27th District, Chattanooga.

The legislators visited the Soldiers from their respective districts, and the various media outlets interviewed Soldiers from their coverage areas as they stood in formation on the polo field. Minutes later, the Soldiers were called to attention and a short departure ceremony was held. MG Gus Hargett, adjutant general for the

LTC Kris Durham, the squadron’s commander, ended the ceremony by reading the *Soldier’s Creed*.

The squadron will fly the OH-58D Kiowa and UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters while in Iraq.

C-130 ROLLS DOWN THE STRIP

This C-130 flight might have been a first for some members of the group, but it wasn’t for me. I racked up more than 30 C-130 rides while deployed to Iraq. But it was only the second time that I boarded one of these airplanes from the front side door. All the other flights, I walked



THE PEN IS MIGHTIER THAN THE SWORD Soldiers from the 114th Public Affairs Detachment gather for a group photo before their deployment to Baghdad, Iraq.

It is an entirely new unit from the one that deployed to Kosovo in 2002. A mix of young and old, seasoned and untested, they are barely a squad-size element, downsized by National Guard restructuring.

They are positioned to add their own unique chapter to the unit's book of travels.

Over the past two decades, the 114th has been one of the most-deployed assets of the New Hampshire Army National Guard, supporting humanitarian missions in the Caribbean and Central America, including the Virgin Islands, Honduras, Panama, Belize and El Salvador. In 1995, the 114th deployed to Bosnia.

In recent years, 114th Soldiers have partnered with the New Hampshire Air Guard's public affairs team to provide critical support to the state's Homeland Security and

Emergency Management Office during state activations for floods and the December 2008 ice storm.

They also escorted state media during the New Hampshire Guard's deployment to New Orleans in the wake of hurricanes Katrina and Rita. At their farewell, Maj. Gen. Kenneth Clark, the adjutant general of the New Hampshire National Guard, said the importance of having public affairs specialists on the battlefield "cannot be overstated."

During a visit to see New Hampshire Guard Soldiers in Iraq two years ago, Clark recalled sitting in on a briefing with GEN David Petraeus, then-commanding general of Multi-National Force-Iraq, and how often Petraeus consulted his public affairs staff.

Clark lauded the 114th for their role in telling the story of the New Hampshire Guard, helping the Army National Guard for the first time fill 100 percent of its allotted positions last year. He also singled out Daigle for his long friendship and his steady advice.

A grateful Daigle beamed afterward—for the large turnout of family and friends, and for the way his Soldiers handled the reporters. **GX**

Fighting With the Pen

NEW HAMPSHIRE DETACHMENT LEAVES FOR IRAQ

By MAJ Greg Heilshorn, *New Hampshire Public Affairs* | CONCORD, NH

THE DAY AFTER PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA announced that all combat troops would be withdrawn from Iraq by August 2010, a group of New Hampshire Army National Guard Soldiers were on their way there.

The 114th Public Affairs Detachment will spend the better part of 2009 based in Baghdad, documenting the successes of U.S. and coalition forces as they begin to scale back operations in a war that started six years ago.

More than 200 family and friends honored the unit during a deployment ceremony Feb. 28 at Joint Force Headquarters. Congress members and senior military leaders wished them a successful mission, the 39th Army Band kept the mood upbeat, and a handful of reporters tried their hardest to find one Soldier out of the nine departing who was miffed by the timing of the president's announcement and their deployment.

"I can understand why you might think it's ironic, but we've known about [the deployment] for quite some time," said 18-year-old Karin Leach, the youngest member of the unit, to Ron Maroney, a reporter for *New England Cable News*. "So we all are just really excited to

go over there and tell the story all the people want to know."

Added MSG Mike Daigle, the elder statesman at 51, "It's an exciting time to be there, because we are transitioning power to the Iraqi people, and it's a new democracy."

What Maroney and other reporters failed to recognize, while they were trying to manufacture a connection between the two unrelated events, was the mind-set of this particular unit. Trained as public affairs specialists, they were prepared for the question and had actually talked about it as a group the day before, according to the commander, CPT Robert Burnham.

He echoed a well-worn talking point, which is true of most service members as they depart for combat.

"I just feel a sense of readiness," Burnham said to more than one reporter. "We've got the support. We've covered all our bases. Now it's time to go forward and execute our mission."

Each time, he delivered his words with patience and maturity—two traits that will be tested many times in theater. The 114th will produce a newspaper, video products and press releases.

Homegrown Heroes



(Left) **CELEBRATED CONVOY** E Company, 1/155th CAB, Soldiers wave to family, friends and supporters as they prepare to deploy to Iraq.

were trying to give back to the Soldiers who support them at home and fight for their freedom overseas.

The next day—parade day—there was a ceremony and free luncheon for the Soldiers of E Company and their families. While the men and women in uniform enjoyed homemade barbecue, Mississippi's lieutenant governor praised them for their bravery and signed a proclamation recognizing E Company and the Mississippi

National Guard's service, patriotism, bravery and dedication.

"My heart fills with pride," Lt. Gov. Phil Bryant said in an interview before his speech. "To know these Citizen-Soldiers will be leaving Marion County to go and spread liberty and freedom throughout the world, do a tough, tough job—it makes you very

proud of [them]."

In Bryant's speech to the crowd of about 100, he said, "Be careful, Soldiers. Our great hope and prayer is that each and every one of you returns without injury. You make us so proud."

After lunch, the Soldiers headed to the armory to begin their tour through town. I



A SMALL TOWN PULLS TOGETHER TO SUPPORT ITS CITIZEN-SOLDIERS

Story and photos by Camille Breland

I'm from a small town. And as in most small towns in the U.S., everyone knows everybody. So when I found out my hometown's National Guard unit was going to be deploying in early summer 2009 to Iraq, I knew I had to get down there to support the men and women I grew up with.

I headed to Columbia, MS—about 30 miles west of Camp Shelby—for the send-off parade of E Company, 1/155th Combined Arms Battalion. The parade was Columbia's tribute to its homegrown Citizen-Soldiers who would be pulling convoy security more than 7,000 miles away from home.

BIG LOVE

I knew my town was supportive of the military, but I didn't expect the outpouring of love I witnessed. As I drove around the night before the parade, I saw my high school history teacher, Tracy Winton, and his wife hammering down a huge sign in front of the school that read, "We love our troops!"

I stopped for a chat with them and Tracy, a former captain in the Mississippi Army National Guard, told me that he can imagine what the deploying men and women are feeling. He has been on numerous deployments throughout his more than 22-year military career.

I headed downtown, passing countless "We Support E Company 1/155 CAB Deployed to Iraq" signs along the way. Nearly every house lining Columbia's main roads had one. Some had two. As I reached downtown, a few bank employees were helping each other secure enormous yellow ribbons to the lampposts on their building.

As I talked to these citizens and volunteers, I heard the same sentiment over and over: They



ATTENTION The combat engineer unit stands in formation while a local minister, Mississippi's lieutenant governor and its commander speaks to the emotional crowd.

(Right) **A SHOW OF SUPPORT**
Children show their patriotism at the town's send-off parade for its local National Guard unit.

(Below) **A FAMILY AFFAIR**
CPT Jim Barry spends time with his son before taking command of the Columbia, MS, unit.



“[THE UNIT IN] THIS TOWN IS UNLIKE ANY OTHER I’VE EVER SERVED IN.”

>> CPT Jim Barry, commander, E Company, 1/155th BCT

can do is continue to support [our Soldiers]—to let them know that they are not forgotten,” he noted.

“It’s almost routine [to] see Soldiers deploy—and we almost forget about it,” he continued. “I think we take freedom for granted. The freedom of consciousness—to be able to think the way we want to think or to send our children to a university. My children can move about without anyone questioning them. They can vote without the possibility of someone blowing up the voting precinct.

“These are things we think of as normal in the American lifestyle,” Bryant observed, “and we’ve got to spread that around the world.” **GX**

SEE THE ACTION!
WATCH VIDEOS OF
E COMPANY’S SOLDIERS ON THE NATIONAL GUARD’S YOUTUBE PAGE:
YOUTUBE.COM/NATIONALGUARD



ALABAMA The Alabama National Guard recognizes how sexual assault and harassment can destroy lives, destroy morale among comrades and negatively disrupt a unit’s mission. In an effort to intervene with this crime, the Alabama National Guard has hired its first full-time Sexual Assault Response Coordinator (SARC), CW2 Rhonda McCrummen.

As the SARC, McCrummen will manage and implement the Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program and Domestic Abuse/Violence Program. McCrummen says she hopes to help create a climate where Soldiers will live the Army values. This will in turn reduce incidents while also educating Soldiers on preventive measures. The program will also provide guidance, and support Soldiers and their families regarding sexual assault and sexual harassment.

ALASKA During the month of May, the Northern Exposure aircrews of Task Force Arctic Eagle, also known as A Company, 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard, were given a rare opportunity. They were tasked to fly Vice President Joseph Biden in their UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters during his trip to Kosovo as part of a larger trip throughout the Balkans.

Currently deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, the Guard members of 1/207th Aviation are known for accomplishing a variety of missions with minimal planning time and making it look easy. This mission was no different. Transporting the vice president, his security detail, press and staff around the country required six of the company’s eight aircraft.

One hundred and forty Alaska Army National Guard members from 1/207th Aviation have been deployed since December 2008. They are on a one-year peacekeeping and peace enforcement mission to Kosovo, and have been providing aviation support with UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to U.S. forces and Coalition forces.

ARKANSAS COL Kirk E. VanPelt of Maumelle, AR, took command of the Arkansas National Guard’s 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team May 31, in a ceremony at Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center.

COL Kendall Penn relinquished command of the brigade he headed during the unit’s second deployment to Iraq. The 39th returned home from mobilization in Dec. 2008, and is currently conducting annual training at Fort Chaffee. Each of the brigade’s six battalions were well

continued on page 34



FAST MANEUVER
SSG Clifford Fraipont of Fountain, CO, moves quickly to clear a room during Close Quarter Combat training at Fort Hood, TX.

Muscle Memory

Story and photo by SSG Liesl Marelli, Colorado Army National Guard | FORT HOOD, TX

▶ DEPLOYING COLORADO GUARD SOLDIERS continued building upon their foundation of Close Quarter Combat (CQC) training at Fort Hood, TX, May 21, 2009.

The Soldiers, who are assigned to 1st Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, Colorado Army National Guard, 115th Fires Brigade, incorporated their medic platoon in the training to help simulate how to treat a casualty while also trying to clear a room or a house.

Using a basic floor plan outlined on the ground, known as a “glass house,” the Soldiers, in small teams, practiced clearing rooms and hallways. At the discretion of the 1st platoon sergeant and the medic platoon sergeant, they would call out to the team a scenario such as, “Third man was hit. Lower leg injury.”

With that, the Soldiers determined a security plan and performed buddy aid.

The pressure didn't let up. If the Soldiers didn't react properly and quickly enough, the platoon sergeants would add to the pressure.

They shouted at the teams, “What are you going to do now? Where's your call to higher? Who is pulling security?”

“I learned a lot I didn't know from the classes on what to do if we [have] a casualty under fire, what to do if we [have] a casualty while clearing a

building, and the proper procedures for clearing the building using the [techniques from] the CQC range,” said SPC Sean Dolan of Colorado Springs, CO.

The platoon trained recently on the Fort Hood CQC range and decided to continue training on their own to both enhance their knowledge and practice building their muscle memory.

The concept of muscle memory consists of many tasks such as muzzle awareness, team building for small teams to clear rooms, and how to conduct buddy aid when adrenaline is pumping and time is ticking quickly.

“I wanted to give [our] certified Combat Lifesavers the opportunity for additional experience,” said SFC Matthew Byerly of Johnstown, CO.

With the help of the medic platoon, the Soldiers practiced applying tourniquets, safely moving a casualty and administering an IV in the field.

Colorado's 3rd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, deployed to Iraq this summer. The battalion is assigned to the 115th Fires Brigade, which consists of more than 2,000 personnel from Wyoming, Colorado, Alabama, South Dakota and Minnesota. For many of these states, the deployment is the largest ever of their respective Army National Guard units. **GX**

1/19th Agribusiness Development Team Receives Combat Patch

Courtesy of the International Security Assistance Force HQ Public Affairs
FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, AFGHANISTAN

▶ THROUGHOUT THE LINEAGE of American history, our great nation has experienced many major wars that have produced heroes and legendary valor to be passed down from generation to generation. With our current operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) in Afghanistan, the next generation of heroes and combat Veterans has earned the right to etch their names in the history books.

In honor of these service members past and present and the sacrifices they have made, the 1/19th Agribusiness Development Team (ADT), deployed in support of OEF, officially received their combat patches during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Salerno on March 14. The combat patch that the 1/19th ADT earned is the 101st Airborne Division “Screaming Eagles” patch.

“This is a very significant day for our Soldiers, especially the ones who haven't been [deployed] before,” said SGM Darren Hudson. “It is more than just slapping on a patch on your right shoulder.”

The significance of wearing the combat patch on your shoulder is that it shows everyone where you have been and the pride you carry with you for your experience.

“Whether this is your first time donning a combat patch or your second, third or more,” COL Brian Copes, commander of the 1/19th ADT said, “it remains a special day, marking a coveted milestone in this warrior institution we call the United States Army. Serving in combat, to fight and win our nation's wars, is the singular task for which we train and prepare.”

The 1/19th ADT, which will be deployed for about one year, has the mission of assisting the government of Afghanistan, and in particular Khowst Province, expand the agricultural systems and economy of Afghanistan.

“I could not be more proud to have my first combat patch be the ‘Screaming Eagle’ patch of the 101st Airborne Division—a unit with an illustrious legacy of service to this nation,” said COL Brian Copes. “Our team is rightfully proud to be afforded this privilege and honor.” **GX**

North Carolina Soldiers Fire New Artillery Round

Story and photo by Robert Jordan

BAGHDAD, IRAQ

▶ **NORTH CAROLINA GUARD MEMBERS** of Battery A, 113th Field Artillery Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, became the first National Guard crew to fire an Excalibur precision artillery round in Iraq at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah, May 21.

The Excalibur is a Global Positioning System-guided 155 mm round fired from the battalion's self-propelled M109 Paladin howitzers.

"This will develop the next generation of artillery," said 1LT Frank Dyson, a fire direction officer from Roanoke, VA. He worked with Excalibur field service representative Dennis Patnode for the test.

"I am here for feedback from the Soldiers going through the drill," said Patnode, "and to improve the weapon."

Dyson said the Excalibur gives the brigade a faster, more accurate punch. "We do not have to



CAREFUL PREP SPC Grayson T. Dinkins (left) and PFC Bryan Southers, both of Battery A, 113th Field Artillery Battalion, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, Multi-National Division-Baghdad, prepare an Excalibur precision artillery round for firing at Forward Operating Base Mahmudiyah, May 21.

coordinate with outside agencies [for additional] weapons," Dyson said. "We have precision at our fingertips."

Conventional artillery devastates its target, but can endanger surrounding areas. Excalibur solves this.

"In unconventional warfare, collateral damage is unacceptable," Dyson said. "Excalibur does not cause problems; it creates solutions. Excalibur can increase the role of artillery."

If the round cannot identify the target after firing, it shifts to a safe area and does not explode.

Patnode travels with the four-man crew, watching each man quickly prepare to fire.

"I evaluate all the time," Patnode said, "I cannot tell the difference between this crew and [one from] the active Army."

Dyson gives the order over the radio for the crews to fire the weapon. The Paladin cannons are rotated into firing position. Soon the rounds are heading toward their targets, miles away.

"It's the highlight of a fire direction officer's career," Dyson said about the new round. **GX**

Artillery Exchange

NICARAGUAN SOLDIERS TRAIN WISCONSIN SOLDIERS

By SFC Vaughn Larson | FORT MCCOY, WI

▶ **SOLDIERS FROM WISCONSIN** and Nicaragua engaged in an artillery exchange recently—in a non-hostile way.

Six artillery Soldiers from the Nicaraguan Army—a major, captain, first lieutenant and three noncommissioned officers—interacted with their counterparts in the Wisconsin Army National Guard (WIARNG) June 14–18 as part of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Last year BG Don Dunbar, the adjutant general of Wisconsin, and other state Guard members visited training in Nicaragua. Through an interpreter, the Nicaraguan visitors shared information in a classroom setting about their BM-21 multiple rocket launcher, a Soviet-era wheeled artillery piece featuring a



EXCHANGING INFORMATION Members of the Wisconsin Military Academy share information about artillery pieces with Nicaraguan officers and noncommissioned officers, shown in darker uniforms and black boots at Fort McCoy June 15.

40-tube module. They then observed members of the WIARNG's 121st Field Artillery Battalion fire the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) June 17 at Fort McCoy.

"They loved it," said MAJ Eric Leckel, director of the State Partnership Program. "This was a phenomenal exchange—we achieved everything we hoped for, and more."

The information exchange, for example, gave Wisconsin Soldiers a better understanding of military equipment currently in use by other

nations, not to mention how Nicaragua's Army—or *ejercito*—conducts operations, and their tactics, policies and procedures.

"It's truly a partnership of ideas," Leckel said.

The 426th Regiment, which operates the Wisconsin Military Academy at Fort McCoy, spearheaded this year's exchange.

Leckel also credited extensive coordination with LTC Brian Wolhaupter, 121st Battalion commander, for the successful event.

The Wisconsin National Guard's partnership with the Republic of Nicaragua is entering its seventh year, but Wisconsin's relationship with the Central American nation dates back to 1964, when 18 sister-city relationships developed as a result of President John F. Kennedy's "Alliance for Progress" initiative.

The Wisconsin National Guard also sent teams to Nicaragua in 1998 to help in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch, and for humanitarian missions in 2000 and 2002. **GX**

The Blue Dragons

By MAJ Scott Bell, South Carolina National Guard Historian

▶ **EVER HEARD** of the “Blue Dragons of Death?” It’s the name Iraqis gave the unique gray-colored Apaches of the South Carolina Army National Guard’s (SCARNG) 1st of the 151st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB) during the unit’s 2004 deployment into Mosul. The history of the gray Apaches began as an experiment in 2003, when the U.S. Army began looking at ways to reduce the risk of surface-to-air fire for aviators serving in Afghanistan and Iraq.

“One of the options the Army pursued was using alternate paint schemes,” said BG Les Eisner, the deputy adjutant general of the South Carolina National Guard. Eisner, who was serving as 51st Aviation Group commander and South Carolina’s director of aviation safety, was at the time preparing the 1st of the 151st ARB for an upcoming deployment to Iraq.

Both he and LTC Ed McKee, commander for the 1st of the 151st ARB, asked the National Guard Bureau and the Apache Program Manager’s permission to paint 14 of their AH-64A Apache aircraft an experimental two-tone gray scheme. They thought the color might blend in better with the sky over Iraq and give their pilots an advantage in battle. Following the plan’s approval, the aircraft became the first and only Apaches to be contracted and painted the experimental color by the U.S. Navy.

When the unit deployed to Iraq in 2004, the gray Apaches garnered a lot of attention upon arriving in Kuwait. Although they looked like Navy aircraft, they were—of course—Army aircraft. As they flew their aircraft into Iraq for the first time, the 1st of the 151st Aviators didn’t realize they would be the only ones ever to fly gray AH-64s in combat. Upon the unit’s arrival in Mosul, insurgents controlled



several parts of the city, and it was a hotbed of enemy activity. The Soldiers were initially supposed to have a two-week train-up period.

Instead, within 24 hours upon arriving in Iraq, the South Carolina aviators were proving the accuracy of their motto—“Ready to Strike”—flying combat operations and receiving fire in support of the 1st Stryker Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Light). The aircraft soon earned the nickname “Blue Dragons of Death” because of their stealth-like ability to be on top of the enemy before the insurgency could react adequately.

“The gray Apaches had an immediate and lasting impact, and contributed to bringing the situation under control,” said LTC Ray Davis, the unit’s operations officer. He feels the gray Apaches assisted his unit in accomplishing their mission of keeping Soldiers on the ground out of harm’s way. “It got to the point [where] Soldiers in the dining facility were coming up to us and thanking us, because they knew the enemy wouldn’t shoot at them if we were overhead,” Davis said.

The gray Apaches also proved to be easier to repair because the experimental color made the skin

temperature about 20–30 degrees cooler than the standard Army green paint scheme. Reports from maintenance personnel in Iraq indicated the 1st of the 151st ARB also had fewer avionics issues with the gray Apaches, because the temperature both inside and outside of the aircraft was reduced.

At the end of the unit’s rotation, the Army closed the loophole for approving alternative paint schemes. The Department of the Army must now approve future color experiments. Currently, the South Carolina Army National Guard’s 14 gray Apaches remain the only Apaches ever to fly in combat utilizing the experimental two-tone gray scheme.

Since the beginning of this year, most of the gray Apaches have now been sent back to the remanufacturing plant to be converted to the newer D-models. According to Eisner, they will continue serving the needs of the U.S. Army but will be repainted Army green.

Several of the remaining gray Apaches, including the last one South Carolina aviators flew (which departed McEntire Joint National Guard Base on March 20), will continue to serve in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard until they are also converted to the newer D-model Apache.

Although the Army may have ended this nostalgic chapter in the history of the experimental gray-colored Apache, it is noteworthy that the new CH-47F Chinook will have an alternative light-tan paint scheme.

“Regardless of one’s viewpoint on gray or tan versus green, the gray Apache was a plausible response to the threats of surface-to-air fire and the means to mitigate it,” Eisner said. He feels all of the “Ready to Strike” Soldiers can be proud of the role they played in the gray Apache’s chapter in the South Carolina Army National Guard and U.S. Army aviation history. **GX**

Tortoises and Troops Share Nevada Home

By SFC Erick Studenicka, Nevada Public Affairs | LAS VEGAS, NV

► **THE ARID CLIMATE** and southwestern desert terrain so prevalent here in this valley combine to create the perfect training environment for Nevada National Guard Soldiers and Airmen. But these same conditions also combine to form the perfect habitat for one of Nevada's most threatened species—*Gopherus agassizii*, commonly known as the desert tortoise.

The Nevada National Guard has called this state home for nearly 150 years, a mere grain of sand in the hourglass compared with the desert tortoise's 10-million-year existence in these unforgiving environs.

The survey's finding: The Nevada Guard is probably sharing its training land with about 50 endangered tortoises, a fact that isn't likely to inhibit future training in southern Nevada, but something every Soldier and Airman should consider.

"They live here, we train here," said Chad Stephens, the Nevada Guard's environmental compliance program manager. "We can have both in southern Nevada: We can conduct important military training and also sustain the environment for wildlife and protect threatened species."



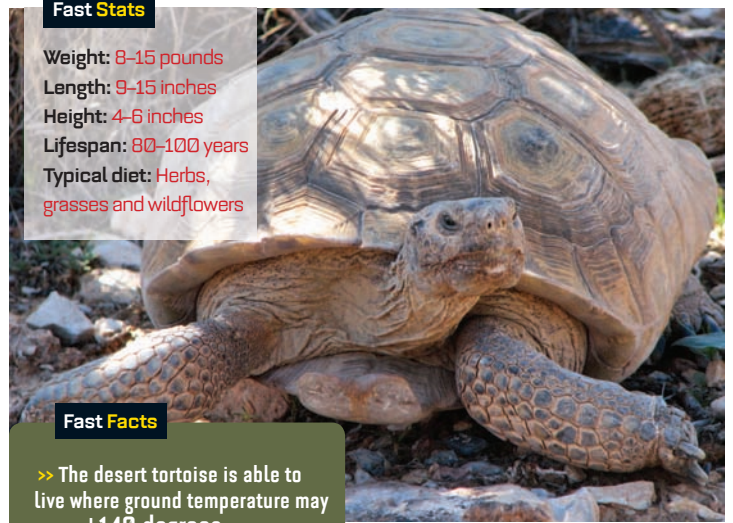
MOVE OUT Nevada National Guard Soldiers start a mission deep into Floyd Edsel Armory in southern Nevada.

As Nevada National Guard and Nellis Air Force Base administrators consider future development of their training lands in southern Nevada, environmental officials are examining the potential impact Guard training may have on these relics from the age of the dinosaur.

In order to calculate how many tortoises might be affected by future training on the Nevada Guard's 1,600 acres surrounding the Floyd Edsel (aka Clark County) Armory, as well as 67 acres of Nellis Air Force Base land, the Nevada Guard environmental office recently hosted a desert tortoise survey.

Contrary to the old adage that "the only thing that will stop training quicker than 'cease fire' is 'tortoise sighted,' the presence of a desert tortoise does not necessarily mean training should come to a halt. Training should only be modified to give the tortoise a wide berth and ensure it is not endangered.

The recent survey focused on the 67 acres of land just north of the Edsel Armory likely to be the site of four munitions ranges in the future if a cooperative effort between the Nevada Guard and Nellis comes to fruition. The survey was one step in the environmental



Fast Stats

Weight: 8-15 pounds
Length: 9-15 inches
Height: 4-6 inches
Lifespan: 80-100 years
Typical diet: Herbs, grasses and wildflowers

Fast Facts

► The desert tortoise is able to live where ground temperature may exceed 140 degrees

► **95 percent** of a desert tortoise's life is spent in underground burrows

► Adult tortoises may survive a year or more **without access to water.**

► Desert tortoise populations have declined by **90 percent** since the 1980s

► **Ravens** are one of the tortoises' primary predators.

► Much of the tortoises' water intake comes from **moisture in grasses and wildflowers**

► It is **unlawful to touch, harm, harass or collect a wild desert tortoise**

tortoises in the area, as there are several burrows in excellent shape."

Woodman reported finding 11 burrows and one tortoise carcass during the survey. Eight of the burrows were in good condition. As expected, no tortoises were actually viewed during the survey as they were hibernating deep in their burrows, awaiting summer.

Woodman concluded that there were likely one to two tortoises now living on the 67-acre proposed rangeland. He said the type of land surveyed statistically could support 16.4 tortoises per square mile, and it was accurate to say Guard training land in Clark County hosts about 50 tortoises. According to Stephens, Woodman's findings were what the environmental office anticipated and should not hamper the construction of the ranges.

"This was not a show-stopper for the construction of the ranges that promise to be vital for training Soldiers and Airmen to standard here in Nevada," Stephens said. "This survey was just primarily to see where the tortoises are and to help us with our plans in monitoring and—if needed—relocating them during construction."

Stephens also said a decision was pending on the question of whether the exterior of the ranges will be fenced off from future emigrating tortoises. **GX**

assessment of the project that is likely to see the first small-arms range completed by 2011.

The representative for the company conducting the survey, Peter Woodman of Kiva Biological Consulting, said the prospective range area was among the best tortoise habitats in the nation. (China Lake, CA, is considered the No. 1 spot in the nation.)

"This is prime habitat for desert tortoises—the best in Nevada," said Woodman during his survey, which included nine miles of hiking through the area in search of tortoise evidence. "There are obviously

First Student Arrives at Patriot Academy

Story and photo by SGT Brad Staggs, Muscatatuck Urban Training Center Public | BUTLERVILLE, IN

WORKERS ARE STILL LANDSCAPING AND laying bricks at the reconstructed school-house. Furniture is still being delivered and assembled in dorm rooms. But the first student has arrived for the very first class at the Patriot Academy at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center.

PVT Michael Meadows, 19, of Daleville, IN, has been busy relearning how to make his bunk in a military fashion. He graduated from Army Basic Training last August and has been waiting for the Patriot Academy to start classes.

“I’m going to be a [Fire Support Specialist],” Meadows said. “But I have to get my diploma here first before I can go to [Advanced Individual Training]. I’ve been looking forward to this.”

Here’s how it works: National Guard recruits who dropped out of high school within 10 credits of graduating may apply for admission to the Patriot Academy.

They will then be sent to Army Basic Training followed by nine months at the academy earning a high school diploma, not a GED. Immediately following the academy time, the Soldiers will then attend the school dedicated to their military occupational specialty (MOS).

It may sound like a long time to spend away from home, but when the Soldiers have



LEADING THE WAY PVT Michael Meadows of Daleville, IN, is shown how to make a bunk the Army way by his Patriot Academy cadre instructor, SGT Carroll Nance. Meadows is the very first Soldier to report to the new Patriot Academy at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center in Butleville, IN. Meadows will spend the next nine months going to school at the academy to get his high school diploma while honing his soldiering skills.

very first Soldier to arrive for the very first class at the Patriot Academy.

“I know there will be a lot of adjusting since we’re the first class, but it makes me proud to be in on the beginning,” Meadows said. “Now I just have to get my bunk made right.”

The adjustment period won’t just be for the students of the academy; the staff and cadre of

Sarver said the primary mission of the school is threefold.

“The first thing is that whoever comes in here is to get his or her high school diploma,” he said. “That’s the most important thing. That’s our job.

“The second thing is to improve their military training,” he continued. “When they come from Basic, we build on what they’ve got so when they go to AIT, a drill sergeant can recognize the difference between every other Soldier and a Patriot Academy Soldier.”

Lastly, Sarver touched on community service.

“When they go back home, not only will they have a high school diploma ... not only will they be military trained ... but they will know what it means to give back to the community,” he said.

In order to ensure that the military portion of the student’s training is getting done, CSM Judy Macy was brought out of retirement to be the top enlisted person at the Patriot Academy. It is her responsibility to

oversee the students’ day-to-day academic and military training.

“Since the Soldiers are coming straight out of Basic Training, they have already had the very basic level of Soldier skills,” Macy said. “We will be building on that training to a much higher level.”

The school is located at Muscatatuck, which Macy said is a phenomenal setting for complete immersion of the student-Soldier. However, she is most looking forward to the community service portion of the student’s growth and training.

“There will be a variety of tasks, from helping the elderly learn computer skills to assisting at Little League games,” Macy said with a smile. “It will be a way to help out Jennings County and develop a passion for community involvement within our Soldiers.”

The first Patriot Academy class will involve approximately 60 students, but the administration foresees the school growing as word spreads. “We will have 500 students within three years,” Sarver predicted. “After the second year, we will add female students and possibly expand the parameters for student admission. This is an exciting time to be here!” **GX**

“THE PATRIOT ACADEMY IS ABOUT GIVING SECOND CHANCES TO STUDENTS WHO DID NOT GET THEIR HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA THE FIRST TIME.”

>> COL Perry Sarver

completed all phases of the training, not only will they have military jobs, they will also have high school diplomas and a lot more experience under their belts.

Only a few students will arrive before the school kickoff of July 15, but for the few who have arrived, academic classes at the new academy have already begun. Meadows arrived at MUTC on May 22, ready to get started, becoming the

new school will have to make adjustments as they go along as well.

“The Patriot Academy is about giving second chances to students who did not get their high school diploma the first time,” said COL Perry Sarver, the officer chosen to serve as the academy’s commandant. “The program supports all 54 states and territories, so we’ll have Soldiers from everywhere coming here.”

Taking it to the Top

GETTING TO KNOW ONE OF MAINE'S BEST

By Camille Breland

“I’ve always wanted to serve my country in some way,” said SGT Katie Cash of Lewiston, ME, during an interview with GX. “I’ve always wanted to be in the military.”

Coming from a family where neither parent was in the Armed Forces, her news that she was joining the Army National Guard came as a shock to her family and those closest to her.

“My friends thought I was crazy!” she laughed.

She was only 17 and a junior at Lewiston High School when she made that decision, but says it was one of the defining moments of her life.

Since then, she has accomplished a lot in the Guard, including becoming a squad leader for her unit and helping to rewire lights at the Arizona-Mexico border with Operation Jump Start.

But six years after enlisting in 2008, Katie, now 24, experienced her proudest moment to date—being named 2008 Soldier of the Year (SOY) for the state of Maine.

TAKIN' IT TO THE LIMIT

Katie won the preliminaries in the competition by conquering question-and-answer sessions at the unit, battalion and group levels. The questions covered basic Soldier knowledge.

Next, she moved on to the state level, where she went up against three other Soldiers from the regular Army and the Guard. In this phase, Soldiers were tested on physical fitness, running 2 miles and completing as many sit-ups and push-ups as possible in an allotted time period. They were also judged on accuracy in firing M-16 rifles and underwent another question-and-answer session.

“It was amazing,” Katie said. “[The other competitors] were really good Soldiers and had a lot of knowledge to put forward.”

Accustomed to extreme training from her high school wrestling experience, Cash excelled in the physical fitness portion of the event. She excelled in the other events, too, and won top Soldier in Maine. She went to the regional level, going up against the No. 1 Soldiers from



Fast Facts

Favorite food: Sushi, especially “The Rising Sun” roll. Sounds different, but I tried it, and now I’m addicted to this one plate!

Favorite band: There are way too many!

What music are you into: Old country, pop, new country and rock

Favorite hobby: Working out

Favorite National Guard

memory: Operation Jump Start

Definition of Freedom: Being able to live your life how you want without being under the control of others.

Definition of a Patriot:

Someone who loves to protect their country and the citizens of that country.

New York, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Vermont and Rhode Island. There, in addition to the previous categories, troops competed in a roK ruck march and basic soldiering skills, like administering first aid.

“The regional competition was intense,” she explained. “They push you to the max because they’re preparing you for the national competition, which is very rigorous.”

Katie fared well at the regionals, finishing in third place. But for her, the event was about more than just winning.

“Even though it was a competition, all the Soldiers worked together to get through everything,” she described. “It was good to learn from them.”

HANDYWOMAN

After winning the SOY competition, Cash was offered a promotion from specialist to sergeant. To receive this promotion, she had to undergo a Warrior Leadership Course and change her military occupational specialty (MOS).

Taking a look at Cash, you might not guess what that job is—a plumber. But there’s a history behind this skill. Having helped her dad build a deck and install wood flooring at their house, she learned how to do handiwork early in life. In fact, when she joined the Guard, her dad told her the carpentry and masonry MOS would suit her.

She took his advice and became a carpenter in the Guard. After that, plumbing was practically a natural.

“Now, if I ever want to build my own house, I can!” she declared.

EXPANDING HORIZONS

Cash has not only honed her leadership and career skills in the Guard, but she has also taken advantage of its education benefits. The Guard’s educational benefits paid for her to earn her degree at the University of Southern Maine, and the Student Loan Repayment Program even covered a study trip to China, where she observed orphaned children who had developmental and emotional disabilities. That experience changed her outlook on life.

“I’d never seen anything like that, and it was very, very hard for me to leave,” she admitted.

In fact, Cash plans to return to the country—this time, prepared. She’s planning to learn Chinese through the Guard’s free language software, Rosetta Stone, so she can teach in China. At the same time, she’ll learn Arabic, so that she can interpret in the Middle East if she’s deployed.

As much as she loves to travel, Cash also greatly enjoys serving her community in Maine. The state accumulates a massive amount of snow in the winter, which can cause flooding in the spring, and she’s proud to be prepared to assist.

“I like being able to help when floods occur,” she said. “I’m glad [we’re] trained and able to go out there.”

“The Guard has done a lot for me,” she continued. “They’ve made me more responsible and motivated. It’s a really good experience.”

We asked Cash how long she plans to serve her country and community as a Soldier. “Until they kick me out,” she said, smiling. **GX**

VICTORY
MAP



continued from page 25

represented on the Fort Chaffee parade field during the 40-minute ceremony, which was punctuated by a 105 mm cannon salute, courtesy of the 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery.

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, N. Little Rock, AR.—The annual Arkansas Adjutant General's Marksmanship exercise was held in May and drew 166 Guard Soldiers and Airmen from units all across the state. This year's overall team winner represented the 233rd Regional Training Institute at Camp Robinson, taking the overall championship in rifle and pistol shooting with a score of 3,108 points with 101-Vs or bull's-eyes.

CALIFORNIA In May, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger launched a revolutionary site called Network of Care. Network of Care is a state-of-the-art Web site that provides a direct link between California Veterans in need of services and the specific organizations that can help them and their families.

With a click of a mouse, Veterans can find immediate crisis counseling, emergency help with housing and jobs specifically for Veterans. The site, Vets.networkofcare.com, is a critical new bridge between the thousands of providers who are there to serve returning Soldiers and their loved ones.

Organizations like Give an Hour say this non-commercial site is the critical link that will better assist Veterans in their search for services. As is evidenced by recent tragic events outside a stress clinic in Baghdad, our community must make it a top priority to ensure that men and women of the Armed Forces have proper community support and the ability to find help quickly when they return home.

With 1.5 million Veterans expected to return home in the next two years, Network of Care is an essential bridge to information about health services and programs available to Veterans in California.

INDIANA The 38th Infantry Division of the Indiana Army National Guard cased the colors of the 3rd Battalion, 139th Field Artillery at the Crawfordsville Armory, Crawfordsville, IN, June 20. The battalion was originally organized as the 4th Regiment of the Indiana National Guard on May 1, 1917.

continued on page 39

Going the Extra Mile

STEWART'S SHOPS PROUD TO SUPPORT GUARD SOLDIERS

By Clint Wood

The Uniformed Services Employment and Re-employment Rights Act (USERRA) is a federal law that gives current and former members of the Armed Forces the right to return to the civilian jobs they held before military service. The law applies to all private employers, state governments and all branches of the federal government.

VeteransForAmerica.com reported that at least 35 states have deployed more troops to Iraq and Afghanistan than to any war since WWII. In all, as of March 31, 2008, more than 267,399 members of the National Guard have been deployed since Sept. 11, 2001, and, as of that date, 32,871 National Guard troops were deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

For Guard Soldiers who are employed by Stewart's Shops Corp. of Saratoga Springs, NY, an employee- and family-owned convenience store chain with 327 stores in upstate New York and southern Vermont, they have no worries in this matter.

GX caught up with Tom Mailey, marketing manager with the chain, which is known for its quality milk and ice cream. The company has more than 4,000 employees, with five currently serving in the Armed Forces. Mailey, whose father was a Korean War Veteran, noted that the company's chairman of the board is a Navy Veteran and several of the district managers are Army Veterans.

"We feel that it is an obligation we need to do and we should do," he said of ensuring Guard Soldiers the ability to return to their civilian jobs. "We work and live in a great country and, as a company, we do all we can to help coworkers serving our country."

One of the employees, a district manager, returned the favor, Mailey said. He brought back an American flag flown over one of Saddam Hussein's palaces. It's framed and displayed in

the company's conference room and overlooks the main table.

"They know that when they come back their job is there, and they know they will receive refresher training," Mailey added.

USERRA states that a return to work must be prompt for returning Soldiers. One stipulation is if the absence is not more than 30 days, a report back to the first work shift is reasonable if the Soldier has safely returned from his or her duty station and had at least eight hours of rest.

Mailey pointed out that his company has been very understanding about how much time it takes Soldiers to readjust to being a civilian and bonding with their families. And it also understands the process of reintegration.

"WE WORK AND LIVE IN A GREAT COUNTRY AND, AS A COMPANY, WE DO ALL WE CAN TO HELP OUR COWORKERS SERVING OUR COUNTRY."

>> Tom Mailey, marketing manager, Stewart's Shops Corp.

"We know the transition is difficult and it is a jarring change," he commented. "They're great people, and we know they have to have the time to get back up to speed."

When they do return home, the Soldiers and families always look forward to an annual event the company hosts—a summer picnic where all employees and their families are invited. Mailey said his company is very proud of having Soldiers as employees.

"This is the ultimate [service]; you're serving all of us on a whole different level," he said of his employees' service to their country. "There is a feeling of pride that goes with having fellow employees in the Guard."

Since 9/11, more than 8,400 New York Army National Guard Soldiers have been deployed. Of those, about 2,000 were deployed to Afghanistan, the rest to Iraq. **GX**

WE ALL SERVE



Jim Ainsworth of Nevada ESGR and Mike Williams, Operations Vice President of Nevada based REMSA, with employees and U.S. Army National Guardsmen Specialist Tyler Teese, Sergeant Steve Park, Sergeant Kevin Basta, Sergeant Nich Hammond, and Specialist Mike Roen.

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

We all serve. Whether serving our communities or our country, members of the National Guard and Reserve depend on their military units, families, and employers for support. Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense agency that seeks to promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law and resolving conflict through mediation.





HELMET SALUTE

While "Taps" is played, 34 players from Pennsylvania's Big 33 Football Classic raise their helmets in a silent salute to the brave 34 from the Pennsylvania National Guard who made the ultimate sacrifice in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

he died for," Shearon said. "This tribute says that we can remember him for all that made him a hero ..."

DAWN OF A NEW PERSPECTIVE

When Ohio heard about the stickers Pennsylvania's players planned to wear, the players and coaches were so moved they humbly requested the honor of wearing them, too.

Former NFL standout and Big 33 honorary chairman, Kyle Brady, noticed their classy expression of gratitude and solidarity.

"Oftentimes, people refer to football players as warriors who sacrifice their bodies for the team," said Brady, a Pennsylvania native who played in the 2007 Super Bowl for the New England Patriots. "But the terms warriors, sacrifice and commitment should really be reserved for those in uniform."

Brady's father served in the 82nd Airborne at Fort Indiantown Gap in the 1950s, and his brother is currently undergoing rigorous Special Forces training at Fort Bragg, NC.

"It's a great honor for these players to be wearing this emblem as a part of their uniform this year," Brady said. "... I think some of them have the maturity to understand what this means, but for some I think it can't hurt to remind them of what they're representing, not only in their state, but also with this sticker and what it means."

MG Jessica L. Wright, commander of the Pennsylvania National Guard, left the field knowing those young men had received the message.

"For the players to understand they were playing for a much bigger reason—for the Soldiers who gave their lives in defense of this country and the freedoms we enjoy—was truly an emotional moment," Wright said.

"The fallen Soldiers and Gold Star families will [forever be] a part of our family," Wright said. "Tonight, Pennsylvania is representing Guard Soldiers from the 54 states and territories who have given their lives for our freedom."

When the final whistle blew, Ohio had gone on to beat Pennsylvania 38-31, and the players bearing tribute would hold their heads high.

As Dana Shearon and her extended Guard family safely headed home, they would do so knowing that what they bore witness to was more than just a game. **GX**

More than Just a Game

Story and photos by CPT Jay Ostrich, Pennsylvania National Guard

THE BIG 33 FOOTBALL CLASSIC would serve as a night a Pennsylvania community would never forget, when young masters of the gridiron paid homage to Pennsylvania's fallen Warriors from the Iron Division.

During the Classic, a "Super Bowl" for prestigious college-bound football players from Pennsylvania and Ohio, the 34 best players from Pennsylvania donned the first-ever helmet sticker designed to honor the 34 Soldiers from the Pennsylvania National Guard who have fallen in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The design was a simple black keystone, like patches worn by Soldiers in the 28th Division, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, with an embedded yellow ribbon.

"The ribbon is a reminder of the sacrifice of these brave Soldiers who would never see the Keystone state again," said Airman 1st Class Claire Behney, Joint Force Headquarters public affairs specialist. "It's a symbol of hope for the safe return of the more than 5,000 Pennsylvania National Guard Soldiers and Airmen currently serving overseas."

But for honored guests, like Gold Star family members, its meaning went well beyond that.

A DAY OUR GUARD STOOD STILL

"To know that people still remember him means the world to us," said Dana Shearon, sister of CPL Gerry Pellegrini, 31, who fell Aug. 9, 2005, when his convoy was attacked in Baiji, Iraq.

Also lost in the attack were PFC Nathaniel Detample, 19, Morrisville, PA; SPC John Kulick, 35, Jenkintown, PA; and SGT Francis Straub Jr., 24, Philadelphia. SSG Ryan S. Ostrom, 29, Williamsport, PA, was lost in action separately that day, making it the greatest combat loss for the commonwealth since WWII.



SYMBOL OF HONOR MG Jessica Wright, adjutant general of the Pennsylvania National Guard, pastes a commemorative sticker to the helmet of a player in the Big 33 Football Classic.

As the names of the fallen echoed throughout the stadium, Shearon blew kisses toward the heavens.

For her, this tribute was not so much a memorial about how these Soldiers died, but about how they lived.

"Hopefully those who heard [Gerry's] name tonight will never forget who he was and what

Tennessee Hero Awarded Purple Heart in Iraq

By Nate Crawford | MOSUL, IRAQ

SSG Thomas Hosfelt, a squad leader in the Tennessee National Guard's 269th Military Police Company from Murfreesboro, TN, was awarded the Purple Heart during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Mosul on May 28 for injuries he sustained while serving in Iraq.

On February 24 of this year, Hosfelt and his squad were conducting an inspection visit at an Iraqi Police Station in Mosul when two men wearing Iraqi police uniforms opened fire on the team with AK-47 assault rifles. While shot in the right side of his face and in his upper left shoulder, Hosfelt returned fire as the assailants fled the scene. He then administered first aid to the wounded, and coordinated with other units to secure the area and transport his Soldiers to the hospital.

1LT William E. Emmert, from Fayetteville, TN, was killed during the attack and three other Tennessee Soldiers, including Hosfelt, were wounded. Hosfelt's injuries allowed him to remain in Iraq and return to duty. The other two wounded Soldiers are currently receiving medical care in the United States and received their Purple Hearts at earlier ceremonies.

"I'm proud of the job our Soldiers are doing in Iraq, and I'm especially proud of this young Tennessean," said BG Max Haston, assistant adjutant general of the Tennessee Army National Guard. "Without hesitation, Hosfelt placed himself in harm's way to help his fellow Soldiers."

Haston was in Mosul last month visiting Tennessee Soldiers and personally presented the Murfreesboro Soldier with the award.

The Purple Heart is one of the most widely recognized and respected medals. It was established by GEN George Washington at Newburgh, NY, during the Revolutionary War on Aug. 7th, 1782. Originally created as a Badge of Military Merit, the Purple Heart is awarded in the name of the President of the United States to any member of the U.S. Armed Forces who has been wounded or killed during combat with a declared enemy.

"I was just doing my job," Hosfelt said. "I volunteered to deploy, and I'm proud of the job the 269th Military Police Company is doing in Iraq. But the real heroes of that day were my squad."

The 269th Military Police Company is scheduled to return to Tennessee in November 2009. **GX**



MIGHTY WARRIOR
SSG Thomas Hosfelt returned fire in a combat situation although he was wounded twice.

COURTESY OF SSG MICHAEL T. LOYD

Q&A

GX CAUGHT UP WITH SSG THOMAS HOSFELT to ask him a few questions about his service and his thoughts on the days of the attack.

GX: How long have you been in the Guard?

TH: I have been in the Guard since 1991 and am currently 31B.

GX: Why did you join?

TH: To continue my military career after leaving the Regular Army.

GX: What is your civilian job?

TH: I'm an AGR Recruiter.

GX: What was going through your mind when you were hit?

TH: "I can't believe this is happening."

GX: What was the key factor that made you return fire?

TH: To protect my fellow Soldiers from further attacks.

GX: What was going through your mind as you were treating your fellow Soldiers?

TH: I needed to get them to the hospital ASAP!

GX: What type of coordination did you execute when coordinating with other units?

TH: My squad had air support on scene and called our company command.

GX: How did you feel after the incident?

TH: "Why did they come after us? What mistakes did I make to cause this?"

GX: What do you think assisted in saving your life?

TH: God is the only answer.

GX: What would you like to say to our readers?

TH: The actions of my squad that day were remarkable, and I commend them for their quick response and their level heads. No one that was there that day ever lost their composure or forgot their training. They all kept their heads and maintained until we returned to the CSH. From the first radio call to the moment we entered the CSH was 28 minutes. Considering that we were a 15-20 minute normal ride from the CSH says it all. I truly believe that if it were not for the members of my squad we would have lost CPL Parrish and the other interpreter. **GX**

>> FOR MORE INFO ON THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA TOUR, GO TO SPIRITOFAMERICATOUR.ORG.



HEY Y'ALL Country music artist Neal McCoy performs for a large crowd during a Spirit of America Tour.

Finding the 'Spirit of America'

By Amanda Powers

> **NEARLY EIGHT YEARS AGO**, America experienced its most horrific day since Pearl Harbor in 1941. On Sept. 11, 2001, terrorists crashed two airplanes into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York City.

Americans will never forget that day. It has been branded into citizens no matter their age, profession or religion. We were all affected by these acts, but luckily, New York had the National Guard, firefighters and police on the scene to help with the chaos and demolition.

Robert Rosenthal, a retired lawyer and former New York National Guard Soldier, was talking to his wife at home in Los Angeles after 9/11, wishing they could do something for their country. In that time of need and such great sadness, he was inspired to find a way to bring back enthusiasm and encouragement to the men and women serving our great country.

In 2002, Robert Rosenthal began building an agency that would bring top-of-the-line entertainers to the military bases within the continental U.S. The Spirit of America Tour was born—a product of the Robert and Nina Rosenthal Foundation Inc., a nonprofit organization founded by Rosenthal and his wife.

But he's not all on his own. Rosenthal teamed up with his good friend Cathy Gurley, a successful publicist and manager in Nashville, to get the tour started. Having no experience in the music

industry didn't stop him. The Spirit of America Tour has been a sensation since its inception and has brought more than 110 shows to the military since 2002.

The tour averages 15 shows a year, all at various military bases such as Fort Leonard Wood, MO, and Fort Huachuca, AZ.

The wide range of entertainers and artists who have volunteered for the tour is endless. Past acts have included Charlie Daniels, Jars

philanthropic activities. Either he or Cathy attends every Spirit of America show. "I love seeing these young kids, who are so brave and so patriotic that they've joined the military to support their country during this time of war," he told *GX*.

Rosenthal feels an overwhelming sense of pride coming from them. "They are the ones who will serve their country, then go back home and become the leaders of America," he said. "I look at these young kids today, and I don't remember being that young. I really don't. But they are so enthusiastic. They're such good Americans."

But Rosenthal isn't completely unfamiliar with military life. He served in the New York National Guard's 101st Signal Battalion. "I was a lieutenant and commanded a platoon." His experiences in the Guard and on the tour remind him that these current service members do not resemble the "glamorous" popular personalities filling magazines, celeb Web sites and TV.

"One of the things that I keep on saying to [talent] agents and managers is that America's military is not made up of people from Beverly Hills," Rosenthal said. "They are from places that represent America far more than the people who live in the greater Los Angeles or New York metropolitan areas."

Rosenthal commented that when he looks out into the faces of the crowd at the shows, he sees Middle America. He sees those who volunteer to give us the feeling of safety and

"SOLDIERS ARE THE ONES WHO WILL SERVE THEIR COUNTRY, THEN GO BACK HOME AND BECOME THE LEADERS OF AMERICA."

>> Robert Rosenthal, founder, Spirit of America Tour

of Clay, Miranda Lambert, Travis Tritt, Terri Clark, Diamond Rio, Billy Bob Thornton, Patty Loveless and Dierks Bentley.

This year, Rosenthal is just as excited about his lineup with tour veteran Charlie Daniels, Neal McCoy and Howie Mandel.

"We've already booked eight shows, which brings us to 115 shows since day one," Rosenthal noted.

9/11 wasn't the only memory that inspired Robert Rosenthal to take action. He simply loves meeting Americans and being part of various

protection, and sacrifice a lot to make sure we keep our "American" lifestyle.

Rosenthal beams with confidence when he talks about our military, "They are not only taught a trade, [but] they are taught discipline, they are taught American values ... they are taught how to be Americans."

The Robert and Nina Rosenthal Foundation has set the bar extremely high for any other military entertainment organization. Rosenthal knows that he is making a difference for the troops, and that's what matters most. **GX**

COURTESY OF SPIRIT OF AMERICA

Music City Dedication

LOCAL ARTIST UNVEILS EXHIBIT AT 2009 NGAUS

By Christian Anderson

National Guard Soldiers converging in Nashville, TN, for the 131st NGAUS (National Guard Association of the United States) conference will view a special piece of art of which the Tennessee National Guard is especially fond. This isn't your typical painting that goes above the living room couch; this is a painting of the Tennessee flag on top of a guitar, a concept that has brought the artist, Rob Hendon, a great deal of attention lately.

Hendon, a native of Nashville and a popular artist within the community, has strong ties to the National Guard due to his relationship with LTC Jimmie Cole. Cole's and Hendon's wives grew up together, so the two men struck up a friendship.

But it was not until the eve of Cole's deployment that he understood how much Hendon cared for the men and women of the Guard.

"When I deployed back in 2004, Rob and Shannon hosted a dinner over at their house for us," Cole said. "Rob has always been a great supporter of the Guard. He and his wife have always taken care of my family when I was gone."

Hendon always wanted to show the Guard his appreciation through his artwork and realized that the NGAUS conference would be the perfect chance.

"About two years ago, the Tennessee National Guard decided they were going to host NGAUS here at Opryland," Cole explained. "Rob and I were at lunch one day and he mentioned this was something he would like to do."

"So I showed him the logo, and he said he would love to do his interpretation for the Guard," Cole added.

So Hendon went to work and began to paint his interpretation of the Tennessee state flag onto a guitar.

Although he knew what the end result should be, the process wasn't easy. Hendon let his inspiration and appreciation for the

National Guard drive him to create a truly unique and special piece.

"I have always wanted to do something for the National Guard, especially since I met Jimmie," Hendon said. "My painting is a way of showing my support, not only to Jimmie and his family, but to all men and women in the National Guard."

Hendon made his official presentation to the Tennessee National Guard back in March at



TENNESSEE PRIDE Artist Rob Hendon presents BG Max Haston of the Tennessee National Guard with his original artwork featuring the Tennessee flag and a Gibson guitar.

the Country Music Hall of Fame in Nashville, TN. BG Max Haston, assistant adjutant general of Tennessee, accepted the painting on behalf of Tennessee and was excited that the 5,000 NGAUS attendees from all 54 states and territories would see it.

"Having a local artist who is embedded in the country music community and having this as part of our 2009 NGAUS conference just adds another special twist to the event that will be held here in September," Haston said. "It is an honor for us to do this in Tennessee, but it is more of an honor just for us to showcase our local talents to the world and show the country just how strong the Tennessee National Guard really is."

This is not the first time one of Hendon's paintings has garnered him recognition. The television shows "Gone Country" and "Nashville Star" have featured Hendon's guitars and the sales office of Gibson Guitars in Nashville displays a 35-foot painting by Hendon. **GX**



continued from page 34

AFGHANISTAN Soldiers from the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team played an integral role in supporting the elections in Afghanistan on August 19. The 48th BCT's mission is to mentor and train Afghan National security forces, including the Afghan National Army, the Afghan National Police and the Afghan border police and has been in Afghanistan since June. The 48th BCT took over operations from the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the Illinois Army National Guard in late August as they ended their deployment in Afghanistan.

EL SALVADOR In early August, 35 medics from the 684th Medical Company of the Ohio Army National Guard traveled to Morazan, El Salvador and treated more than 7,000 patients as part of a U.S. Army Medical Readiness Training Exercise (MEDRETE). The MEDRETE is a medical humanitarian and civic assistance exercise conducted in partnership with the government of El Salvador and U.S. Southern Command. The MEDRETE team visited four different locations during the two-week exercise. The team worked out of local schools in the towns of Corinto, Joateca, Rancho Quemado and Torola. The treatment services offered included: preventive medicine, general medicine, optometry and dentistry.

VIRGINIA Thirty-four Virginia National Guard Soldiers from various units spent part of their annual training at Fort Pickett in June trying to earn the Abzeichen für Leistungen im Truppendienst, the German Armed Forces Badge for Military Proficiency. To earn the badge, Soldiers had to complete a list of physical requirements such as swimming and track and field events, and Soldier tasks such as demonstrating accurate marksmanship skills and marching with a rucksack.

WISCONSIN The Tomah-based Headquarters Company of the 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Wisconsin Army National Guard, assumed command of its mission in Iraq in July by settling in at Forward Operating Base Adder. The 732nd has command and control over approximately 1,200 people in seven companies and three detachments, and is responsible for managing supplies and resupply efforts for all of southern Iraq—from Baghdad south to the Kuwaiti border and from the Iranian border in the east to Saudi Arabia in the west.



ELECTRIFYING
The Charlie Daniels Band plays for Soldiers on bases at home and abroad every year.

>> READ GX'S HERO PROFILE OF CHARLIE IN GX 4.1, AVAILABLE AT GXONLINE.COM/PASTISSUES.

Want more Charlie?

Read his soapbox messages online at CharlieDaniels.com.



Back From Iraq

One-on-one with **Charlie Daniels**

By Camille Breland

CHARLIE DANIELS' music has transcended generations. In the 30-plus years he has been playing and entertaining crowds, he has recorded more than 50 albums, including 2007's "Live from Iraq"; been inducted into the Grand Ole Opry; and played countless shows—at home and abroad—for the brave men and women who serve and protect America.

In a recent exclusive interview with GX, Charlie talked about his latest overseas tour to Iraq and Kuwait, playing for Soldiers over the years and picking up a fiddle for the first time. This is the first part of a two-part series.

GX: What was it like in Iraq now, compared with your previous visits?

Charlie Daniels: I felt that things were not as tense as they were the other times I had been over there. I think it is a result of the military doing their job so well the whole time they've

been over there. It's gotten to the phase where it's really starting to show.

We've never had a war like this, and it has taken us a while to learn how to fight it. It has always been—you had a battlefield, these guys were holding this line, and you try to take it.

It's not like that in Iraq. We had to ... learn how to do it, and I think we did a really good job of that.

GX: What was the biggest change you noticed?

CD: The first time we went [to Iraq], everybody was very security-conscious, but I did not feel that urgency quite as much this time. I don't think it's as dangerous as it was.

GX: What was the outlook of the Soldiers?

CD: I think morale is very high. I think that in certain parts over there, a lot of the guys feel like their job is done. They're not really doing as many patrols as they were. It's very evident that we're winning that war.

GX: What was it like interacting with the Soldiers over there?

CD: I met really good kids and fans. They would tell me where they're from, and most of the time I'd either been there or close to it. It's gratifying to know that after 50 years of doing

this, there are still people out there who appreciate you. I constantly heard, "Thank you for coming. Thank you for caring." That's the high point [in my night].

GX: What was the first thing that came to your mind when you stepped off the plane?

CD: We knew what to expect. We stayed in the same hotel and played the same venue. There weren't many surprises. Going into Iraq, we went to some different bases we had not been to. The first night we played outside, a daddy-whacker of a sandstorm came in. The sound guys wanted us to quit, but I said, 'I can't do that.' I almost couldn't see the people in the stands, but we got a 40-minute show in.

GX: Tell us about the first time you played the fiddle.

CD: It squeaked and squawked—I remember that (laughs)! My parents put up with it. I didn't take lessons; I just learned on my own. And of course when you learn like that, it takes a little doing to get it done.

"HONORED ... THAT'S THE WORD THAT COMES TO MY MIND WHEN I THINK ABOUT GOING OUT TO PLAY FOR THE FORCES."

>> Charlie Daniels

GX: How did you become interested in the fiddle?

CD: I'd started playing guitar and a little bit of mandolin. And the fingerboard on the mandolin is the same as the fiddle. And somebody came around one day with one, and I said, 'I wanna give that a shot!' So I did, and kind of started learning to play a little bit on it. I got addicted to it, I guess you could say (laughs)!

GX: How would you sum up your experience playing for Soldiers over the years?

CD: It's something I was very honored to do. That's the word that comes to my mind when I think about going out to play for the forces—anywhere really, but especially in a war zone. It is an honor to do it. **GX**

Julianne Hough Supports the Troops, Youth

By Amanda Powers

▶ **IF YOU HAVEN'T HEARD** of Julianne Hough yet, you're in the minority. Between winning two seasons of the hit ABC reality competition "Dancing with the Stars" and releasing her self-titled debut country music album, the smart starlet is making fans—and friends—faster than a viral video spreading on YouTube.

But there's more to her than a big smile and beautiful voice. Julianne's already showing her patriotic side and supporting the troops, performing for the National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program gala in Washington, DC. In a recent exclusive interview, she talked to us about life in the spotlight, her boyfriend and fellow country music singer Chuck Wicks and her desire to play for Soldiers overseas.

GX: Tell us about your performance for the National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program at the Gala in DC. How was it?

Julianne Hough: It was amazing. It was a great opportunity. Anytime I can be a part of something that [affects] young kids, it's the best because they are the future. It was really cool to see [the teens] and how their lives have changed.

GX: Did you talk to any of the Youth ChalleNGe Program teens?

JH: Yeah, absolutely. They told their stories: how hard it was for them growing up, how they completely [turned] around, and how they feel like they have a dream and that they can now achieve it.

GX: Your boyfriend, Chuck Wicks, is also a big supporter of the Soldiers. Do you think he has had any influence on you? Is that something that you ever talk about?

JH: Yeah, absolutely. His single "Man of the House" is a great song because with so much focus on the negative [aspects of the military], Chuck is focused on the positive. Wives and kids [will] come up to him and say they're going through the exact same situation [that is in the song]. He's touched a lot of people.

GX: It seems that country artists in particular have a bond with the military. Why do you think that is?

JH: I don't know ... we are just down-to-earth, normal people. There's not this expectation that



STAUNCH SUPPORTER Julianne Hough appreciates the sacrifices of the men and women in uniform and pledges her support.

we have to be in Hollywood. We're very patriotic. We love our country, and [that's what] we cherish the most rather than materialistic things.

GX: You're on tour with George Strait this year.

JH: I am. It's the opportunity of a lifetime. This is something that I will cherish forever. The fact that I get to learn everything that I can from him—it's definitely an experience.

GX: Has he been a musical influence or inspiration to you?

JH: Yeah, I was always a fan of George Strait growing up. He is the epitome of country music.

GX: Are you working on a new album?

JH: I am. This has been really cool because the last album was so rushed. I had a great time with it, but I think I've grown as an artist, vocalist and performer in this last year. I feel like this next record is going to be the real Julianne coming-out party.

GX: Where did you get inspiration and ideas for your new album?

JH: Well, I think that I just grew up a lot in one year. Relationship-wise, career points of

Julianne's Favorites

Ice cream: Häagen-Dazs, Bailey's Irish cream flavor. "It's amazing, and of course, it's frozen and doesn't have any real alcohol in it. It's so creamy and so good!"

Movie: *Pretty Woman* or *The Notebook*. "I love any Nicholas Sparks novel that they turn into movies. I love all of the *Lord of the Rings* movies, and I love fantasy films.

Playing on my iPod: Maroon 5, Bruce Springsteen, U2, Chuck Wicks. "Of course Chuck is on there. I'm obsessed. I was a big fan of Chuck before I even met him."

view, even my family—my mom, dad and sisters. We've all conquered and accomplished [a lot].

GX: If you could say something to your Soldier fans out there and overseas, what would it be?

JH: Thank you for supporting me. But I should be the one supporting and thanking [them] for everything they do for our country. [We're] very fortunate to have such amazing people keeping [us] safe.

GX: Do you ever see yourself performing for the troops or going overseas?

JH: Absolutely. I would love to do a USO (United Service Organizations) tour. Chuck and I actually talked about doing it [together], but then "Dancing With the Stars" came up, so we'll have to find another time to do it.

GX: Who are some of your heroes?

JH: My older sister has always been my hero. She is a working mom with five kids. Everything she does, she does with a smile. She is so motivated. She goes through hard times, trust me, but you would never know it.

GX: What is the biggest lesson that you've learned from her?

JH: That everybody goes through trials and tribulations, and [you can] get past them if you believe in yourself, have courage and get support from family, friends and God.

GX: What does freedom mean to you?

JH: There's so much I think about when I think about freedom. [There's] the freedom to write a great song and have it be controversial. You can speak your mind and not be penalized for it. I think about having kids, getting married and being able to be a singer, dancer and actress. Without freedom I [might not] be able to do any of that. **GX**



PROUD FATHER CW5 Gaddis poses for a picture with his daughters Alyssa (left) and Cassy (right).



LASTING FRIENDSHIP Cassy (left) and Alyssa (right) pose with Hart Steen, producer of "The Price of Peace."

The Gaddis Way

GX TALKS TO CW5 JIM GADDIS ABOUT HIS SUCCESSFUL DAUGHTERS

When we last checked in with Cassy and Alyssa Gaddis (*GX* 5.8, December issue), they were in Nashville recording their song, "The Price of Peace." Since then, the men and women of the National Guard have embraced their song and their patriotic spirit, thanks to the support of the National Guard and their father, CW5 Jim Gaddis.

By Christian Anderson

IN MAY, The Gaddis Sisters celebrated the start of summer with the launching of their Web page at www.NATIONALGUARD.com/priceofpeace. The Web page, which has their story and a downloadable MP3 of the song, as well as a downloadable music video they recorded in Nashville in the spring, has been a huge success. With all these new promotions, it is hard for their father, CW5 Jim Gaddis of

the Illinois Army National Guard, to keep his pride from showing. The girls have met many amazing people along the way—some who have helped them professionally with their music—but the one person who is consistently behind them is their father.

Like all fathers, Gaddis wanted his daughters to be successful in whatever venture they chose to follow in life. As soon as he heard their first recording, Gaddis knew they would be able to achieve

their goal of helping Soldiers' families. "I knew the song had merit because everybody that we played it for, it touched them immediately," Gaddis said in an interview with *GX*. "As they went along this summer and went to different organizations, Cassy and Alyssa kept getting nothing but positive feedback from Soldiers for the message of the song."

Gaddis, whose service has spanned more than 20 years in the Guard, has enjoyed his daughters'

wild ride and has noticed that their patriotism stems from his Guard service. Joining after high school, the Guard intrigued Gaddis because it allowed him to serve and pay for college.

"I decided I wanted to pay my own way through college, and I saw an ad for 100% Tuition Assistance in the paper," Gaddis said. "I walked into a recruiting office and recruited myself. It paid for a four-year degree in Aviation Management and led to my 20-plus year career in the military and civilian sectors."

It is hard for him not to notice the girls' patriotism, their love of country and their kindness to all the strangers they happen to meet at their performances.

"It makes me really proud that their mom and I have raised them to be patriotic kids and to see the big picture," Gaddis said. "I am particularly proud of them because they have been doing this since about March and really haven't accepted any payment, and really have given a lot."

COURTESY OF SFGSC



VOICES CARRY The Gaddis Sisters travel across the country singing, including performances at the National Guard Youth Conference and with Gary Sinise's LT Dan Band.

"I KNEW THE SONG HAD MERIT BECAUSE EVERYBODY THAT WE PLAYED IT FOR, IT TOUCHED THEM IMMEDIATELY."

>> CW5 Jim Gaddis, Illinois National Guard

Being out of school for the summer gave Cassy and Alyssa a chance to shine and perform for more Guard Soldiers and their families. From the beginning days of summer, the girls traveled across the country performing, got to sing their song at the National Guard Youth Conference and even performed with Gary Sinise and the LT Dan Band.

Gaddis was a little worried they might get burnt out, so he created a schedule that would give them plenty of time to enjoy their lives and still do what they love to do best: perform. Nevertheless, he is always amazed at how eager they are and how much energy they have during performances.

"I think they keep doing it because of the feedback from all the people," Gaddis admitted. "I try to find a balance for them as a dad

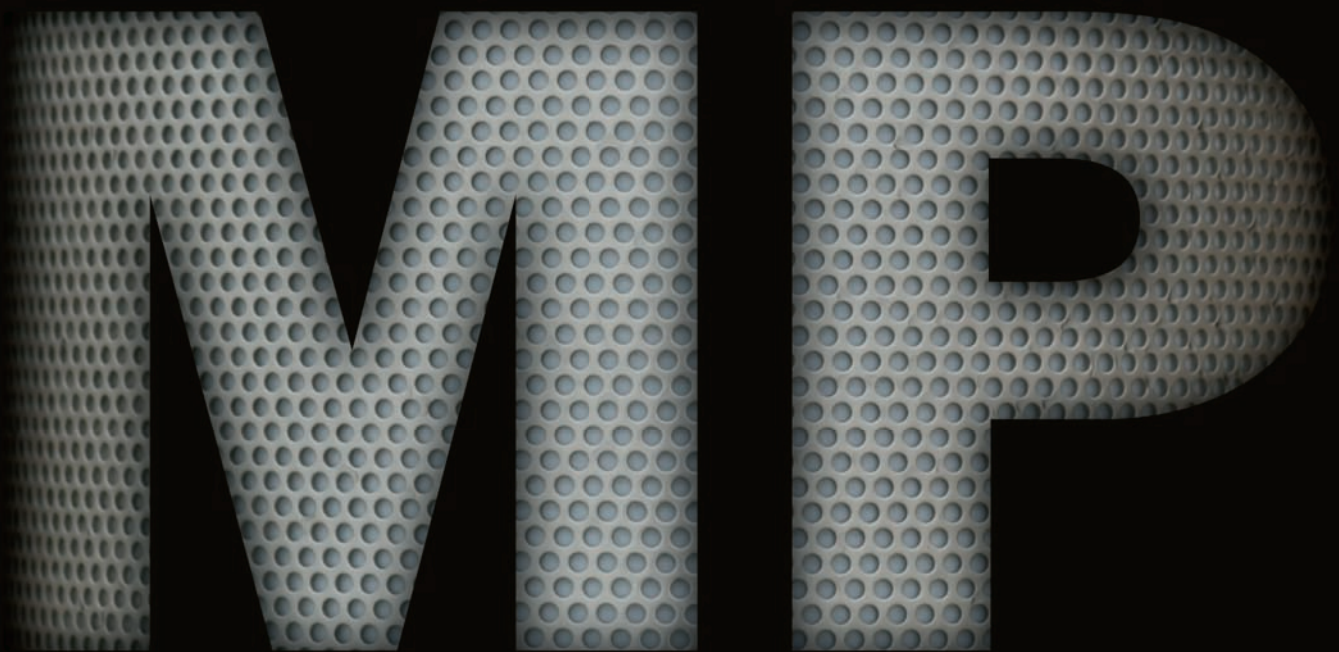
and watch out for them, but they have always been live performers, since they were young.

"Troop performers really garner a lot of energy from feedback, and when the feedback is positive, it keeps you going," he added. "The people that they meet at all these events, all these kids and parents, really give them the energy to keep going.

"The feedback we get from families is that they are proud that two young kids see the sacrifice, and are willing to speak out about it just to educate and bring awareness to others who may not realize what military families are going through in this eight-plus-year war," he said. "It has all been positive. We have not received, since the song has been released, one negative email or phone call, which is incredible." **GX**



SUPPORT FROM ABOVE Cassy (left) and Alyssa (right) pose with LTG Clyde A. Vaughn, former director of the Army National Guard, at a performance in the spring.



BEHIND THE BADGE

THE THIN GREEN LINE OF THE MILITARY POLICE

By CPT Darrin Haas



**"MY FAMILY HAS
SERVED IN THE
ARMED FORCES
SINCE WWII.
WHEN I WEAR
MY UNIFORM,
I KNOW I AM
MAKING A
DIFFERENCE."**

>> SPC Michael Bielat, 933rd
Military Police Company,
Illinois Army National Guard,
and member of the Choinummi
and Mono Native American tribes

This past March, 26-year-old Gitanja Williams stood at Memphis City Hall with the rest of her Memphis Police Department academy classmates, raised her right hand and took the oath of service. She swore to “serve and protect” the citizens of Memphis, and pledged to give her life in their protection.

As a new police officer, she will put herself in harm’s way daily, protecting the lives of strangers.

She joined a small group of officers who bear the burden of protecting American citizens directly, in their own hometowns.

This may have been a new concept to many of her classmates, but not to Williams. As a sergeant in the Tennessee Army National Guard, she was already a member of the most powerful organization in the world—the U.S. military. She has been putting her life on the line for strangers at home and abroad since she was 17. But she is also something else. Williams is a military police (MP) officer, a special breed of professionals charged with protecting America’s most valuable asset—its Soldiers.

“All I ever wanted to do since I was a kid was help people,” Williams said. “When I first joined the Guard, I wanted to do something that was bigger than me. I wanted to be a part of an organization that took care of others.”

So Williams joined the Guard while still in high school. In 2004, she deployed to Iraq with the Georgia National Guard. While there, she found her true calling.

“I saw thousands of poor children and wanted desperately to help them. As a mechanic, I was serving my country and helping Soldiers who were helping these families, but I wanted to help directly,” she explained. “I saw MPs who were helping these families daily and keeping them safe. MPs were also protecting the camp, escorting convoys, caring for detainees and ensuring that everyone, even other Soldiers, were protected.”

After her deployment, Williams joined the 130th Military Police Company.

“The 130th responded to [Hurricane] Katrina and deployed for Operation Jump Start, so they already had a proven record for helping others,” Williams said. “That was a team I wanted to be on.”

From that point on, Williams was pursuing her goal. “Within a few months, I was alerted and deployed to Kosovo for KFOR 9 as an MP and traffic investigator. I got the chance to help people and, best of all, take care of Soldiers and work with a dedicated group of professionals.”

Most MPs, like Williams, will tell you how proud they are for the opportunity and privilege to serve others.

“I always stand a little taller knowing that if something happens, I am the first responder and first line of defense,” Williams said. “The Military Police Corps is the only place where you get the chance to serve other Soldiers and be ‘of the troops, for the troops!’”

THE ORIGINS OF THE MILITARY POLICE

The Military Police Corps has a long and honorable history. Even though it was not officially established until 1941 at the outbreak of WWII, and is one of the youngest branches in the U.S. Army, its police origins reach back to the Revolutionary War.

In May 1778, while GEN George Washington camped at Valley Forge transforming the Continental Army into a legitimate fighting force following the harshest winter the Army had seen, Congress established a “provost.” The position of provost marshal was for Soldiers of “great judgment and experience” in the “laws and ordinances of the camp.” Their job was to apprehend deserters, various fugitives and thieves, and enforce the Articles of War.



CAN I SEE SOME ID?
SPC Gitanja Williams of the Tennessee Army National Guard performed duties as an MP at a checkpoint in Kosovo.

“I ALWAYS STAND A LITTLE TALLER KNOWING THAT IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, I AM THE FIRST RESPONDER AND FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE.”

>> SGT Gitanja Williams, Tennessee Army National Guard



BROTHERS IN ARMS PFC Justin Henley of the 267th Military Police Company serves with his Iraqi counterparts.

from damage and arresting “all wrong-doers, of whatever regiment or corps they may be.”

These Soldiers set the example for proper dress. One Soldier from the corps remarked, “We were not allowed to wear anything that was not issued by the government, even to our shoes.” Even on pass, these Soldiers were required to wear white gloves and look professional at all times, since they represented the Provost Marshal’s office. Looking professional is a tradition that continues today.

During the Spanish-American War and in the

Philippines, the Provost troops gained fame for their professionalism and for their value on the battlefield. By 1900, these Soldiers were starting to be called “military police.”

Next, they would begin wearing the one uniform article that distinguishes MPs from other Soldiers—the MP brassard. It was originally a blue band with white letters that Soldiers wore on their left arm (so oncoming traffic could see it). The brassards gave them a symbol of authority and would go through many changes over the next 100 years.

MORE CORPS FOR THE WAR

During WWI, warfare became so complex that more Military Police were needed. MP companies and other units were formed, some within National Guard divisions. Their main function was to handle captured prisoners (more than 48,000 by the end of the war) and control the movement of Soldiers and supplies to the front, known as circulation control. They also conducted law enforcement operations.

In September 1918, GEN Harry Hill Bandholtz was appointed Provost Marshal General of the American Expeditionary Force. He established the first MP school in Autum, France, which trained more than 4,000 officers and men throughout the war. He then established the Military Police Corps. At the end of the war, the corps was disbanded, even though Bandholtz tried to establish a permanent military police branch. His efforts failed, but in 1920, the National Defense Act provided for a reserve military police that set the foundation for the military police in WWII. Bandholtz is considered “The Father of the MP Corps.”

When war broke out again in Europe, Congress and the Army saw the need to have a permanent branch of military police to regulate the large mobilizing Army, so on Sept. 26, 1941 (the MP Corps’ birthday), the secretary of war established the Military Police Corps as a permanent Army branch. The Military Police Service School was then established at Fort Myer, VA, in December 1941, to train Soldiers for the new tasks assigned, mostly focusing on military law, criminal investigation, police methods and traffic control.

Washington created a special 63-man troop of light dragoons for the role in June that he named “troops of the Marechaussee,” after French provost marshal units called “Marecheaux” (French word for “marshals”) dating back to the 12th century. Washington put CPT Bartholomew Von Heer, a professional Prussian Soldier, in command of the new horse-mounted troops.

Throughout the Revolutionary War, the Marechaussee Corps performed numerous duties similar to modern day MPs. While the Army was camped, the Soldiers patrolled the surrounding areas and the camp itself. They searched for spies, checked papers and passes, and maintained discipline and security by arresting spies, deserters, stragglers, brawlers and disorderly troops.

During battles and while the Army was on the move, the Marechaussee would detain, secure and transport enemy prisoners of war, as well as patrol the surrounding area to collect intelligence about British movements. They set up roadblocks and checkpoints to prevent spying and secure routes for the Army. They patrolled the Army’s flanks and rear to watch for spies, secure supply lines and guard against enemy ambushes. Sometimes the troops would conduct route reconnaissance missions or find areas for river crossings. During the battle of Yorktown, the corps provided security for Washington’s headquarters.

The Soldiers were required to carry themselves professionally while performing their duties. It was a serious mission and in order to enforce regulations, they themselves had to follow the rules flawlessly. Many carried two flint-lock pistols while mounted for protection, which later became the Military Police Corps’ symbol.

The Marechaussee Corps was disbanded after the war in 1783, but it left a long-lasting impression on the Army. Similar units were created throughout the years, but they were temporary and only lasted during wartime.

Throughout the Civil War, the Veteran Reserve Corps (also known as the Invalid Corps) acted as military police, as well as infantry and cavalry units assigned to the Provost Corps. They secured vital areas, guarded prisoners of war and enforced “good order and discipline.” These units also had the “special and sole duty” of protecting property



A BOND OF FRIENDSHIP

SSG Michael Evans of the 267th Military Police Company greets young Iraqi children.

New duties and responsibilities ensued. MPs were now responsible for combating and investigating crime. They also enforced all regulations and laws of the areas they operated in and reported violations of Army policies and orders. MPs were also required to perform their traditional duties as well—detainee operations, traffic control and base security. MPs were also used as combat troops to defend against partisans and terrorism, and to destroy airborne enemy troops landing in rear areas. The corps, which started with just 2,000 men in 1941, grew to more than 200,000 during the war.

During WWII, MPs fought in every major theater. They supported the assault on the beaches of Normandy and moved German detainees from the frontlines all the way back to prisoner-of-war camps throughout the U.S. After the end of WWII, the MP Corps continued its professionalism in Korea, Vietnam and Desert

Storm, as well as contingencies worldwide. Today, they are one of the most valuable assets on the battlefield due to their flexibility and numerous skill sets.

WHAT IT TAKES

“Military police officers are different from other Soldiers,” said MSG Hank White, a military police instructor at the 117th Regimental Training Institute, Tennessee Army National Guard. “Most think that MPs just give tickets when you are on post or check IDs. But that is far from the truth. Law-and-order missions are only a small percentage of what we do. We conduct combat and combat support operations throughout the entire spectrum of military operations, on the battlefield and in garrison. There is very little that an MP is not trained to do. “MPs can provide five important functions on the battlefield and

SSG DOBBS/WOOD



2002 through March 2004, White was deployed to Kuwait and Iraq with the 267th Military Police Company for Operation Enduring Freedom, which would become Iraqi Freedom. Throughout mobilization training, the unit's mission was to conduct detention operations. Once on the ground, things would change.

"As soon as we landed in Kuwait, in February 2003, our mission shifted. Our first tasking was to secure the theater ammunition supply area in Kuwait. After a few weeks, our mission changed again to conducting convoy security for supplies and equipment being staged along the Iraqi border," White said. "Once the war started, the company began doing numerous missions simultane-

through the town. "We worked hand-in-hand with the Gallatin Police and Tennessee State Troopers to help secure the damaged areas," White said.

Following the tornado, Operation Jump Start began, and the 269th was one of the first units to arrive in Yuma, AZ, to help the U.S. Border Patrol spot illegal immigrants crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. The 269th would deploy to Yuma twice and then back to Vicenza, Italy, again within the next year. In 2008, the 269th was alerted again for Operation Iraqi Freedom and are currently deployed to Iraq training Iraqi Police.

"There is no greater asset on the battlefield or subject matter expert for operations the National Guard is currently involved

"WHETHER IT'S RESPONDING TO NATURAL DISASTERS, CIVIL DISTURBANCES, OR COMBAT OPERATIONS, MPS ARE EXPERTS."

>> MSG Hank White, military police instructor, Tennessee Army National Guard

ously. We performed convoy escorts, area security, detainee operations and, later, detainee transfers to Abu Ghraib. There were very few missions that we did not conduct while deployed."

After deploying to Iraq, White transferred to the 267th's sister company, the 269th, which just returned from a year in Baghdad and was awarded the Valorous Unit Award after being deployed for 22 consecutive months.

Over the next few years, the 269th would be deployed for numerous contingency operations.

"After transferring, the company sent platoons to Vicenza, Italy, for law-and-order missions," White explained. "In 2005, some Soldiers went to Bulgaria for three weeks to train with the Bulgarian military police. As the Soldiers were returning home, Katrina hit the Gulf Coast and the Soldiers were ordered to Gulfport, MS. The unit spent a month enforcing curfews, patrolling for looters and cordoning off damaged areas. Katrina really tested our flexibility, but we were all incredibly proud to help U.S. citizens."

The next year, White and the 269th responded to support the local police in Gallatin, TN, when an F3 tornado tore

in," White declared. "Whether it's responding to natural disasters and civil disturbances, or combat operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and Kosovo, MPs are experts on community policing and training indigenous police forces, or any other mission needed."

A HIGHER CALIBER

Not everyone can be a military police officer. MPs have to live up to a different standard than a regular Soldier.

"We are professionals, and as professionals, we set the standards," said SFC Kirk Meyer, a Kansas Army National Guard MP with numerous deployments.

"MPs are generally the first Soldiers the public sees when coming onto an installation," Meyer explained. "They represent the entire base, and if they look bad, the entire base looks bad. Even though patrolling on post is not a military police [officer's] primary mission, that is what the public sees."

MPs need to have the ability to remain calm under stressful situations, think and react quickly, and interact well with people.

"We are the experts on crowd control and dealing with the public," explains SSG Jason Bucklew of the 269th Military Police Company, Tennessee Army National Guard. "We have to be calm and think before we act.

during peacetime—maneuver and mobility support, area security, internment and resettlement, police intelligence, and the most well-known: law and order operations," White continued. "These five functions can provide a combatant commander with the needed support and information to complete many Army missions."

"We sometimes joke that MP stands for 'multi-purpose,'" White added.

Expertise in these missions is what gives the military police its flexibility, and White is a perfect example of expertise and flexibility in action. From December

We are given numerous tools for the escalation of force and are mandated to contain a situation with the least amount of force necessary.”

“As an MP in the National Guard,” Meyer explained, “I have experienced a lot of different law-enforcement-related situations, whether working in Germany during annual training as a regular patrolman investigating a fatality accident in Bosnia, or patrolling Main Supply Routes (MSRs) and escorting convoys. As an MP in the National Guard, you get the opportunities to use your skill sets both in the garrison environment and in the field.”

Meyer has made three overseas deployments since 9/11 with the Kansas National Guard. He first deployed to Bosnia as a traffic investigator at Eagle Base. While there, he responded to numerous vehicle accidents along roads that constantly had a threat of landmines.

Next, he deployed to Kosovo as the MP station commander and traffic accident investigator. “We experienced cases from shoplifting and organized crime on and off post, to deadly fuel explosions and fatality accidents,” Meyer shared.

Next, he deployed to Kosovo again for KFOR 9, where he was the noncommissioned officer (NCO) in charge of the Joint Law Enforcement Liaison Team (JLELT).

“JLELT was unique to the Army because it was the only team of its kind,” Meyer explained. “Our main function was to be the liaison for the Provost Marshal and the commanding general of Multi-National Task Force East to the local law enforcement senior staff in the region, who were responsible for more than 1,200 Kosovo police service officers. Our duties consisted of gathering law-enforcement-related information, analyzing the data and coordinating with all involved.”

While in Kosovo, Meyer witnessed firsthand the country gaining its independence. “I had the unique experience of seeing the birth of the newest nation in the world,” Meyer said.

SETTING THE EXAMPLE

As Meyer and all MPs know, MPs have to follow all policies and procedures, always. Those charged with the responsibility of correcting others’ deficiencies and enforcing policy must be doing it better and cleaner than everyone else.

“When I was working at Fort Campbell before deploying to Iraq, I had to be on top of my game, always,” SSG Jason Bucklew said. “When you pulled over a general’s wife for speeding, you had to ensure everything was done perfectly and professionally, because you would definitely hear about it if you didn’t. Also, everyone expects military policemen to be subject matter experts on rules, regulations and policies, because that is part of our job—enforcing them.”

In order to enforce the laws, military police have to obey them as well. All MPs need to have clean records so they can obtain a secret security clearance. Candidates also need a minimum score of 92 in the Skilled Technician aptitude area on the ASVAB, among other educational requirements.

MPs need to be able to think quickly. They have to have a working knowledge of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. MPs might have to interview witnesses and document evidence at crime scenes, as well as arrest and charge criminals.

“There is no greater responsibility than having the ability to restrict or take away someone’s civil rights,” Bucklew said.



SPEED BUSTER
SFC Kirk Meyer operates a radar gun on base while in Kosovo.

THE BEST WITHIN THE BEST

Once a Soldier is a military police officer, there are numerous opportunities to excel and be part of some high-speed units. As MSG White demonstrated, being in an MP unit is challenging and constantly hectic. But there are other positions to excel within the field.

First, most units within the National Guard are combat support MP companies. MPs operate in three-person teams, with each team assigned a Humvee. Normally each team will have an MK-19 40 mm grenade launcher, an M-249 SAW, two M-4 carbines or M-16s, a 203 grenade launcher, and each Soldier has a 9 mm Beretta. Squad leaders are often assigned a 12-gauge shotgun as well. That is a lot of firepower for three Soldiers.

These companies mostly focus on operations within a combat theater. Since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom, units have been proving their mettle on the battlefield. In 2005, the 32nd Military Police Company from the Wisconsin National Guard was awarded the Valorous Unit Award (VUA), which is equivalent to an individual Silver Star, for “extraordinary heroism in action when they were deployed in and around Baghdad, Iraq.” Other units, like the 168th Military Police Battalion, Tennessee Army National Guard, and the 649th Military Police Company from California, have also earned the VUA.

Some military police units have received the highest honor that can be bestowed. The 1165th Military Police Company, based in Fairhope and Brewton, became the first Alabama National Guard unit to be awarded the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC), for its 14-month deployment to Iraq, conducting a variety of different missions, including force protection, IED sweeps and training the Iraqi National Police. The degree of heroism needed to receive the PUC is equivalent to an individual awarded the Distinguished Service Cross (DSC), which is second only to the Medal of Honor.

Individual military police Soldiers have been performing heroically on the battlefield as well. SSG Timothy F. Nein from the 617th Military Police Company, Kentucky Army National Guard, was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his actions in Iraq on March 20, 2005, during the Battle of Salman Pak. He heroically led his squad “Raven 42” against a much larger insurgent force ambushing a 30-truck convoy. The enemy was concealed in an irrigation ditch and

KANSAS ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

orchard, which Nein attacked, resulting in 27 enemy fighters killed and seven captured. He was the first National Guard Soldier to receive the DSC in the Global War on Terror.

SGT Leigh Ann Hester was awarded a Silver Star for her actions during the battle, making her the first female Soldier awarded the Silver Star since WWII. SPC Ashley Pullen was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor during the battle, making Pullen and Hester the first women in U.S. history awarded medals for valor in combat. SPC William Haynes and SPC Casey Cooper received Bronze Stars for valor during the ambush, and medic Jason Mike received the Silver Star as well.

There are a few MP companies that are configured differently than the ones mentioned above. They specialize in internment and resettlement operations or are Guard companies that focus on securing installations or important facilities and areas. There are battalions and brigades within the Guard that focus on specific missions as well.

Law-and-order detachments and liaison teams are a few of the other units within various states. Some states have Criminal Investigation Division Detachments. Made up of officers, NCOs and warrant officers, these teams are the Army's "detectives," specializing in investigating and solving crimes.

There are also a number of specialty positions to which Soldiers can be assigned. There are criminal investigations special agents who specialize in investigating felony-level crimes and criminal activities that relate to espionage, terrorism and treason. Other duties include gathering criminal intelligence and supporting forensic laboratories.

the garrison MPs. Lastly, he was sent back to Kosovo as a member of the PSD team for the KFOR 9 commander of Multi-National Task Force East. "Being in the military police has given me the chance to experience some really cool stuff and go to schools not normally offered to other Soldiers," Ralston said.

SKILLS THAT TRANSLATE INTO CIVILIAN LIFE

Many Soldiers get to use these skills in the civilian world. In the Guard, you'll find many military police officers who are city police, federal agents, sheriff's deputies and correctional officers. Being an MP provides valuable experience in law enforcement and will help Soldiers wanting to get a job with their local police department.

"I work as a civilian police officer, so my experience as an MP translates over to my work," Ralston said. "I find that I have a little more in my mental toolbox that I can call on while on duty. My experiences have showed me how special our way of life is and how important it is to do my duty. I have also found that it has helped me become a better person.

"I think being a MP helped me with starting a career in law enforcement, due to the maturity I gained in the National Guard. Another big help was knowing how to work as a member of a team, putting the mission first." Ralston added, "I think that, due to my Guard experience, I brought maturity to the job and also the ability to make decisions under stress."

SGT Gitanja Williams explained, "Being an MP helped prepare me mentally and physically for the job, and I got to hone skills that I would use at the academy and on the street. When I applied to be a Memphis police officer, my experience in the military played a big part in getting on the force. Most police agencies are structured like the military, and they want people who already know the system and have the discipline and professionalism that you learn in the Guard."

Overall, the main reasons Soldiers join the Military Police Corps are to "Assist, Protect, and Defend" their fellow Soldiers and their country, and to be a part of the team.

"I love being a part of a brotherhood that is unlike any other," Williams said. "There is a camaraderie and professionalism within the corps that I have never found anywhere else."

"I would tell a new recruit who wanted to join the Military Police Corps, 'Welcome to the brotherhood. You will make friends here that will last a lifetime,'" Ralston said.

Whether at home, at war, or conducting stability and support operations, military police Soldiers are dedicated to setting a standard of excellence while helping those in need. **GX**

CPT Darrin Haas was commander of the 269th Military Police Company, Tennessee Army National Guard. He deployed to Iraq, and mobilized for Hurricane Katrina and two Operation Jump Start missions. Haas is now a Public Affairs Officer with the Tennessee Army National Guard.

“I THINK BEING AN MP HELPED ME WITH STARTING A CAREER IN LAW ENFORCEMENT.”

>> SSG Joe Ralston, Kansas Army National Guard

There are military police investigators who investigate non-felony crimes. Traffic investigators are Soldiers specially trained in investigating and sometimes recreating traffic accidents. Using special tools and skills, they can determine vehicle speeds based on skid marks and impact damage, among other factors. They also specialize in traffic laws and safety.

There are only a few Military Working Dog (MWD) handlers in the Guard, mostly in Connecticut, but MPs get to interact with them constantly while deployed. MWD handlers care, train and conduct operations with their assigned dogs on essential missions. Most dogs are trained to search for explosives or narcotics. They are also trained in aggressive tactics to capture a fleeing suspect or to defend Soldiers.

Some Soldiers, like SSG Joe Ralston, a squad leader in the 35th Military Police Company, Kansas Army National Guard, specialize as a Personal Security Detachment Soldier. Ralston joined the Guard in 1994, and since 9/11, has been deployed overseas three times as well as one deployment stateside.

Ralston's first deployment was to Bosnia for SFOR 13 as a member of the Personal Security Detachment (PSD) for the SFOR commander, a three-star general. He then deployed to Kosovo during KFOR 6A, where he did PSD for the Multi-National Task Force (East) commander. Following those two successful deployments, he then deployed to Fort Riley, KS, where he ran the bike patrol team supporting

To learn more about MPs, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com.

The Bugler

STRENGTH MAINTENANCE



The Bugler is a tool to help Soldiers in all aspects of recruiting. From the Recruiting NCOIC to the Recruiting Assistant (RA), all new information about the latest and greatest recruiting tools and programs can be found right here in each issue of GX.

Info and photos courtesy of NGB-ASM

>> SOCIAL NETWORKS

FACEBOOK

User interaction continues to grow on the social media giant Facebook. The National Guard page swelled from just over 8,000 fans to nearly 27,000 fans in one week and continues to grow beyond 56,000. Users are able to chat with Soldiers and fill out a "Contact a Recruiter" (CAR) form from Facebook, as well as receive updates on Guard news, photos, blogs, events and more. To get plugged in, go to Facebook.com/nationalguard.



YOUTUBE

The National Guard-branded YouTube page launched in early August and features a custom video player, links to www.NATIONALGUARD.com content, a Path to Honor promotion, wallpaper downloads and more. The channel continues to highlight Soldier success stories from Guard men and women from across the U.S. To see Guard success stories, go to YouTube.com/nationalguard.



MYSPACE

The National Guard-branded MySpace page launched in early August and features interchangeable promotional areas, news feeds, polls, quizzes, a Path to Honor promotion, videos, blogs and more. The new page has a higher focus on user interaction and links to www.NATIONALGUARD.com. To get connected, go to MySpace.com/nationalguard.





>> **HERO ON CALL (HOC): GOING MOBILE**

HOC has seen a recent spike in activity with the recently launched mobile request for contact application. Previously, HOC has been receiving anywhere from 50–60 mobile requests for contact on a daily basis, but recently the number has shot up to an average of 161 daily contact requests. Going mobile has allowed HOC operators to connect with potential recruits by phone calls, email or text messaging, opening an avenue of discussion for individuals who do not have regular access to a computer. To get mobile, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com and click “Talk to a Soldier.”



“It is an honor to represent the National Guard both as a Citizen-Soldier and as a musician.”

—Darby Ledbetter



>> **DARBY LEDBETTER**

The Guard has a new Soldier, singer and songwriter representing all the men and women who fight under the Stars and Stripes. CW2 Darby Ledbetter of the Tennessee Army National Guard proudly released his song and music video “I Won’t Let My Guard Down” in August. A Texas native, Ledbetter has 17 years of service and three combat tours under his belt.



>> **BLACK OPS 350Z**

SGT Nick Ashby is back with the new Black Ops 350Z National Guard car. Almost four centuries after the first Citizen-Soldiers picked up their rifles and fought for freedom, Ashby creates a car to remind Americans of the valiant Citizen-Soldiers who have fought for the U.S.

Ashby enlisted the help of Nissan North America and 23 car companies to build a car that tells the Guard story. The highlight of the car is the hand-painted depictions by Corey St. Clair of Guard Soldiers in America’s six major conflicts—WWI, WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm and the War on Terror—on the driver-side door.

To see the making of the Black Ops 350Z, go to YouTube.com/nationalguard. Check out Ashby’s blog at MySpace.com/nationalguard.





MORNING FORMATION
RSP Warriors line up in formation and get ready for the day's activities.

leadership during the transition from RSP to their unit after MOS Qualification (MOSQ).

The BHO Ceremony recognizes Distinguished Honor Graduates, Honor Graduates and award recipients to produce role models for pre-IET Soldiers assigned to the RSP.

BHO ensures the Soldier is administratively returned from training, transferred to their parent unit and provided sponsorship.

GALVANIZED IN GUAM

On a bright sunny April day on Fort Juan Muna in Guam, SFC George Franquez, RSP NCOIC, greeted the parents and loved ones of the Guam



AIMING HIGH
RSP Cadre explain the finer points of marksmanship to RSP Warriors.

Guard RSP with the traditional Guamanian greeting, "Hafa Adai."

While briefings on ESGR, TRICARE medical benefits, educational services, legal, J-1 and Family Assistance Programs generally held everyone's attention, the commander and command sergeant major wanted to convey a real-world idea of the training their sons, daughters, husbands and wives would undergo. The plan was simple and execution would be key. The families would get an opportunity to witness common weapons tasks associated with task training. All weapons training would be based on real-world scenarios.

Franquez, a Veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom, ensured training would reflect what could happen during an operation.

"It is important to me that we prepare these Warriors for every scenario," he said. "Train how you fight' is a reality. We simulate IEDs and everything. The training we give our Warriors makes a difference and that difference could be life or death. We want them to be as prepared as possible.

"So that the [parents] could see what their kids were doing," he continued, "we optimized the space on the parade field with a clearance area so

A Family Affair

Story and photos courtesy of NGB-ASM

THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU (NGB) FAMILY Outreach Program (FOP) believes the success of the Warrior relies on his or her family's support.

To enhance current outreach programs, the NGB Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) has created a four-phase Family Outreach Program (FOP). Its goal is to prepare Warriors and their families for Initial Entry Training (IET) in the Army National Guard (ARNG).

PHASE 1

The first of the four phases consists of a Warrior Enlistment Family Newsletter welcoming new Warriors and listing pertinent information for the family, including drill dates, emergency numbers and sponsorship programs.

PHASE 2

The second phase ensures that new ARNG families can receive information and assistance in a timely manner.

Tools include the Family Outreach Guide and the completion of an RSP Family Data Sheet. The Family Outreach Guide will provide fingertip information on what the Guard expects from

Warriors, and the benefits it offers to Soldiers and families.

PHASE 3

The third phase, Shippers Night (SN) Family Outreach Supplemental, is a combination of newsletters and digital media that display the challenges at Basic Training.

SN includes a question-and-answer session between families and cadre, or other designated subject matter experts, to minimize fear of the unknowns of Initial Entry Training (IET).

SN provides full visibility on all IET matters—preparation activities, the training itself and any changes the family can expect afterward.

Cadre will ensure families have the knowledge and material they need to prepare mentally and administratively for entry into the ARNG family. The briefing informs families about upcoming training, Family Day activities and unit meetings that families can attend and assist with throughout the training year.

PHASE 4

The fourth and final phase culminates in the Battle Hand-Off Ceremony (BHO). The primary goal of the BHO is to provide Warriors continuous

"FROM THE BEGINNING, WE LET [FAMILIES] KNOW HOW IMPORTANT THEIR ROLE IS IN THEIR WARRIOR'S SUCCESS."

>> Stephanie Wilson, Maryland RSP Contract Manager

“IT IS IMPORTANT TO ME THAT WE PREPARE THESE WARRIORS FOR EVERY SCENARIO.”

>> SFC George Franquez, RSP NCOIC

they could watch up close and take photos. They got a big kick out that.”

THE HEAT WAS ON

Although it was early April, the Guamanian sun beat down heavily as families watched their Warriors operate the diverse weaponry.

A Canopy and Tree Bar (Wet Station) was constructed early and used heavily because, although the 96-plus Warriors were used to the rigors of training in the elements, their family members were not.

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS

The Guam RSP counts its strength as its greatest asset. “Since the [beginning of the] fiscal year, we’ve consistently had more than 90 Warriors in attendance,” Franquez commented. “The key to keeping it high is keeping our families involved.”



A SIGHT TO SEE
Family members of recruits watch their loved ones begin the transition from civilian to Soldier.

Across the ocean, nestled in the lush greenery of the historic Montrose Mansion, is the Maryland National Guard (MDARNG) RSP Headquarters. Every quarter, the MDARNG-RSP holds a Family Day, when families can come to Camp Fretterd to meet the cadre and receive briefings.

“When we have our family briefing, we usually start with the commander telling the families what they can expect from our training and how they play an integral part in keeping the Warriors motivated,” explained Stephanie Wilson, Maryland RSP Contract Manager. “From the beginning, we let them know how important their role is in their Warrior’s success.

“We also have a very good relationship with the state Family Readiness Group (FRG) and ask their representatives to come out and give an FRG briefing,” she continued. “We want the families to know we take care of our own here in Maryland and that, while their loved one is a part of our organization, they are, too.”

It’s important to the Maryland RSP cadre that family members’ minds are put at ease. With family stress minimized, Warriors can concentrate on preparing for Basic Training and AIT.

The RSP in Maryland has a hands-on approach to incorporating the family into the fabric of the MDARNG. In addition to Family Night at Headquarters, families receive unit information, including their point of contact. **GX**

READY TO MOUT

RSP Warriors stand in formation as they prepare to conduct MOUT drills.



Watch video of RSP Warriors at
[YouTube.com/nationalguard](https://www.youtube.com/nationalguard)

Shouldering the Load

RSP WARRIORS TAKE HEART IN RESCUE CARRY TRAINING

Story and photo by Clint Wood | JOHNSON CITY, TN

PRETEND YOUR FELLOW SOLDIERS ARE “wounded” and carry them to safety.

That was the task for RSP Warriors of the East Tennessee Region who were undergoing rescue training.

In the exercise, teams of Warriors ran the length of a soccer field using several carrying techniques, including a fireman’s carry and a backpack carry. The fireman’s carry is where Warriors carry wounded people over their shoulder, holding their right leg and left hand.

The Soldiers formed teams of four to five and began the drill. In a second, an easy task became a life-and-death situation.

“You’re dead, a sniper just took you out!” shouted SSG Ken Weichert. Weichert, *GX*’s Fitness Master, is the Fitness Director for the Tennessee Army National Guard. The Soldiers dropped onto the soccer field as if they had stepped onto an ice rink without skates.

Pointing to various Warriors directly, Weichert shouted, “Take action! Some of you return fire! A couple of you need to start medical aid—now!”

PFC Richard Barrett of Irwin, TN, heard the message loud and clear. “I knew this was practice for actual missions. So you’ve got to do your best in the training so you can [be] your best when the time comes,” said Barrett, a cavalry scout and YMCA lifeguard.

“If something does happen when your battle buddy goes down, it’s up to you to get them out of there and make sure they stay safe,” he continued.

The exercise culminated in the carrying of a wounded Warrior while providing cover.

INFANTRY MOS PLAYS ROLE

SSG Robby Johnson, one of the senior RSP cadre, based this training on the U.S. Army regulation that requires Soldiers with the 11B MOS (Infantry) to occasionally raise and carry a 160-pound person on their back.

Johnson knows about training these Warriors. He has been an instructor for the last

five years and was involved in the region’s first RSP cycle.

The 16-year Guard Veteran stressed setting the example. He played the role of the Warrior in each of the three drills. The third drill was the two-man carry, where two Warriors formed a seat with their hands in order for their fellow “wounded” Warrior to sit in. “In a program like this, my cadre here feels like, ‘How can you ask a Soldier to do something that you can’t do yourself?’” he said. “They need to see you participate. Once they see that, they don’t question you the next time you ask them to do something.”

PVT Bobby Whatley of Alexandria, LA, knew the importance of the fireman’s carry. “If they were actually unconscious, you couldn’t tell them to get on your shoulder like we were doing,” he noted.

PVT Michelle Bunting, a 17-year-old supply specialist participating in her fifth drill, was impressed with the fireman’s carry. To make it even more impressive, she carried a female Warrior who weighed five pounds more than she did. “It was tough to carry her,” said the petite Bunting. “But [the technique] made it a lot easier. I would never have thought to carry someone like that. It made me feel strong.”

GETTING OLDER

Growing stronger is the reason 35-year old PVT Michael Jarrell of Sevierville, TN, decided to join the Guard. A Cannon Crewmember, he signed on in December 2008, to get in shape because, he said, he was “getting older.”

Jarrell was glad to receive this training before he deployed overseas.

“I will know how to grab [a Soldier in need] and get them out of harm’s way,” he noted.

PVT Joseph Southerland of Morristown, TN, a Signal Support Systems Specialist, was participating in his final drill. Southerland summed up the training this way: “I believe it’s imperative, because [when] multiple branches of the military are involved during deployment, everybody has to take care of each other.” **GX**



See success stories from these Warriors
at www.NATIONALGUARD.com

PHASE II SLINGLOAD

IT'S TEST TIME

Story and photo by SFC Ken Suratt

WITHOUT A DOUBT, phase two of Air Assault School (AAS)—“Slingload Phase”—is the most mentally challenging of all the phases.

Preparation, rigging and inspection of the M998 HMMWV, LMTV, Cargo nets, Multi-fuel Blivets, A22 Cargo Bag and the M149 Water Trailer are part of the training, and those are just some of the pieces of equipment used.

Students have two minutes to conduct a complete inspection and identify three of four deficiencies that could render the slingload unsafe for transport.

Warrior Training Center (WTC) cadre offered the following advice for AAS students: “There is a methodical and systematic approach to each piece of equipment that they will be tested on. If they follow the instructions and training taught here at the course, they don’t have any problems. When a student starts to deviate from that, they start to miss deficiencies.”

Upon successful completion of the phase two testing, students will conduct an actual hook-up of a slingload underneath a CH-47 or UH-60 aircraft. **GX**



CARRYING HER WEIGHT

PVT Michelle Bunting said the fireman’s carry made it easy to carry someone heavier than she is.



TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE

An AAS student checks proper routing of a cargo net.

Awarding Your Employer

By MAJ Elaine M. Gullotta

CPT DONNA KUSTER was mobilized for a year in 2008. Her employer, Ms. Devlin, a senior manager at the company where she worked, was supportive.

“She sent care packages and letters, and arranged supplemental pay for me to make up what was not covered in my military salary,” Kuster said.

When Kuster returned from mobilization, she got her job back. Shortly thereafter, she received a scheduled promotion, as if she had never left. She was grateful and felt lucky to be employed by a company that walked the talk when it came to military service.

As a manager herself, Kuster had seen the Statement of Support (SoS), signed by the CEO of the company, proudly displayed in the lobby of the bank. More importantly, she saw the memorandums he had sent to all the managers asking them to follow his example—to look for ways to be supportive of employees who were members of the Reserve forces.

Kuster wanted to publicly recognize both of them, so she spoke with her local Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) representative and visited the ESGR Web site to start the process.

THANKS, BOSS

The ESGR award program is designed to recognize employers for implementing policies and practices that are supportive of their employees’ participation in the National Guard and Reserves.

All employer recognitions and awards originate from nominations by individual reserve component members. Depending on the degree of support, the level of recognition can be a certificate of appreciation, presented by the employee himself, and rise all the way to the Employer Support Freedom Award.

PATRIOT AWARD

The most frequently presented award is The Patriot Award. This award is intended for an immediate supervisor and not necessarily the organization as a whole.

ESGR awards this certificate and a Patriot Award lapel pin on behalf of the Department of Defense.

All members of the National Guard and Reserve are eligible to nominate their employer for the Patriot Award through the ESGR Web site. A certificate can be provided to the service member for presentation or can be presented to the supervisor by the local ESGR committee.

Regardless of how it is presented, all nominated employers receive this award.

This nomination is also used by local ESGR committees as the basis for consideration to receive higher-level awards.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

The next award in the series is the Above and Beyond Award. ESGR presents this award for support that exceeds what is required by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA).

Examples of Above and Beyond employer support consist of providing pay differential, child care or continuation of benefits.

Employers are not nominated for this award by their employees. They are selected by the local ESGR field committee based on the write-up that was previously done for the Patriot Award. Typically, employers who have been recognized with a Patriot Award continue to provide support. Many also

increase the level of support they provide. This award is intended to reward that increased level of support and is presented to employers by the local ESGR committee.

PRO PATRIA

The next award in the series is the Pro Patria Award. Like the Above and Beyond Award, employees do not nominate employers for this award. It’s presented by the local ESGR committee and is the highest award that a local committee may bestow upon employers in their purview.

To be eligible, an employer must have received a Patriot Award, an Above and Beyond Award, and must have signed a Statement of Support.

It is presented to employers who demonstrate exceptional support for national defense by adopting personnel policies that make it easier for employees to participate in the National Guard and Reserves.

This award is competitive, as each ESGR local committee may give only one Pro Patria award annually in each of the following three categories: public sector, large employer and small employer.

STATEMENT OF SUPPORT

Service members should consider their employers as a strategic partner who supports their efforts to serve our nation. One effective way to bring employers into the partnership is to encourage them to sign and display an ESGR Statement of Support (SoS).

An SoS is not an award. It is more of a promise, or contract, between the employer and ESGR. Signing and displaying an SoS is a visual reminder that an employer is doing his or her part in supporting the nation by supporting military employees.

EMPLOYER SUPPORT FREEDOM AWARD

The most prestigious award is the Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

This special award is presented annually to 15 employers, and is designed to recognize unique support to National Guard and Reserve employees.

Nominations for the Freedom Award are accepted on the FreedomAward.mil Web site, but only during the open season, which is typically November through January.

Then a rigorous national review process is conducted, identifying the top 168 potential recipients.

In the spring, the National Committee of Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (NCESGR) facilitates a selection board of reserve component general officers and civilian business industry leaders that identifies the final 15 recipients.

Only the nation’s most supportive employers receive this award, which is presented at a black-tie dinner ceremony held in Washington, DC, each September.

After learning more about the four types of employer awards available, Kuster immediately nominated Ms. Devlin for the Patriot Award. Shortly thereafter, when the nomination season was open, she nominated her employer for the Secretary of Defense Freedom Award and is now waiting for the results for the 2009 recipients.

“I spent a lot of time on the write-up for both of these awards so I could really explain all that they did for me” Kuster said. “Now, I’m crossing my fingers.” **GX**

For additional assistance with employer-related questions about ESGR or USERRA, visit Esgr.mil or call (800) 336-4590.



THREE OF A KIND
Mississippi's 1SG Curtis Earl Feazell (center) and his sons SFC Douglas McArthur Feazell (left) and SFC Kenley Earl Feazell (right), pictured here at Camp Shelby, MS, will deploy with the 155th Brigade Combat Team.

As for Kenley, 34, his second tour of duty will be at a separate location from his father and brother. Still, he said, he's thankful to have two important men in his life fighting the same fight.

Kenley also said that his father played a significant role in his life and his decision to make a career out of the MSARNG. "My father has always been the male role model in my life," Kenley said. "He never forced me to join the military."

Kenley, a full-time active MSARNG Guard Reserve employee for six years, noted: "When I joined the National Guard, my father was already a first sergeant. His commitment to the Soldiers and the military as a whole inspired me to join and become a part of such a great tradition."

About to receive a degree in accounting, Kenley is a 1999 class 41 Officer Candidate School graduate from Camp Shelby. He plans to pursue an officer commission.

Both sons worked hard to move quickly up the ranks, and their father is proud of them. Curtis believes that each generation should be reared in a way that produces a better life than the previous generation had.

"I look at my sons with great appreciation and admiration," Curtis shared. "I never wanted or asked for them to be like me. I prayed that they

would be better than me ... raise their families better than I raised mine. That is what parenting and fatherhood are all about."

Kenley and Douglas had similar thoughts to share.

"Regardless of where life takes me and what success I pick up along the way, I owe it all to my father," Kenley stressed. "There is no way I would have made it this far without his support, guidance and advice. He's my hero, and I can only hope that I am raising my three boys with the same passion and toughness that my father raised me with."

"I would definitely agree with my brother," Douglas said. "My father is to our family what he is—and has been for more than 30 years—in the Army National Guard: the backbone. He spent his entire military profession taking care of Soldiers, and my brother and I had so much respect for that. We wanted that same fulfillment and appreciation, only full-time. Call it cliché, but it's like the old saying, 'Like father, like son.'" **GX**

Like Father, Like Sons

By SSG Raheem Lay, 177th AR BDE | CAMP SHELBY, MS

A MISSISSIPPI ARMY NATIONAL GUARD (MSARNG) father and his two sons deployed to Iraq with the 106th Support Battalion, 155th Brigade Combat Team, out of Monticello, MS.

Traditionally, many children have followed in their father's military footsteps. For the Feazells, that tradition is considered one of the most honorable decisions the sons have made.

1SG Curtis Earl Feazell has been in the MSARNG for more than 35 years. He chose to pursue a military career because he wanted to have a positive influence on his children, SFCs Kenley Earl Feazell and Douglas McArthur Feazell.

"I joined the military primarily for structure and [to develop] leadership characteristics," Curtis said. "How my children viewed their father was very important to me at the time, and still is today."

Curtis joined the Guard in the summer of 1974. Since then, he has been deployed three times, but this time is a little different. With

Kenley and Douglas by his side, Curtis said this is an experience like never before.

"I am very thankful for my boys, knowing what we as a military are up against overseas," he emphasized. "What an honor it is, to serve my country with two of my most precious gifts in the world."

Douglas, 31, a full-time, active Guard employee with the Headquarters Company 106th Support Battalion, is the readiness noncommissioned officer for his unit. Now preparing for his second deployment, he says that a combination of the military and his father's guidance helped him build character and leadership skills.

"If it weren't for my father, I don't know if I would have ever appreciated the military as much as I do," Douglas said. "My dad would always share with us the experience and benefits of being in the Army. At a very young age, I knew that my career choice was going to be the military."

To view family testimonials, go to [YouTube.com/nationalguard](https://www.youtube.com/nationalguard).

"I JOINED THE MILITARY PRIMARILY FOR STRUCTURE AND [TO DEVELOP] LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS."

>> 1SG Curtis Earl Feazell, Mississippi Army National Guard



LINE UP! Students at Pearl High School participate in the Guard Fit Challenge program.

Web site has more than 30 exercise technique videos in which Guard athletes—including Outstanding Athlete Program participants—guide visitors through basic and advanced workouts based on the FM 21-20.

The exercise videos can be downloaded onto a video iPod or another compatible device, and there are also exercise technique handouts to download and take to the gym. In addition to fitness information, the Web site also focuses on nutrition, including healthy recipes submitted by Guard athletes and other Soldiers.

At an educator's request, a Guard recruiter presents Guard Fit Challenge during class or a team practice. Guard Fit Challenge can be presented to up to 40 students at a time.

There are minimal equipment requirements, and the program can be done indoors or outdoors (weather permitting). There are 45-minute and 90-minute versions of the lessons, depending on how much time is available.

After introducing students to the APFT, the recruiter can return to present a cardio workout and a full-body workout that exercises the core, upper body and lower body. During the follow-on lessons, the recruiter measures the students' progress on the APFT.

While developing Guard Fit Challenge, the ARNG presented the program at Pearl High School in Pearl, MS. Students, teachers and coaches all participated, while a video crew filmed Mississippi National Guard recruiters giving the APFT presentation for a promotional video.

At the end of the day, both students and educators had positive things to say about the experience.

"Guard Fit Challenge benefits not only the sports teams, but our entire student body," said Mark Monaghan, baseball coach and advanced fitness instructor. "Participating in the program can make our students healthier and give them more energy."

And it wasn't only the athletic department that saw the benefits of this new program.

"Being physically fit makes students more confident and helps them focus in my class and throughout the day," said Mickie West, an English teacher. "Guard Fit Challenge establishes an attitude about fitness that will carry on throughout our students' lives." **GX**

Taking the Challenge

SCHOOL FITNESS PROGRAM SCORES BIG *By SFC Lloyd J. Bowers*

WITH CHILDHOOD OBESITY ON THE RISE and budget cuts eliminating physical education from schools, it has never been more important to motivate young adults to lead healthy lives. Guard Fit Challenge is a great opportunity for schools around the country to receive a valuable public service that can enhance their physical fitness curriculum. The program can also help bring health and exercise awareness to a school whose physical education budget has been cut.

Launching at the beginning of the 2009–2010 school year, Guard Fit Challenge is a new way for physical education teachers, athletic directors and coaches to get high school students excited about fitness. Whether students want to get in shape, stay in shape or improve their current workout routine, Guard Fit Challenge can help them achieve their goals. The program offers the resources students need to challenge themselves to improve fitness routines and start seeing results.

Members of the Army National Guard must be ready to respond to any challenge at a moment's notice, so they have to stay in top shape. To make sure they are physically fit for duty, Guard members are required to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT). As all Guard members know, the APFT includes push-ups, sit-ups and a 2-mile run.

The Guard Fit Challenge program invites high school students to find out if they're Guard Fit by teaching them the proper form for the three APFT events and scoring them on their

APFT performance. For students interested in improving their scores and tracking their progress, there are many online fitness tools and resources to assist and motivate them.

The Guard has developed a desktop widget and a mobile application for tracking APFT scores, as well as body composition and APFT score calculators on the program's Web site. The

"PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM CAN MAKE OUR STUDENTS HEALTHIER AND GIVE THEM MORE ENERGY."

>> Mark Monaghan, baseball coach and advanced fitness instructor



PUSH 'EM OUT! Students get down and dirty as they push their mental and physical strength to the limits.

To learn more about the Guard Fit Challenge program, visit GuardFitChallenge.com.

GET READY:

How to Prepare for Hurricanes

Courtesy of USAA

Military families may face unique challenges from deployment and other duties. One of those concerns is weathering a hurricane without having a spouse at home. It's important to become hurricane-savvy for storm season.

With extensive experience in addressing homeowners' needs before and after hurricanes, and a unique, deep relationship with the military community, USAA's catastrophe team advises Guard families to develop thorough contingency plans.

"It's critical for Guard families to have an evacuation plan because they live in a split world with one spouse possibly deployed, and children in schools," says Bill Chandler, USAA executive director, National Catastrophe and

Flood Operations. Chandler has almost 20 years of experience in catastrophe-related services at USAA, and previously served in the U.S. Air Force and Army for 10 years.

"The most important thing any family should do is make sure your plan focuses first and foremost on your family's safety," says Chandler. "Insurance can replace your house, apartment and belongings, but nothing is more important than ensuring your family makes it through the storm." Chandler adds that the plan should include a communication plan and location for meeting in the event that the family becomes separated.

Chandler further advises families to carefully consider the logistical and physical challenges inherent in preparing a home for a hurricane when one spouse may be unavailable to help due to military duty or deployment. He says plans

should be in place to safely evacuate a family and communicate with friends and loved ones before and after the storm.

Chandler says families should consider these questions in developing the plan:

- * Is there a family member in an area removed from the danger who can provide updates for both?
- * Can an affected family check in with the deployed Soldier through a common acquaintance or an employer?
- * Is there a pre-designated meeting spot if an evacuation occurs while family members are apart?

"Without a doubt, the more time and energy you invest in preparedness, the faster and less problematic your recovery will be," Chandler says. "And that applies to every aspect of preparedness, including managing insurance claims for any storm damage." **GX**



Hurricane-Related Tips For Guard Families



- **CONTACT** State Headquarters or your unit for any particular directions for military personnel. Be alert to guidance provided by the Office of Emergency Management serving your area.
- **ENSURE** your unit's designated point of contact knows your anticipated evacuation location, and develop an evacuation and family communication plan.
- **BUILD** a communication network in advance with neighbors, friends and relatives, and clarify how you will provide updates on your family's status.
- **CREATE** a record of your possessions, including purchase prices, dates purchased, serial numbers and receipts. Keep the inventory in a safe location. Consider consulting with your local JAG office for guidance on keeping these records safe during a major hurricane.

Check to ensure your property, renters and auto insurance coverage levels are adequate. Also, keep in mind that flood damage is not covered by a homeowner's insurance policy. A separate policy to protect against this risk is available through the National Flood Insurance Program.

Boost Your Brainpower

By Judith S. Harris, BA, MSN, CHES and Decade of Health Contributor

The term “brain food” has been around for a long time. People used to think that protein was brain food and would build a strong brain the way it builds strong muscles. Sometimes, you would even hear the brain referred to as a muscle, but it isn't. Times change, and science is rapidly increasing our knowledge about foods that actually do build and preserve brainpower.

The brain is really a complex network of nerve cells that are in constant communication with each other. Chemicals called “neurotransmitters” convey information from one brain cell to another.

Some substances, like alcohol, damage or kill brain cells, seriously disrupting brain function. Small numbers of brain cells are lost naturally throughout life, but this loss does not have to get faster with normal aging. Rather, most loss of mental ability as we grow older seems to be a result of brain cells losing the ability to “talk” to each other.

Now researchers are learning that there are substances in the foods we eat that help maintain the communication between brain cells, which may make us more resilient. Most of these substances fall into the category of antioxidants, and some antioxidants have a much greater effect on brain

function than others. The effect of antioxidants is measured in “ORAC” units (ORAC = Oxygen Radical Absorption Capacity).

Source: USDA
Agricultural Research
Service, Ars.usda.gov

DON'T CELL YOURSELF SHORT!

Studies in rats have shown that foods with the highest ORAC values have the largest influence on brain function, including a slowing of normal age-related changes like short-term memory loss.

One study where rats were fed blueberries showed that their ability to produce new brain cells increased significantly. What does all this mean for humans? It's one step in learning ways to improve brainpower through nutrition.

The rat model is usually successful in pointing toward what will work in humans. Since, during mental activity, our 3-pound brains use about 50 percent of our total oxygen intake, it's worth finding those natural elements that support oxygen use. The next step is conducting research in humans, and then getting a U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) review of the health benefits of high-ORAC foods.

Meanwhile, including these delicious foods in your healthy eating plan for their overall nutrition value is definitely a good idea! **GX**



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ANTIOXIDANTS
HAVE A MUCH
GREATER EFFECT
ON BRAIN
FUNCTION
THAN OTHERS.**

GETTY IMAGES/NORA PELAEZ

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TO A DEGREE

NCO STILL PLANNING ON COLLEGE—AND MUCH MORE

By Daniel T. Riggle, Program Manager, SOCGuard

SERGEANT JOSEPH HERBST chooses not to undercut his life experiences, nor judge the fact that he hasn't yet completed his bachelor's and master's degrees. "Everything happens for a reason," he said.

Indeed, Herbst believes that his choices have enriched his experiences both in the Guard and in civilian life. Currently the marketing director for the National Guard Bureau's Education Division (EDU) and Operations NCO for the Patriot Academy Project, Herbst pursued his first college courses almost 30 years ago.

He began his military career with the active duty Army in 1989, and in 2000, joined the California Army National Guard (CAARNG).

The son of a college professor, Herbst never doubted he would accomplish his educational

goals. In fact, he knew achieving a degree was expected of him.

1979: EXPLORING THE OPTIONS

Immediately after graduating from high school in 1979, Herbst attended a community college in his hometown of Laramie, WY. After "knocking around" in his classes there, he continued working and considering his options.

Two years later, he entered the University of Wyoming's television and broadcasting program, studying there for two years before leaving to enter Montana State University's television and film production program, with a focus on script-writing. At Montana State, he also pursued classes for two years, but had to leave to concentrate on family and financial matters.

It was after working various jobs and wondering how he might one day return to college that he decided to join the Army, spending the better part of his seven-plus years of active duty service in Germany.

Though he trained and served as a chaplain assistant, Herbst's attachment to a field artillery unit allowed him to learn how a line unit performs.

When he elected to stay in Germany for an extended tour, his service with U.S. Army Europe (USAREUR) Headquarters in Heidelberg allowed him to train and work with computers during their relative infancy as office tools. This opportunity would prove advantageous to Herbst's military career, as well as in his future education and career aspirations.

Returning stateside after years overseas, Herbst used accrued leave and took a break in service before re-enlisting in the CAARNG in 2000. Then an M-Day Soldier and again serving as a chaplain assistant for a field artillery unit in the San Francisco Bay area, his military career would evolve due to his existing skills and his willingness to adapt.

9/11 CHANGES THE LANDSCAPE

While he was performing active duty special work assignments at Camp Roberts, the events of 9/11 and the military's response altered his Guard career path significantly.

Tapped by a battalion commander, Herbst joined other CAARNG Soldiers providing security in northwest California, and later trained as a 44C Finance Specialist.

After completing training, he joined the United States Property and Fiscal Office at San Luis Obispo until he deployed to Iraq with the CAARNG unit on Sept. 11, 2004.

Returning to California a year later, he heard from a CAARNG battle buddy who had since joined the National Guard Bureau (NGB) and knew Herbst's writing skills would make him a strong candidate for a position with the ASM (Strength Maintenance) Division.

While Herbst hesitated to make a decision—he had little desire to relocate to the East Coast—his friend noted that the marketing department position for the NGB also involved direct contact with the Guard's NASCAR program.

OFF TO THE RACES

Herbst's love of NASCAR racing contributed greatly to his decision to join



STAYING THE COURSE SGT Joseph Herbst enjoys some time in pit road at Talladega Superspeedway.

COURTESY OF THE NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

"I CAN'T PUT A HIGH ENOUGH VALUE ON A COLLEGE EDUCATION."

>> SGT Joseph Herbst

the NGB in 2006, and his duties with NGB-ASM would prepare him for a transition to his current position as Marketing NCO and Patriot Academy Project Operations NCO for NGB-EDU. It was a position he felt "groomed" to do, and the move allowed him to rejoin LTC Diana Craun, a former commander under whom he served in the CAARNG, who is now the Director of the Education Division at NGB.

Currently in its pilot phase, the Patriot Academy will help qualifying students earn an accredited high school diploma while training for and serving in the Army National Guard. Students 17–18 years old who have dropped out of high school as seniors with fewer than 10 credits remaining to graduate join the Guard, receive Basic Combat Training and participate in the computer-based credit pick-up program in a military academy setting.

After six to nine months at the academy, participating Soldiers graduate with a diploma through Liberty University and enter Advanced Individual Training (AIT) thereafter, embarking on the rewards of a career and future educational opportunities afforded to all Guard members.

Among the program's many benefits is its contribution to the Guard of well-trained, college-ready Soldiers. But the academy also offers a potentially powerful alternative to the rising national high school dropout rate.

Phase II of the project will commence in June 2010, with 250 participating students and a goal of bringing 500 students through the academy, beginning in June 2011.

In the meantime, Herbst has never given up on his dreams of earning his own degrees and remains dedicated to education as a means of personal and career development.

As the EDU Division's first enrollee in the Army Vocational Technical (AVOTEC) Program, he is pursuing a Multimedia Arts Certificate through a course from Sessions Online School of Design in New York. This intensive online course involves non-linear video editing, Photoshop basics and

Web design. His success in this course will allow him to better serve the Guard and improve his civilian career prospects upon retiring a few years down the road. With his thirst for knowledge growing more intense as he gets older, Herbst

doesn't ask, "Why didn't I do this earlier?" He values each learning experience as it comes, whether on-the-job or in the classroom.

"I can't put a high enough value on a college education," he said. **GX**

Check out the Patriot Academy online at VirtualArmory.com/patriotacademy.

Q&A with SGT Joseph Herbst

by Christian Anderson

GX: Why did you join the National Guard?

SGT Herbst: To continue my military service after leaving active duty. I wanted to serve both my community and the country.

GX: When was the first time the National Anthem meant something to you?

SGT Herbst: As far back as I can remember, it has always been important to me and has never ceased to send chills down my back, and even bring a tear to my eye.

GX: What was going through your head on the first day of Basic Combat Training?

SGT Herbst: Oh my God! What have I gotten myself into? [laughing]

GX: You spent significant time in uniform in Germany. What was that like, serving your country in a foreign land?

SGT Herbst: It was awesome! My parents are both German immigrants, so in a way, it felt like "coming home." I would go again in a heartbeat!

GX: What was running through your mind on 9/11?

SGT Herbst: Very simply, "We're going to war." And I knew that life from that point forward would be forever changed.

GX: Were you excited to deploy to Iraq in 2004? What was it like on the ground there?

SGT Herbst: Excited? No. Scared? Yes. Ready and willing to serve with my unit? Unquestionably! We took an oath, and I take that very seriously! Life on the ground in Iraq wasn't always easy. I was with a support element out of California, so we spent the majority of the time on the base. But that didn't mean it was any safer than being out on a convoy mission. In some ways, it felt less safe, since you never knew from when or where the rounds were going to come. Anytime. Night or day. Anywhere. You never knew. For the most part, though, it was simply hot and dry, and one repetitive day after another. The money was good, though! [grinning]

GX: What was going through your mind when you saw the American flag flying in Iraq? What goes through your mind when you see it flying now?

SGT Herbst: In a word, pride! In Iraq, it was a touch of home and reminded me how proud I am to be an American. Here at home, it's the pride of having served this great country in combat.

GX: How important is it to you, especially after seeing the education system in Iraq, to promote education to young Americans?

SGT Herbst: Extremely important. It's an honor and a source of pride and satisfaction to not only work in the Education Division for the National Guard (both my parents were educators), but also to be on the implementation team for the Patriot Academy. What an opportunity!

GX: What is it like to work with the Patriot Academy? Why is this program so important?

SGT Herbst: It's an incredible opportunity, to be on the ground floor of such a fantastic program for America's "at risk" youth. To know that it's up and running successfully is an awesome feeling. This is history being made! This program is important, because it provides high school dropouts with a positive alternative to the situation in which they may currently find themselves. Not only do these Soldier/students complete their high school education and earn their diploma, they also receive the training, benefits and experiences afforded any National Guard Soldier. Since they're required to enlist and complete Basic Training prior to attending the academy, they are Soldiers. This alone is an achievement they can be proud of. Then, to earn their diploma on top of that ... well, the lifetime benefits go without saying.

GX: How do you feel when you put on your uniform?

SGT Herbst: Happy that, at my age (48), I still have what it takes to succeed in the military, and humbled to be working at the highest levels of the National Guard, with the amazing, wonderful leaders and coworkers I have the privilege of working with, on programs that have a direct effect on the 360,000-plus Soldiers who make up the National Guard. Life doesn't get any better than this! I'm proud to be an American Soldier! **GX**

Jump-Start Your College Enrollment

By Johanna Altland, Grantham University



The first step before beginning any enrollment process is to choose the schools that you want to attend and decide when you want to start your classes.

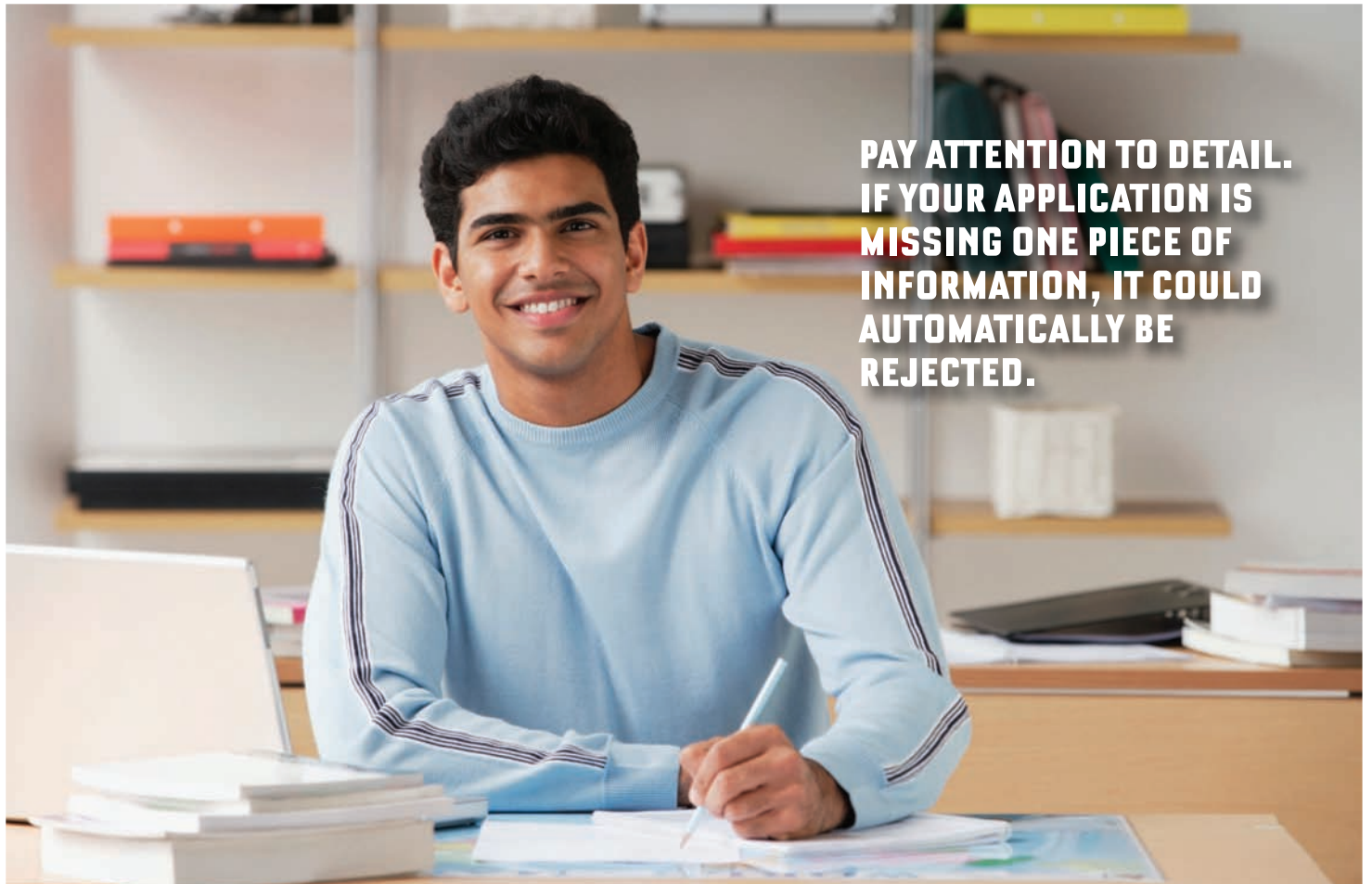
If you're applying to a traditional school, expect to begin the application process a few months in advance to meet any required deadlines before the semester starts. Typically, traditional schools accept new students in the fall and the spring semesters. Online universities often accept applications on a continual basis because of the flexibility of online learning. Some online schools enroll students once a month and some even once a week.

Once you decide which school is right for you, it's time to start the enrollment process. For some, this can be intimidating, but knowing what to expect beforehand will make the process a lot smoother. While every institution of higher learning has an enrollment process unique to its needs, there are still some commonalities that you can expect to see when applying: application, essay, transfer credit evaluation, placement tests and course enrollment.

Application

The application is one of the most critical items in the enrollment process. If you want your application to be considered, it's important that you follow the directions, complete your application thoroughly and submit it before the deadline—the earlier, the better. For most traditional schools, the application deadline for the fall semester is May 1, so you need to plan ahead and prepare your application early.

Be sure to dot your i's and cross your t's. If your application is missing one piece of information, it could be rejected automatically, and you may not be able to reapply until the next semester. Depending on your school, you may submit your application one of three ways: online, by mail or in person. If an institution of higher learning



**PAY ATTENTION TO DETAIL.
IF YOUR APPLICATION IS
MISSING ONE PIECE OF
INFORMATION, IT COULD
AUTOMATICALLY BE
REJECTED.**

has a preferred method for submitting your application, it's always best to select that option.

Application Essay

While not every school requires an application essay, it's important to be prepared to write one.

Ofentimes, an application essay is similar to a personal statement. It's your time to shine and tell the college why you are the right student. Focus on your strengths, abilities and accomplishments. Be open. Be honest. Be yourself. This will make you stand out and become more than just a name on a piece of paper. Also, avoid the temptation to use the thesaurus because using impressive words won't impress the admissions staff and could distract them from what you are really trying to convey.

Always, always get a second opinion. After you've written, reviewed and revised your essay until you are satisfied with it, give it to a friend or colleague to review. Ask for their honest feedback including what they liked and didn't like. They may even catch grammar errors that you missed.

Transfer Credit Evaluation

Whether you're entering college for the first time or returning after taking some time off, minimizing the amount of time it will take to earn your degree is important.

If you've taken college courses before, you'll be required to go through a Transfer Credit Evaluation to determine if you can get credit for any of your previous work. As a Soldier, you have several options for transfer credits: previous college coursework, equivalency exams such as CLEP, military training and your Military Occupation Specialty (MOS).

You'll be required to submit official or unofficial transcripts for the evaluation. If a school completes the evaluation with unofficial transcripts, know that you'll need to provide official transcripts at some point in the process.

Generally, an undergraduate college-level course completed at an accredited institution that is recognized by the Department of Education will transfer, provided that a grade of "C" or better is earned and the course is similar in content and scope to the work offered at your chosen university.

However, it's always best to talk with your chosen school about their transfer credit policy, so you have a better understanding of what courses are eligible for credit.

Placement Tests/Skills Assessment

To you, a placement test might seem like an unnecessary, burdensome step in the enrollment

QUICK ADMISSION TIPS:

START EARLY & APPLY EARLY

CREATE AN APPLICATION CHECKLIST

BE METICULOUS

FOLLOW DIRECTIONS

MAKE YOUR ESSAY SHINE

DOUBLE-CHECK EVERYTHING

YOU'LL NEED TO PROVIDE THE SCHOOL WITH OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS, SO IT'S BEST TO ORDER THEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.



process, but it's actually very important to your success in your chosen degree program.

Placement tests measure your level of competency in math and English and determine which level of math and English courses you should complete first.

In some cases, placement tests may be waived if you've successfully completed previous

college coursework or have acceptable ACT or SAT scores.

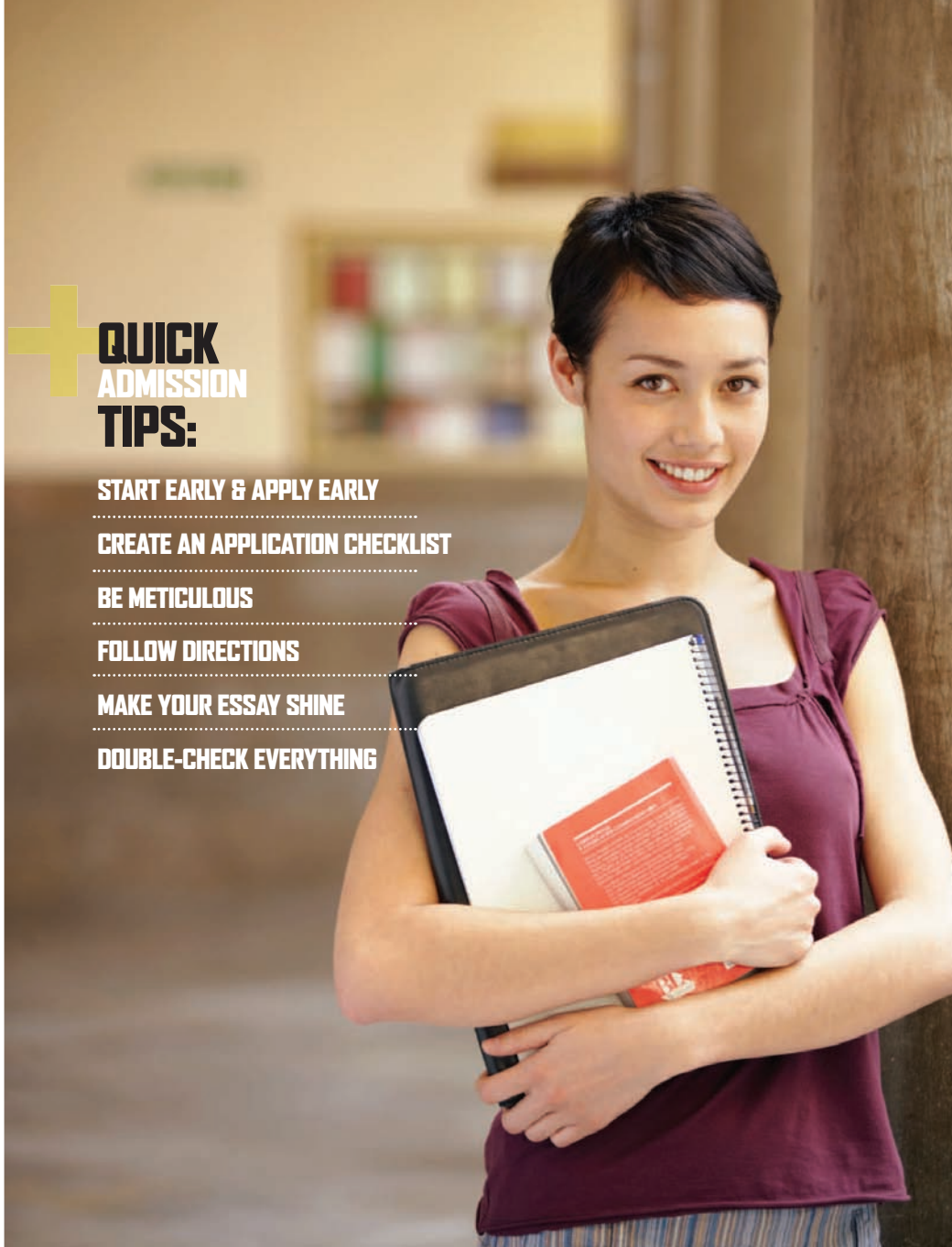
Course Enrollment

Once you've successfully completed the steps above and been accepted into your chosen college or university, it's time to select your classes.

In most cases, you'll be assigned an advisor or enrollment counselor to help you determine which courses you should select first, based on your degree program of interest.

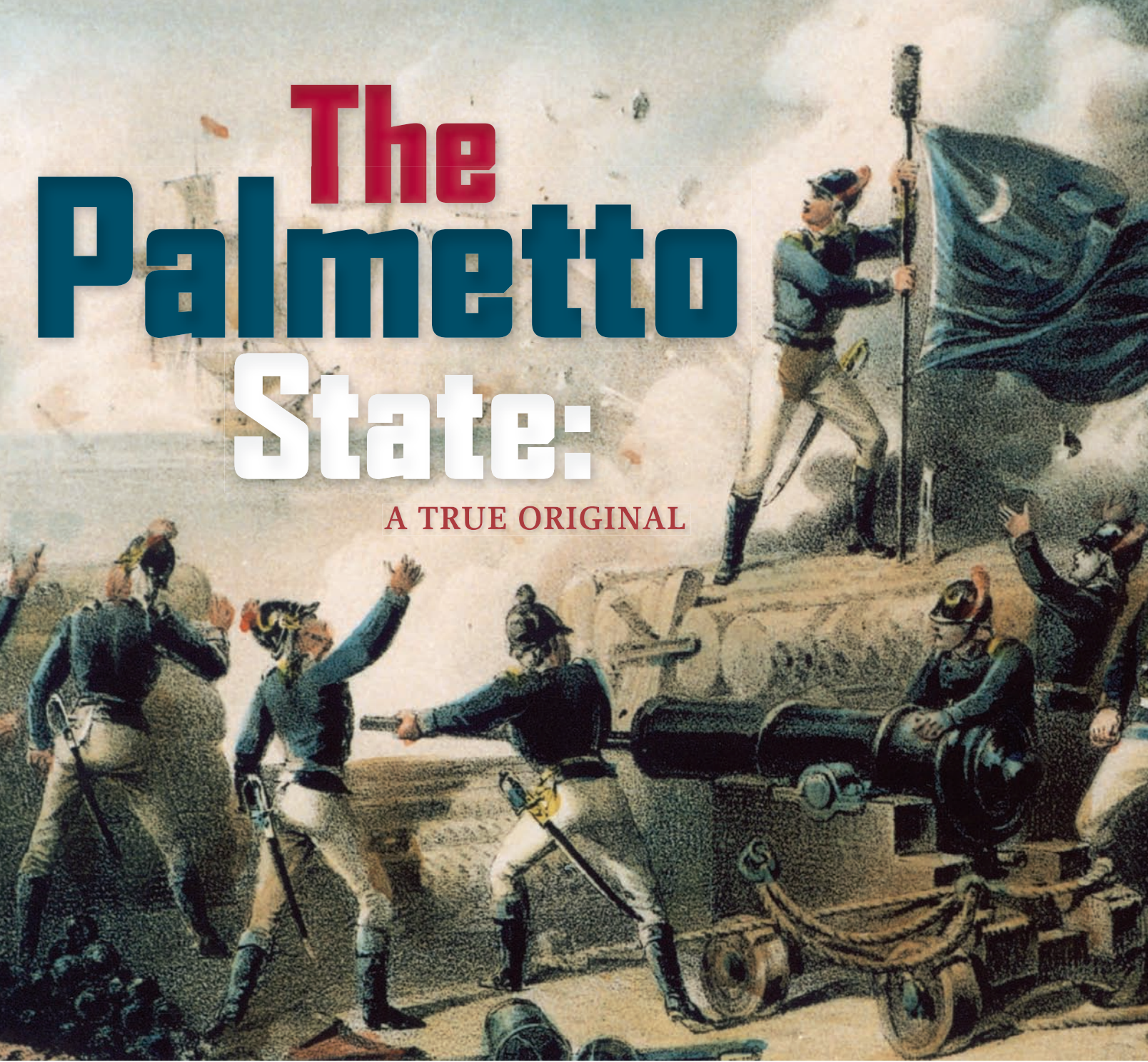
In addition, your advisor will work with you throughout your degree program to make sure that you are selecting courses that fulfill your degree requirements.

While some students say that the college admissions process can be a full-time job, you can make it a lot easier on yourself if you do your research and prepare as much as you can ahead of time. **GX**



The Palmetto State:

A TRUE ORIGINAL



By Jason Hall

THE SEAL OF SOUTH CAROLINA

contains the Latin motto *Animis opibusque parati*, which means “Prepared in Mind and Resources.” This is very appropriate when one looks at the long history of the state’s National Guard.

The story of the South Carolina Army National Guard began more than 300 years ago in 1670. As a British colony, the immediate threat was an attack from the Spanish forces based in Florida. During these early days, a Spanish military expedition from St. Augustine, FL, attempted to attack the British settlement at Charleston. However, the Spanish decided to turn back when confronted by the fortifications erected by the militia. This

was the beginning of the long legacy of the South Carolina National Guard defending its state and country.

In the beginning, the colonial militia was formed into regiments for each geographical area. As the colony grew, these regiments were subdivided into smaller units containing two or more companies in order to cover the expanding territory.

Colonial Militia

There were two types of militia at this time in Colonial America. All free white men aged 16 to 60 in the colony were required to be a part of the “enrolled militia.” Though the enrolled militia

provided a substantial amount of manpower, it was wholly unorganized and poorly trained. Conversely, the “Volunteer Militia,” though legally part of the enrolled militia, consisted of professionally trained units that met on a regular basis to drill. The volunteer militia represented the primary force called upon to defend the colony, and the enrolled militia was viewed as a reserve.

Originally, service in the militia was restricted to free white males. There was a pervasive fear, especially in Southern states, that arming free African-Americans and slaves would incite insurrection and pose a threat to the institution of slavery. However, as the threat of attacks from native tribes increased, the fear of African-Americans serving in the militia decreased. Due

ANNE S.K. BROWN MILITARY COLLECTION



SYMBOL OF DEFIANCE

SGT William Jasper of the 2nd South Carolina Regiment uses a cannon rammer to hoist the Crescent Moon flag, shot off its pole by Royal Navy gunfire during the failed British attempt to capture Fort Moultrie at the entrance to Charleston in 1776.

A month after the “shot heard round the world” fired by Massachusetts militiamen that began the Revolutionary War, the South Carolina General Assembly voted to form a Committee of Safety. One of the committee’s first acts was to authorize the formation of two regiments of infantry and one regiment of cavalry to join the fight against the British.

There were many in the colony who remained loyal to the king and wished to keep South Carolina from joining the growing rebellion. However, South Carolina sealed its fate on the evening of Sept. 15, 1775, when members of the militia captured the small British garrison at Fort Johnson. The militiamen hauled down the British flag and hoisted aloft a blue flag emblazoned with the word “Liberty” in the center and a crescent moon in the left-hand corner.

The color of the flag was chosen by South Carolina militia COL William Moultrie. He based the color on the indigo blue uniforms worn by the First and Second Regiments, South Carolina Militia. The crescent was symbolic of the crescents that stated “Liberty or Death” on the hats of the men of the regiments.

day, with the exception of the word “Liberty,” this flag remains the official flag of the state of South Carolina.

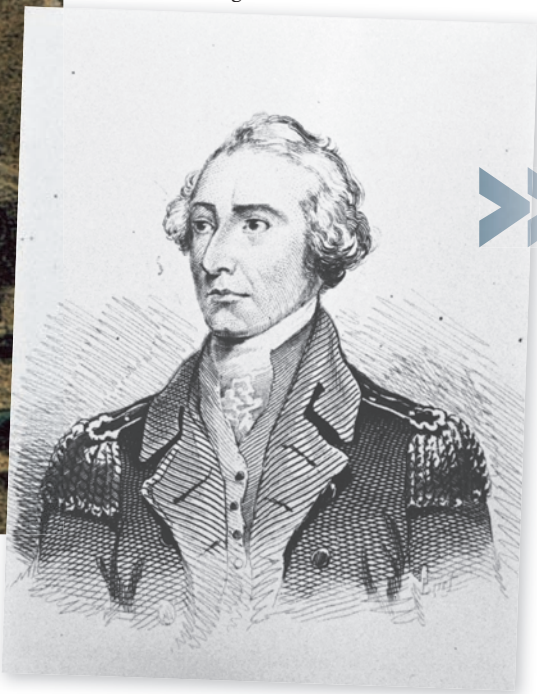
Charleston Captured

Despite the bravery of the militiamen in 1776, a much larger force of more than 8,000 British regulars, led by Lord Cornwallis, successfully captured Charleston in the spring of 1780.

On May 12, more than 5,000 American Continental Soldiers and militiamen surrendered to the British, the worst defeat of the war. Though the British attempted to tighten their grip on South Carolina, a small band of militiamen would prove to be a thorn in Cornwallis’ side.

Several militia leaders formed raiding parties to hamper the efforts of the British, the most famous being Francis Marion. Nicknamed the “Swamp Fox” by a frustrated Cornwallis, Marion would hide in the thick woods and swamps while conducting a guerrilla war against the British regular forces and Loyalists—colonists who remained loyal to the British Crown.

The confrontations between Marion’s militia and the combined force of Loyalists and British Regulars became increasingly violent and vindictive. The British began using terror as a weapon, with Lt. Col. Banastre Tarleton, being the worst offender. Tarleton was a cavalry commander with



FRANCIS MARION
—THE “SWAMP FOX”—
HID IN THICK WOODS AND SWAMPS WHILE CONDUCTING A GUERRILLA WAR AGAINST THE BRITISH REGULAR FORCES AND LOYALISTS.

to a shortage in white manpower, nearly one-third of the Carolina militia was African-American by 1705. In 1715, these African-American units, led by white officers, participated in a war to subdue the Yamasse tribe. Though they served honorably to protect the citizens of the colony, African-Americans were removed from the militia following the Yamasse War as fears rose again concerning rebellion of armed slaves.

Committee of Safety

The threat of slave rebellion and tribal attacks would be soon overshadowed by the colonists’ growing disdain of being ruled by Great Britain.

The British attacked Charleston in June 1776. A small fort made of palmetto logs located on Sullivan’s Island was the “linchpin of the American defenses.” The fort was occupied by the 2nd Regiment, South Carolina Militia, commanded by Moultrie. Flying above the fort was the flag that he had designed. Thanks to Moultrie’s tenacity, and that of his militiamen, the combined British Army and Navy force was repulsed.

In honor of their defense of the palmetto log fort, a palmetto tree was added to the flag. To this

reputation of brutality that included executing prisoners and giving no quarter to colonists attempting to surrender.

In retaliation against British brutality, the militia attacked a small British force on Oct. 7, 1780, located at King’s Mountain in the northwestern corner of South Carolina. The militiamen killed and scalped many of the prisoners, which convinced many Loyalists to stop assisting the British regular forces.

In addition to increasing morale among the American Soldiers, the actions of Marion and his men helped bog down the British Army in South Carolina. The story of Francis Marion and the South Carolina militia during the Revolutionary War was the basis for the 2000 film *The Patriot*. The climax of *The Patriot* is a very loose adaptation

Guard Legacy

of one of the most brilliant American victories of the American Revolution. Along the border with North Carolina lies a sparsely wooded area known as the Cowpens. Here, on Jan. 17, 1781, the Americans conducted their “tactical masterpiece” of the entire war. The Americans, two-thirds of whom were militia, crushed the British force commanded by the notorious Tarleton.

Other noteworthy South Carolinians arose from the American Revolution, including Pierce Butler, the state’s first adjutant general and the 40th signer of the Constitution.

Evolution Follows Revolution

Following the Revolution, the men of the South Carolina militia would evolve in many ways and learn new lessons during the War of 1812, the Seminole War and the Mexican War.

In addition to combat, the militia saw structural changes. Many states had begun abandoning required service in the enrolled militia following the War of 1812. By the 1840s, the South Carolina Militia had done away with its enrolled militia and was solely a volunteer force of trained and regularly drilled units, who would see combat in a war that would pit brother against brother.

The election of Abraham Lincoln to the presidency in November 1860 sparked open rebellion against the federal government by Southern states. On Dec. 20, 1860, South Carolina became the first state to secede from the Union.

As other states followed suit, federal Soldiers began evacuating northward. One force that did not leave was the U.S. Army garrison at Fort Moultrie. The Regulars moved to a more defensible position inside the strong walls of Fort Sumter in the center of Charleston Harbor. South Carolina militia forces occupied fortified positions around the harbor, encircling the trapped Union Soldiers inside Fort Sumter.

All hopes of a peaceful resolution were shattered by cannon fire beginning at 4:30 a.m. on April 12, 1861, when South Carolina militiaman LT Henry S. Farley fired the signal gun that began a nightlong bombardment of Fort Sumter.

Civil War

With the fall of Fort Sumter, the American Civil War had begun.

South Carolina contributed approximately 60,000 Soldiers to the Confederate States armed forces. Of those, more than 20,000 would be killed in service.

Due to an ever increasing shortage of manpower, the state decided to allow the enlistment of slaves into its ranks. As in colonial times, these African-American units were commanded



FORWARD MARCH Members of South Carolina’s Company D, 117th Engineer Regiment, an element of the 42nd Division, march toward the frontline trenches in France, September 1918.



WINTER OPS Soldiers of South Carolina’s 111th Signal Battalion did not let snow or high wind stop them from setting up their equipment in Belgium during REFORGER ‘86. Starting in the early 1970s, Guard units were rapidly deployed for training in Europe to prove to our NATO allies that American forces could quickly come to their aid in the event of a Soviet attack.

Militia Act of 1903

The Militia Act of 1903, called the “Dick Act” after Congressman Charles Dick, a National Guard Soldier from Ohio, was intended to modernize the Guard and supply federal support to each state’s National Guard.

Unfortunately, due to lack of federal funds, the Dick Act caused a massive reduction in the strength of the South Carolina Guard from more than 3,000 men in 1904 to approximately 1,700 by 1905. The year 1905 also saw the construction of the first South Carolina National Guard Armory, which was built on Assembly Street in Columbia.

In 1916, with the passage of the National Defense Act, the National Guard could now officially be called up by order of the president. President Woodrow Wilson wasted little time using his newfound power to mobilize the Guard in response to the threat posed by Pancho Villa along the Mexican border.

World War I

The training and discipline the men of South Carolina received during their service along the Mexican border would prove valuable when the U.S. entered WWI.

The South Carolinians joined Guard forces from North Carolina and Tennessee to form the new 30th Division, which would become known as the “Old Hickory” Division in honor of Andrew Jackson. The 30th was heavily involved in the Ypres campaign and the Somme offensive.

One of the units that distinguished itself during the war was the 118th Infantry Regiment, South Carolina National Guard. Six members of the 118th received the Congressional Medal of Honor, our nation’s highest military commendation. Of

the six, one of the most famous is 1LT James C. Dozier, who received the medal for action near Montbrehain, France, on Oct. 8, 1918. An excerpt of his citation states:

“In command of 2 platoons, 1LT Dozier was painfully wounded in the shoulder early in the attack, but he continued to lead his men displaying the highest bravery and skill. When his command was held up by heavy machine-gun fire, he disposed his men in the best cover available and, with a Soldier, continued forward to attack a machine-gun nest. Creeping up to the position in the face of intense fire, he killed the entire crew with hand grenades and his pistol and a little later captured a number of Germans who had taken refuge in a dugout nearby.”

Later, following the war, Dozier would become South Carolina’s 13th adjutant general and the state’s most decorated Soldier.

Following WWI, the regular Army turned over land at Fort Jackson in Columbia to the National Guard. The new training site—today’s Leesburg Training Center—would fill with Guard members answering President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s mobilization order of 1940. This mobilization, the largest ever in peacetime, was in response to the growing conflicts in both Europe and Asia. The attack on Pearl Harbor would once again call the South Carolinians to fight abroad.

World War II

As in WWI, the Soldiers of South Carolina deployed as part of the 30th “Old Hickory” Division. The division landed at Omaha Beach, Normandy, on June 11, 1944, five days after D-Day.

1LT JAMES C. DOZIER WOULD BECOME SOUTH CAROLINA’S 13TH ADJUTANT GENERAL AND THE STATE’S MOST DECORATED SOLDIER.

Spearheading the breakout from the hedgerow country, the division relieved the battered 1st Division on Aug. 6 near the town of Mortain.

The next day, the South Carolinians found themselves the focal point of the German counter-attack, intended to drive the Allies back into the sea. From Aug. 7–12, through sheer courage and resolve, the men repulsed the continuous assaults made by the 2nd SS Panzer Division and broke the enemy spearhead. The men from the Palmetto State continued their fight across Northern France and into Germany’s Rhineland. Once again, in the Ardennes, the men of the 30th repulsed a German counteroffensive during the Battle of the Bulge.



HIGHWAY PATROL
A convoy of Soldiers from the 218th Infantry Brigade patrol city streets in Afghanistan in 2008.

With victory in 1945, the men returned home to South Carolina. Peace would not last long. Many members of the South Carolina National Guard volunteered for individual service in both the Korean and Vietnam wars.

First on the Ground

The first to set foot in Saudi Arabia were two Soldiers of Headquarters Company, 228th Signal Brigade, from Spartanburg, SC.

On Aug. 9, 1990, SFC Palmer Burchstead and SFC Timothy Hester arrived to establish a communication link with the forces in Saudi Arabia and Third Army Headquarters at Fort McPherson, GA. Little did Burchstead and Hester know that more than 37,000 of their fellow Guard members from around the country would soon be joining them.

No one realized that the next place freedom would be threatened would be the U.S. The terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, caused the entire South Carolina National Guard to spring to action in defense of their state and nation.

Participating in actions such as Operation Noble Eagle, Guard Soldiers helped re-establish security, and more importantly, a sense of security in the hearts and minds of all Americans. With the initiation of Operation Enduring Freedom

and Operation Iraqi Freedom, South Carolina Guard members answered the call for service in Afghanistan and Iraq.

In 2007, SGT Jimmy Weeks Jr. of Manning, SC, left his job as a supervisor on an assembly line of an auto company to join his comrades in the 151st Field Artillery Brigade, South Carolina Army National Guard, being deployed to Iraq.

Like many Guard units, he has known many members of his unit for years, even before joining the Guard.

“I miss home, but I brought a piece of it with me,” Weeks stated proudly. “Some of my best friends are in my unit.”

Though he was dedicated to his mission in Iraq, he looked forward to returning home to his wife and children—and so did his taste buds.

“I am looking forward to family barbecues again,” he said. “I miss my mom’s mashed potatoes and my wife’s fried chicken.”

Weeks and the other members of his South Carolina unit were stationed at Camp Liberty, Iraq, northeast of Baghdad International Airport. It’s fitting that the camp be named Liberty, conjuring up distant memories of a blue militia flag emblazoned with the same word that, since the Revolution, has been faithfully served, and defended, by the members of the South Carolina Army National Guard. **GX**

The Soldier's Medal

Compiled by Christian Anderson



REAL VALOR, REAL HEROES

According to Army regulation 600-8-22, the Soldier's Medal is awarded to any person of the Armed Forces of the United States, or of a friendly foreign nation who, while serving in any capacity with the Army of the United States, distinguished him/herself by heroism not involving actual conflict with an enemy.

The degree of heroism required for this medal is the same as for the award of the Distinguished Flying Cross. The performance must involve personal hazard or danger and the voluntary risk of life under conditions not involving conflict with an armed enemy. Awards are not made solely on the basis of having saved a life.



SPC BEAU JORDAN
JULY 2007, AFGHANISTAN



OKLAHOMA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SPC Beau Jordan received the Soldier's Medal in July for rescuing two Marines from a swiftly moving river in Afghanistan in 2007.

Jordan, a SAW gunner with the 1/180th Infantry Battalion, was waiting—along with Hospital Corpsman 3rd Class Jeremy Hoyer—for the Marines to return.

Night had fallen, and Jordan could see the Marines begin the crossing by their red headlamps. "I thought they were going to be fine," said 22-year-old Jordan, who spent many summers as a lifeguard and is a certified scuba diver.

When he realized his buddies were caught in the current, Jordan jumped in after them, pulling CPL Joshua Kilzer to shore and then going back for CPL Robert Stoaker. Both Marines were in full combat gear.

Jordan said he "reacted instinctively" when Kilzer and Stoaker, both of the 3rd Marine Division, entered the Alishang River, which was swollen from an earlier rainfall, while returning from a mission with the Afghan Army. **GX**

SSG DANNY STANLEY
OCT. 25, 2006, KOSCIUSKO, MS



MISSISSIPPI ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

SSG Danny Stanley saved the lives of three people who were trapped in a fiery car crash. His decision to stop and risk his life to help them earned him the Soldier's Medal at Munford's Crossing on Oct. 5, 2006.

Stanley of the 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment, was en route to a mission at the Kosciusko Armory when he spotted the wreck. There were no emergency

responders on the scene, and no other drivers had stopped. So he did.

He signaled passing cars for help, but still no one pulled over.

A man with burns, bruises and broken bones emerged from the car, and Stanley pulled him to safety. The man pointed back at the burning car, indicating there were more people inside.

Stanley went back to pull

the man's wife and daughter from the flames.

Of the five people in the car, he saved three. If he hadn't stopped that day, everyone in the car would have died, authorities said. **GX**



SSG JUSTIN LAMPERT
JULY 7, 2007, LAS VEGAS, NV



WHILE VACATIONING IN LAS VEGAS,

SSG Justin Lampert of the North Dakota Army National Guard had just sat down to eat when he heard a popping sound and saw a crowd of panicked people run by. He realized it was something other than a nearby casino game.

Lampert noticed an older, bearded man dressed in a trench coat, holding a 9 mm pistol.

After being threatened by the man, Lampert ran after him, tackled him and placed him in a chokehold.

Lampert, already considered an American hero for his Guard service, is now a Nevada hero as well. He never stopped to think about the danger he was in as he prevented likely injury, and possibly death, to the innocent civilians at the casino. **GX**

On the Road

▶ DISPATCHES FROM THE FIELD

I was standing near the edge of the Fort Sam Houston Aquatic Center pool in San Antonio, TX. In front of me stood four Texas Army National Guard Soldiers. They were wearing Army Combat Uniforms with their boots on and facing their Special Forces (SF) instructor.



Story and photos by
Clint Wood

Saddle

INSIDE TEXAS' NEW SPECIAL FORCES COMPANY

The instructor said, "Do not touch the bottom; do not touch the sides of the pool. Is everybody OK to be jumping in the water?"

And so began the 50-meter swim test. This is just one of the events that made up a one-of-a-kind assessment—a Special Forces Assessment and Selection Drill (SFAD) last January. This no-time-limit swim test, where the Soldiers swam one lap, determined whether or not they had the aptitude to swim like a Special Forces (SF) Soldier.

The company—Charlie Company—is Texas' first SF unit, part of the 5th Special Forces Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne) based near Denver, CO. The company moved to Camp Bullis, near San Antonio, in September 2007.

Just having this company in San Antonio would make Alamo heroes COL James Bowie and LTC William B. Travis mighty proud. To refresh the memories of Soldiers who slept through high school history, Bowie and Travis led Soldiers and volunteers in a 13-day fight at the Alamo. These brave volunteers holed up in the former Spanish mission and held off a much larger Mexican army's advance into the territories that make up modern-day Texas.

So when these Green Berets go into battle, you can bet they will use "Remember the Alamo" as their battle cry.

BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

About eight SF Soldiers attended the first drill in an old rickety hutment building. When I was there, there were about 40 Soldiers drilling. There are more than 60 Soldiers in the company that have the Special Forces Tab.

Company commander LTC Tim (GX is omitting last names to protect Soldiers' identities) noted he had 49 Soldiers in the SF training pipeline.

He noted that most of his Soldiers are from the "Golden Triangle." This goes from Dallas to Houston to San Antonio. Other Soldiers are from Oklahoma and Arizona.

Several of the Soldiers were prior Active Duty SF. Tim's recruiting staff had notified Active Duty SF groups at Fort Lewis, WA, Fort Bragg, NC, and Fort Carson, CO, of the company.

"We had guys calling right and left," Tim said. "The quickest way to build an SF company is if they're already qualified."

Up

This company hit the ground running. Tim noted that about two months after the company relocated, five Soldiers deployed to Jordan. Five months later, 10 deployed to South Korea.

"Right off the bat, we were doing stuff, but we didn't have the equipment," he pointed out. "The great thing was Texas, man. They were helping us out

with funding and any equipment they could get their hands on."

SSG Brian expanded on how well the Texas National Guard has assisted. "Submit it, boom, it's approved and we go train," he quipped.

Texas is phenomenal for training areas, Brian noted. "I never realized there were that many places for the kind of training we do. They're there and always accessible because nobody knows about them.

"We never have a problem with aircraft," he continued. "This is one place you can go in the world where it's like, 'Hey, we need a plane for this jump three months from now,' and they say, 'OK, how many do you need?'"

"You know how it is—Texas pride, buddy. We take pride in everything."

The success rate for the Texas SF trainees is, so far, largely unheard of in the SF world. At Fort Bragg, 34 of 35 Soldiers have passed. The one who failed had suffered a course-ending injury.

If they graduate from the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC), they will join the company.

IT ALL STARTS WITH THE RIGHT GEAR

Applicants receive an email telling them what items to bring to the SFAD. They are responsible to either bring or mail these items.

Tim said this is the first test, designed to ensure that they can follow instructions.

"If they can't [accomplish this task], they're not going to do me any good," he pointed out. "I need to be able to count on them to go 50, 100 or 500 miles from where I'm at and operate on their own."

When the applicants arrive Friday night, rank is removed and they're given numbers. This is followed by a few written exams.

“I need to be able to count on them to go 50, 100 or 500 miles from where I’m at and operate on their own.”

>> LTC Tim, Company Commander

On Saturday morning, they take an Army Physical Fitness Test. They need to score a minimum of 229, with no less than 70 points in each event.

Early in the drills, most applicants don’t know what the assessment will entail. “At first,” Tim explained, “when a guy shows up, he has no idea what he’s going to do, and we don’t tell him.”

The instructions are written on a board and the applicants check the board intermittently. For example, this was written on a white board outside a building:

Formation: 1500 Building 888, Uniform ACU, boots, ruck, numbered vest, weapon, reflective belt, water.

These instructions were for the rucksack road march. The applicants didn’t know the distance, and the course wasn’t marked. The average time has been more than three hours. The rucksacks weighed about 45 pounds, and the M4 rifles were made out of rubber and had no sling. The applicants must carry this rifle with both hands (see “Low Ready” sidebar, pg. 77).

“We just tell them, ‘Go, and we’ll tell you when to stop,’” Tim said. “You see how well they’ve been preparing themselves and how bad they want to do it.”

After the applicants complete the assessment drill, Tim and the company’s sergeant major interview them.

Tim said Charlie Company isn’t in search of Soldiers who can score a 300, the maximum points in each event. Instead, they would like Soldiers who have well-rounded backgrounds.

“I don’t want to send anybody up [to Fort Bragg for additional training] who’s not going to be successful, because that just demoralizes a guy,” he said.

Applicants who fail the assessment testing but show determination and mettle are granted a second chance to complete the assessment.



CHARLIE PROFILE: SSG BRIAN

Brian was the first noncommissioned officer from the Texas Army National Guard to graduate from the SFQC in 2008. He was the oldest in his class at 38. The married father of four daughters started the assessment in April 2006.

“I was the first guy to go through,” this former Marine said. “They just got me in there on the information that there was going to be a unit.”

He was undergoing the Small Unit Tactics training when the company officially relocated to San Antonio. He was told that he would be a High Altitude Low Opening (HALO) team member. HALO requirements include exiting at 25,000 feet with full equipment and oxygen. High Altitude High Opening jumps are when Soldiers exit a plane at, for example, 13,000 feet and less than 10 seconds later deploy their chutes.

Brian graduated eighth in his SFQC class of 170 students. The course started with more than 450 candidates.

He noted that younger candidates had a harder time with the course because of their poor study habits. He pointed out that college students and older candidates did well because they knew how to study.

Upon graduation from the qualification course, he attended Skydive Coolidge, a three-week free-fall course in Coolidge, AZ.

Brian’s Marine Force Recon experience included deployments across Southeast Asia and Desert Storm. He was in the Marines from 1988 to 1992. Brian has more than 200 free-fall jumps and more than 70 combat dives.

He enlisted in a Texas Long Range Surveillance Unit after 9/11.

As a Guard member and while attending a parachuting course in Utah as a jumpmaster, SF Soldiers approached him.

Brian turned down going to the course twice. Encouragement by his wife finally convinced him to go through it.

“She told me, ‘You know you want to do it, go do it,’” he said.

(Left) **HIGH-TECH WEAPONRY** Special Forces Soldiers often equip their weapons with the latest gadgets and gear to help them accomplish the toughest missions.

(Below) **HAVE RUCKSACK, WILL MARCH** A Texas Special Forces Assessment and Selection Drill Soldier tackles a grueling rucksack march in hopes of becoming SF qualified.



An average of about four Soldiers compete in these assessments but as many as 13 have attended the SFAD.

TRAIN, TRAIN AND TRAIN

From start to finish, Soldiers interested in becoming SF Soldiers better be prepared to spend about two years training.

Applicants who pass the company’s SFAD at Camp Bullis must attend the Special Forces Preparation Course (SFPC) and the Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) at Fort Bragg within 60 days.

The SFPC at Fort Bragg is 25 days, the SFAS is 19 days, and the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC) has five phases: The 13-week Small Unit Tactics, the 14-week Language Training, the 15-week Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) Qualification Phase, the approximately four-week-long Unconventional Warfare Culmination Exercise (Robin Sage) and the final phase—graduation, out-processing and initial assignment within the Texas Guard.

Texas Soldiers will attend the preparation course unless they have demonstrated a mastery of land navigation and a superior level of fitness. The SFAS Course assesses and selects Soldiers for attendance at the SFQC. Soldiers not already Airborne-qualified will attend Airborne School prior to attending the qualification course. For example, a Medical

CHARLIE PROFILE: SGT JAIME

A former active-duty "Old Guard" Soldier, Jaime was one of the first Soldiers in Charlie Company.

Before Charlie relocated to San Antonio, Jaime had to commute to Colorado for his drills. He was living in San Antonio at the time and studying management in international business at a local college.

Jaime enlisted as an infantryman, intending to become a Ranger. During basic training, he took the advice of fellow Soldiers to join the Old Guard.

Around that time, 9/11 occurred, and Jaime's post-9/11 tasks included cleanup at the Pentagon.

Like most American Soldiers after the attacks, Jaime wanted to deploy overseas and "take the fight to the enemy." Unfortunately, the Old Guard is non-deployable.

"I wanted to have more of an active role," Jaime told GX.

He chose to attempt to earn a spot as a Green Beret in 2001.

He joined the 1st SF Group (Airborne) in Fort Lewis in 2003. He deployed with the group in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2006. He left the group that same year, intending to become a full-time college student.

He eventually enlisted in the 5/19 SFG (A) for education benefits and "just to stay with the community and be active with them."

Jaime drilled twice with an SF company in Colorado before transferring to a Charlie Company that hadn't moved to San Antonio yet. He said the company was an intelligence operations unit based at Camp Mabry in Austin. His task was to recruit Soldiers into the company.

Sergeants MOS Course Phase is 48 weeks that includes Language Block II training.

Tim said a lot of interested Soldiers want to join his company, until they find out how long it takes to become one of these elite Soldiers. Then they lose interest. "It takes a pretty [strong] commitment," he stated.

ROCK AND ROLL!

There is nothing better than sending rounds downrange.

The Charlie Company Soldiers spent Saturday morning learning about different scopes for their M4 rifles, including the Block II MNSD ELCAN Day Optical Scope and the Miniature Day/Night Sight Advanced Target Pointer/Illuminator/Aiming Laser.

That afternoon, they fired several hundred rounds at a 25-meter zero-qualification range.

Then they handed me a rifle. It was equipped with the day optical scope and laser.

Basically this scope emits a red dot that you place on the target, and that's where the point of impact will be. The optical scope was a reflexive sight (see "Reflex" sidebar). The laser projects the red dot onto the target.

When I stepped up to the foxhole, I was the only one shooting. It didn't matter to me, though, because I love shooting and have been doing it since I was 5. My first semi-automatic 22 caliber rifle was one that looked like a WWII M-1 Carbine.

Steven, the company operations NCO, said I shot well considering that the weapon was not zeroed to me specifically.

Steven said most of my shot groups were OK, "but left room for improvement."

But I was having fun shooting, and that's all there was to it.

Camp Bullis

- Established in 1917 to train troops in preparation for war
- Occupies 12,000 acres
- In 1926, two movies were made here—*The Rough Riders* and *Wings*
- Home of the Air Force Security Police Academy
- Has hosted Army medical specialists practicing combat medicine
- Supports the Combat Casualty Care Course for Army, Navy and Air Force medical department officers

"If we do deploy, this will probably be one of the better units going downrange, especially compared to the SF community," he said. "You've got some experience here that is just phenomenal." **GX**

MOUNTING UP

Tim said his commander's intent is to prepare this company for a deployment overseas.

"Our whole mission in life is to go downrange," he said.

To prepare for the mission, he had to ensure that each of the Soldiers had the required gear pertaining to their MOS.

"It's a very diverse mission," he explained. "It's just amazing how much training it requires."

Brian said this company has a lot of SF experience, with Soldiers from different phases of special operations, different parts of the world and varied backgrounds.

Reflex The term "reflex" refers to the fact that the aiming reticle (the dot, triangle, chevron, circle, etc.) is projected forward, from a point behind the objective lens, and is then reflected off the back of the objective lens assembly toward the shooter's eye.

Since the lens coating reflects exactly the color of the reticle, the reticle is very efficiently reflected back to the shooter's eye and is clearly visible against the target field.

Low Ready The butt of the weapon is placed in the Soldier's shoulder and is pointed down at a 45-degree angle. Their nonfiring hand grasps the handguards over the barrel and their other hand grasps the pistol grip. Trigger finger is outside the trigger well.

ONE STEP CLOSER

Soldiers participate in the Texas Special Forces Assessment and Selection Drill's rucksack march.

FAST FACTS

SFAS statistics

- > The average PT score for graduates is 250.
- > The overall average ruck march time for graduates is 61 minutes. (Soldiers had to carry a rifle, load-bearing equipment and a 45-pound rucksack.)

Find out more about Special Forces at www.NATIONALGUARD.com





MY BEST 10 DAYS IN THE GUARD SINCE BASIC TRAINING, AT LEAST

I finally got a slot.

After seven years in the military, I finally got an Air Assault slot. There aren't many of them, and I'd been trying for a long time. I finally did it.

I was signing my registration packet when it actually hit me—I had a lot to do to be prepared. I constantly checked the packing list and rechecked my gear to ensure that I had everything. I didn't want to be missing anything for the shakedown on Zero Day.

I reported to Camp Atterbury Joint Movement Training Center. First day was in-processing. If we were missing anything from our school packet, now was the time to get it. After we turned the packet in, we headed to the barracks to get our area set up and wait for tomorrow.

Zero Day

It was a cold, rainy morning as we stood in formation for roll call. As I stood there holding my wet-weather bag full of gear, a car pulled up and out came four Air Assault sergeants. As soon as I saw them get out of the car, I thought, "OK, here we go."

They filed us onto several buses to take us to the O-Course. When we got there, we did a walk-through of the course and saw what we would have to get "Gos" on.

As we started the O-Course, the only obstacle I was worried about was the Weaver. I had done it before in Basic Training and remembered how hard it was.



By SSG Alex Purdue,
Indiana Army National Guard

Everyone was very quiet while waiting for Sling Load Phase, and for good reason, too: Some had failed.

GO AHEAD AND JUMP

Soldiers rappel from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during the Air Assault Course at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, FL, March 5, 2009.

and the hand-and-arm signal test. The written test had a lot about weights, times and armament, so it definitely helped to have battle buddies there so we could quiz each other.

The hand-and-arm signal test was the easier of the two, but again, I recommend practicing with a buddy. Face each other and go through the different signals to get them right. Before the tests, we had a 6-mile road march to complete. It wasn't that bad, but you do want to road march a lot before going to Air Assault School if you're not used to it.

Sling Load Phase

This is the phase I'd heard so much about—the phase that produces the most failures.

It was all outside. We learned how to hook different loads up to helicopters so they could transport them, and we studied the sling loads for two solid days to get it right.

When test day came, I didn't feel 100-percent ready. This was the most stressful part of Air Assault for me, because I'd heard several people talk about how hard it was.

They took us out three at a time for the test. Everyone was very quiet while we were waiting, and for good reason, too: Some had failed.

Rappelling Phase

In this phase, there were no written tests. It was very nice to get a little extra sleep and not have to stay up and study. The only test was to tie a "Swiss seat" (rappelling seat made out of rope) in 90 seconds or less.

We were out on the towers each day, rappelling until the evening. It was fun, but for those of you that will be going to Air Assault School, when they tell you to "Tie your Swiss seat tight," it's in your best interest to do so, because you don't want to feel what a loose seat rides like. Trust me.

The last day, we got to rappel out of a UH-60 Black Hawk. This is what most of us came to do.

Standing on the ground watching people rappel out, I thought, "That doesn't seem very high." But when it was my turn up in the air,

I peeked over the edge and thought, "Hmm ... the pilot must have heard me."

Stepping out on the aircraft, I waited for the Air Assault sergeant's signal, "GO!" As soon as I saw it, I was out the door, looking down at the ground as it rapidly approached me.

"OK, brake!" I locked in my brake and was on the ground.

It felt like I waited three hours for five seconds of excitement—and, well, I did. And it was worth it.

12-Mile Road March

This was the last thing standing between us and our Air Assault wings.

The night before, everyone was prepping their rucks, making sure they had everything on the packing list. You had to have everything on the list when you crossed the finish line or you would be a "no-go" for the school.

SSG Ryan Wenk (my battle buddy) and I were obsessive about making sure we had everything. We even tied our canteens to us so we wouldn't lose them on the march. The Air Assault sergeants had told us how people had completed the road march only to be missing something on the packing list and be a "no-go." We were not going to let that be us.

The first 10 miles were fine; it was the last two that seemed to go on forever.

Graduation

Finally. I think those were the longest 10 days ever!

Standing in formation with the rest of the class, I looked around to see just how many people were not there. We lost several—including some I didn't expect to lose.

As graduation came to an end, family and friends in the audience came up to pin their wings on their Soldier. My father came up to me and pulled out his Air Assault wings from when he went through it in the '80s. As he pinned his wings on my uniform I thought, "This is a great day to graduate Air Assault School, but having my father pin me is the best part."

Then, "WHAM!" I was forced backward by my father's fist as he put all his weight behind his punch to pin me "the proper way." **GX**

Watch video of Air Assault at www.NATIONALGUARD.com.

I forgot about my worries as soon as I hit the first obstacle. I pushed through all of them until I pulled myself over the last wall. Then it was time for the 2-mile run. I was not worried about the run before we started the course, but now I realized I was a lot more tired than I'd expected.

I got done with the run. I was now done for the day and officially in Air Assault School,

Who does 400 sit-ups in a row?

right? Nope—not by a long shot! The rest of the day included several physical activities before, during and after shakedown.

Air Assault Phase

We woke up at zero dark 30 for physical training and then classes all day.

The instructors were PT animals. As my muscles cramped up, I asked myself, "Really? Who does 400 sit-ups in a row?"

The first phase was taught in the classroom. The only day we went outside was to practice hand-and-arm signals. We had a written test,



Prepping for Peace

Story and photos by SGT Amy Wieser Willson, North Dakota National Guard

THEY'VE SHOT WEAPONS, and received shots. Family care plans are in place and budgets established. Employers have been informed and have had more than a year to develop a plan. Universities have let out, but next semester's schedule remains empty for a number of student-Soldiers.

Now all that's left here is to say good-bye—or *dovidenja* or *mirëupafshim*.

But that's not all that's left. There are new people awaiting a friendly *zdravo* or *tungjatjeta*.

About 2,200 troops will be arriving in Kosovo for KFOR 12 this fall to help ensure a safe and secure environment. Nearly 700 of them—including KFOR 12's commanding general and headquarters element—come from the North Dakota Army National Guard.

It's the single largest deployment since the Korean conflict for the North Dakota Soldiers. While many units have deployed simultaneously for separate GWOT missions in recent years, the KFOR mobilization encompasses the largest single element to mobilize in more than five decades.

The North Dakota Soldiers will complement another 700 Guard members from across the U.S.; they hail from Arizona, California, Georgia, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, South Carolina, Utah, the Virgin Islands, Virginia and

West Virginia. The full KFOR 12 contingent is rounded out with more than 800 troops from 35 other nations.

"This mission will give our North Dakota Soldiers invaluable experience in not only forging relationships with the Kosovars, but also in working with other states' National Guard units in a shared mission," said MG David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota National Guard adjutant general. "The mobilization will surely leave Kosovo an even better place than when they arrive, but the life-long relationships built with Soldiers from across the United States will yield dividends for years to come."

STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE

It's a big mission, but it's in capable hands. In charge of it all is a man who is suited to such a job. Standing 6 feet 4 inches, BG Al Dohrmann brings a résumé and skill set that is as long as

he is tall. He's a skilled lawyer who has served as North Dakota's judge advocate general. He wears Airborne wings. Dohrmann was commissioned as an infantry officer more than 26 years ago and served in the active Army for seven years before joining the North Dakota Army National Guard.

He served as a JAG and engineer officer, rising to the position of deputy adjutant general before being assigned as the commanding general for KFOR 12.

Dohrmann has served around the world, having been assigned to the 1st Battalion, 48th Infantry in Gelnhausen, Germany, and to the 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Okinawa, Japan.

This won't be his first time to Kosovo, either. From 2004–05, Dohrmann deployed with KFOR 6A as the command judge advocate for Task Force Falcon.

"My experience as a Guard Soldier, especially my time in Kosovo, allowed me to get my arms around this mission early on and focus on our pre-mob training," Dohrmann said recently. "I have also been blessed with a talented staff and commanders, mentoring from prior KFOR commanders and great support from MG Sprynczynatyk, all of which will help ensure the success of KFOR 12."

"BG Dohrmann brings a wealth of experience, knowledge and skills to this challenging position, and he is abundantly capable of handling the responsibility of maintaining peace in Kosovo while ensuring the welfare of our Soldiers," Sprynczynatyk



DOHRMANN'S MISSION BG Alan S. Dohrmann will lead North Dakota's troops in KFOR 12.

said. "While he's focused on the mission's success, we'll help from our end by keeping in close contact with our Soldiers' families and making sure they're well taken care of—and that we're maintaining open lines of communication with them throughout the mobilization."

PREPARATION IN EVERYTHING

The KFOR mission isn't a new one to the Guard or to North Dakota. In 1999, the Wahpeton, ND-based Company B, 142nd Engineer

Battalion, mobilized to Kosovo, and in 2004, a North Dakota National Guard combat engineer team supported explosive ordnance disposal teams in de-mining operations in Kosovo.

COURTESY OF NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD

GET DOWN! A Soldier practices detaining a suspect. Although these Soldiers are public affairs and military police, they have to be ready for anything.



HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT Soldiers practice Combatives moves in order to stay proficient.



When the 142nd mobilized, KFOR was still an active Army-led mission; Guard units have played an important role in that mission since the inception of operations on June 12, 1999, when KFOR entered Kosovo under a United Nations mandate—two days after the adoption of U.N. Security Council Resolution 1244.

In March 2003, the National Guard assumed the mission's lead role for the first time, when the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's



GRENADE! Soldiers practice throwing grenades from a less-than-normal position on their sides.

“BG DOHRMANN ... IS ABUNDANTLY CAPABLE OF HANDLING THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MAINTAINING PEACE IN KOSOVO WHILE ENSURING THE WELFARE OF OUR SOLDIERS.”

>> MG David Sprynczynatyk, North Dakota National Guard adjutant general

28th Infantry Division took the lead. Guard units from across the U.S. have continued the mission's success for the past six years.

These previous missions, coupled with current events and situation reports, have combined to develop an extensive training program for the new KFOR Soldiers. Since receiving the notification in November 2007, Soldiers have been earnestly preparing to succeed in KFOR 12.

“When you have a task force as big as we have, and a rank structure as large as we have ... I think it was beneficial to have that year to come together as a team and work together to learn the things we need to do to succeed,” said MAJ Stuart Beckman, planner for Task Force Falcon, KFOR 12.

Training has encompassed a broad range of topics while moving from classroom to hands-on training and from uniformed to civilian

presenters. Units pegged for KFOR 12 distributed a five-page suggested reading list to all of their Soldiers in February 2008.

“It is vital we all spent the last year educating ourselves on the environment in Kosovo, and the history of Kosovo is part of that,” said CPT Dan Murphy, public affairs officer for KFOR 12. “We will deploy into a mature theater, so we need to understand the issues and what progress has been made. We will live and work in the communities, and the key is relationship building. That begins with understanding the environment.”

UNDERSTANDING KOSOVO

In April 2008, Dr. John Cox, a professor at North Dakota State University and head of its history department, spent a full day in Bismarck, ND, providing a lecture to a theater full of Soldiers on the history of the Balkans. It’s the topic of a book he wrote as well—*The History of Serbia*.

“Dr. Cox has traveled extensively in the Balkans region, and his insight will prove to be a building block to our cultural awareness and help to ensure our success upon deployment to the Balkans region,” LTC Paul Harron, G2 for KFOR 12, said at that time.

Acquiring a surface-level understanding of the complicated, centuries-old history of the region became a fundamental base for follow-on training. It’s not always easy for the casual observer to grasp the big picture of what the KFOR mission involves. Key dates in Kosovo’s history go back several times longer than the U.S.’s existence.

In June 1389, the Serbs battled—and lost to—Ottoman Turks, who influenced the region for the following 300 years. Kosovo is part of that original Serbian kingdom, which contributes to the conflict that continues today. The Serbs claim that Kosovo lies at the heart of its medieval kingdoms, and that during the Middle Ages few, if any, Albanians lived among them. On the other side, Albanians claim to be the area’s original inhabitants, having descended from the ancient Illyrians.

Beyond understanding the country and the need for peacekeeping forces, Soldiers were exposed to cultural aspects, languages and more, which were woven into months of mission training on drill weekends. Record flooding in North Dakota even offered some valuable training, as Soldiers worked to save lives and property from the rising waters.

“I would say the best training I had during my pre-deployment training was a real-life situation. There are two sides to every coin, and

Common Phrases Soldiers studied the following phrases, and were tested on them, in preparation for their mobilization to Kosovo.

ENGLISH	ALBANIAN	SERBIAN
Which direction?	Në cilin drejtim?	U kim pravcu?
Stop!	Ndal!	Stoj!
Hands up!	Duart lart!	Ruke u vis!
Drop your weapons!	Ul ni armët!	Baci oružje!
Stop your vehicle.	Ndale kerrin.	Zaustavite vozilo.
Do you have an identification card?	A ke ndonjë document identifikimi?	Imate li isprave ?
Do you have weapons?	A keni armë?	Da li imate oružje?
Do you need medical attention?	A ju nevojitet ndihmë mjekësore ?	Da li Vam je potrebna medicinska nega ?
What is your name?	Si e ke emrin?	Kako se zovete?
Let me search your car.	Ta kontrolloj kerrin.	Dozvolite da Vam pretražim kola.
Excuse me / I’m sorry	Më falni / Më vjen keq.	Izvinite.
Do you need help?	A ke nevojë për ndihmë ?	Da li Vam treba pomoć?
Do you understand?	A kupton?	Da li razumete?
Put your weapon down.	I ul ni armët poshtë.	Spusti oružje.
You can leave.	Mundesh me shku.	Možete da idete.

what was a tragedy to North Dakota turned out to be a benefit to me and, I believe, to the 231 MTF,” said MSG John Waters, operations sergeant for the 231st Maneuver Task Force, KFOR 12. “During the flood, we were activated as a battalion and went right in to working together and doing our job. We liaised with the majors and city workers. We worked with the citizens. This is the same thing we will do in Kosovo—presence patrols, much like dike patrols—letting citizens know they are safe.”

Early on, flyers were posted around armories to help Soldiers learn 15 key phrases in both Serbian and Albanian. Cards were handed out, and Soldiers were later tested on their proficiency. It tied into additional training on working with an interpreter—how to interact and how to treat them. The instruction fell under “Theater-Specific Individual Tasks,” one of four groups of training that filled the past year. The other groups included the 32 Army Warrior Tasks with about 250 subtasks; 12 Battle Drills, including lanes training; and Theater-Specific Leader Tasks, which were geared toward all officers and NCOs.

Beckman said the lanes training—conducted at Camp Grafton Training Center—was the most intriguing. Soldiers spent about a week practicing convoy operations, dismounted

patrols with hand-and-arm signals, MOUT (Military Operations on Urban Terrain) training, land navigation, HEAT (Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer), an obstacle course that involved throwing smoke grenades and engaging the enemy, setting up and operating entry control points, and other weapons training.

The HEAT simulates Humvee rollovers and water crashes to help Soldiers practice escaping the vehicle should an accident occur. The weapons training incorporated an Engagement Skills Trainer, which functions much like a large video game and helps Soldiers practice their marksmanship. Training also familiarized Soldiers with the maintenance and function of not just the M-16 rifle and M-9 pistol, but also the M2 .50 caliber machine gun, M249 squad automatic weapon and M-240B machine gun.

“The premise is that all of us in Task Force Falcon—should there be a worst-case scenario—know from the PFC to the general how to get on the .50 cal and engage targets with it,” Beckman said.

THE FINAL COUNTDOWN

Throughout the training, leaders coordinated with their counterparts on KFOR 10 and

KFOR 11, culling their successes and lessons learned. Key leaders traveled to Kosovo for two separate pre-deployment site surveys juxtaposed by a conference in Germany. About 15 command and primary staff members spent May 4–8 in Kosovo, while 15 more personnel and logistics-trained Soldiers were there May 13–16 focusing on sustainment issues. Together, they spent the middle week learning in Germany.

Harron's group asked a lot of questions to ensure Soldiers were well-prepared for the mission. They also traveled to Camp Bondsteel, the main U.S. base in Kosovo, to survey the working and living conditions, as well as what facilities are available for Soldiers' morale, welfare and recreation. A visit to NATO Headquarters near Pristina established face-to-face connections with those serving in KFOR 12's higher headquarters.

"I feel that we are absolutely prepared for this mission," Harron said. "BG Dohrmann has laid out clear training and guidance to set his team up for success."

As leaders wrapped up their site assessments, KFOR Soldiers began the final Soldier Readiness Processing event. Shots were given and paperwork updated, and then many departed for annual training at Camp Grafton Training Center in northeastern North Dakota.

"One of the unique things we had to do is we made five different annual training periods to give our Soldiers maximum flexibility to spend time with their families as well as continue to do the work of the National Guard," Beckman said.

Much of the full-time Guard force in North Dakota is mobilizing to Kosovo, so it was important to stagger annual training periods to ensure offices remained staffed until backfills were available. The training continued as August drew to a close and KFOR 12 arrived at Camp Atterbury, IN, to reinforce their preparations and acquire new skills. Then, it's on to Germany for a few more weeks of training before arriving in Kosovo sometime in October.

"We've done a very good job of doing all of these individual tasks and Battle Drills to prepare the individual Soldier," Beckman said.

In the meantime, families conducted their own training of sorts.

Soldiers' early alert for mobilization allowed them more than a year to think through and plan for the time apart. Family Readiness Groups continued to meet but with a fresh focus. Regular communication with family members culminated in early May, when informational briefings took place across North Dakota.

Dohrmann provided families with an overview of KFOR 12 operations, the mission area and other pertinent details. Other presenters

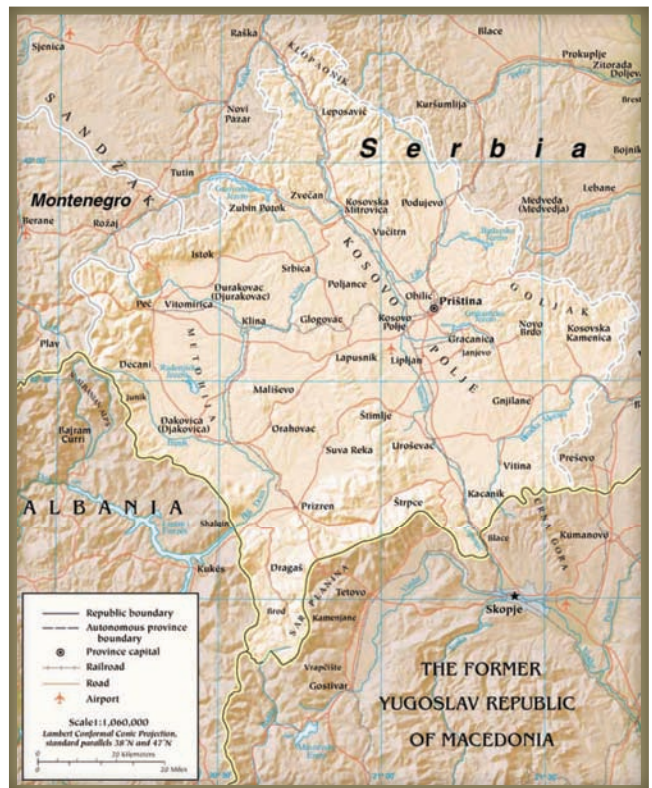
discussed the support and service available from the chaplain, finance, TRICARE health system, dental services and legal offices. A North Dakota representative with Military OneSource, a comprehensive compilation of resources for service members and their families, also spoke about available services.

"Taking care of Soldiers, Airmen and their families is our No. 1 priority in the North Dakota National Guard," Dohrmann said. "Hosting these briefings was inherently important in our efforts to do that, but it won't stop there.

"As the year continues, we will do everything in our power to ensure that not only North Dakota Soldiers, but also those from the other states serving with us, will have the tools, resources and support they and their families need to be successful throughout the mission," Dohrmann continued.

And with all of that preparation, Soldiers bid their final good-byes to their families and friends during send-off ceremonies in North Dakota this summer. By October, they'll be saying hello—or *zdravo* or *tungjatjeta*—as they encounter a new mission in a new place, with a renewed vigor at maintaining peace throughout Kosovo.

Follow these Guard members in future issues of *GX* as they build on the work of those who have come before them in establishing peace in the Balkans. **GX**



Fighting Spirit

▶ SHARP AND STRONG





The Right Way

Dale Jr. peels into a right turn during the Sprint Cup Series race at Watkins Glen International Speedway.

SPORTS

GX gets off track with Dale Jr., and shoots the breeze with Jeff Gordon.

86

FITNESS

SGT Ken gives you a 15-day APFT crash course.

92

GEAR

Sit inside the Guard's Caiman MRAP vehicle.

100



Getting Off-Track

ROCK 'N' ROLL FANTASY Dale Earnhardt Jr., driver of the No. 88 AMP/National Guard Chevrolet, may wear a helmet now but if he wasn't a NASCAR racer, he said he would be a rock band's lead guitarist.

GX CHATS WITH DALE JR.

By Clint Wood

As Dale Earnhardt Jr. races his No. 88 AMP/National Guard Chevrolet Impala at the Atlanta Motor Speedway on Sept. 6, shooting for his second victory at this track won't be the only thing on his mind.

His favorite racing movie, *Stroker Ace*, was filmed on this 1.54-mile quad oval track located 20 miles south of Atlanta, GA.

Dale's late father, Dale Earnhardt, was among nine NASCAR racers in the 1983 movie. Others included Kyle Petty, Terry LaBonte and Harry P. Gant.

Dale Jr., who has posted eight top-five finishes at this track, gave *GX* an exclusive interview.

GX: What is your favorite movie outside of racing?

DJ: Probably *Tombstone*.

GX: Do you like your coffee with sugar and cream or straight black?

DJ: I don't drink coffee.



TOO MANY LAPS Dale Earnhardt Jr. said if he could change one thing about NASCAR Sprint Cup Series races, it would be to shorten the schedule.

GX: Out of the car business all together, what job or industry would you like to be in?

DJ: I would be a lead guitarist in a rock band.

GX: What is your favorite TV show?

DJ: My favorite TV show is "The Office." **GX**

FOR MORE ON DALE JR.
AND THE NO. 88 CAR, GO TO
DaleJrGuardGarage.com



NCO BUSINESS CSM John D. Gipe, Senior Enlisted Advisor, Army National Guard, explains to Jeff Gordon, driver of the No. 24 DuPont/National Guard Chevrolet, the business of Guard noncommissioned officers before the Lifelock 400 in Michigan.

Shooting the Breeze

JEFF GORDON'S TAKE ON LIFE BEYOND RACING

By Amanda Powers

JEFF GORDON—a name well known in the world of NASCAR. Even his car, the No. 24 DuPont/National Guard Chevrolet Impala SS, has an unparalleled popularity and significance to fans all over the nation.

With decades of experience at the wheel, Gordon continues to provide fast-paced victories.

He began “running laps” and racing quarter midgets at 5 years old. His stepfather, John Bickford, taught him to drive and could see that Jeff had immense determination and natural talent for the sport. Bickford inspired him to tackle his dreams of competitive racing.

Today, Jeff is a four-time NASCAR Cup Series champion, a four-time Brickyard 400 winner, a three-time Daytona 500 winner, and has more than 65 career poles. So far in this 2009 season, Jeff is ranked No. 2 in overall driver standings, trailing closely behind Tony Stewart.

Not only is Gordon an accomplished driver, but he also takes great joy and pride in being a father and a husband. “I think being a dad is the greatest achievement you can ever have, and

the most rewarding and hardest thing you’ll ever do,” he said.

GX: What are your feelings on your daughter ever wanting to race?

JG: I want to approach parenting her the same way that my parents [approached me]—to present different things and try to give her plenty of opportunity to find something that she’s passionate about, is good at and enjoys—whatever that may be. And if that’s racing, then I will support her in racing.

GX: What’s your favorite thing about NASCAR fans?

JG: I think just the avidness that they have. They’re always surprising me with how far they will go to be a fan, [from] watching a race to getting tattoos, [even] wearing crazy outfits and shaving their heads with the number in it to just show their support. It’s fantastic to have that.

GX: If you weren’t a professional racer, what would you like to be?

JG: Well, it’s hard to answer that because I have been a racecar driver for so long that there’s really nothing else that I can think of doing. I love racing, so I hope that no matter what I’m involved with, it’s always with racing in some form or fashion. If I [couldn’t] be a driver, I feel like I’ve learned a lot about the industry and the business, [enough] to still be a part of it, hopefully.

GX: How important is it for racers to work out? What do you concentrate on as far as staying in shape?

JG: It’s extremely important to work out. I’ve not always been the best at it, and I’m a lot more focused on it now [because of my back issues].

It’s hard to say if those issues I’m having with my back are because my core is not as strong as it used to be and those muscles are overcompensating, or if they’re through injuries, and I just need to strengthen it to help with the injuries.

I think exercise is a good thing to put in your regimen whether you’re a racecar driver or not, for mental stability and the physical fitness that it gives you—just to feel better about yourself and life. **GX**

To check up on Jeff Gordon, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/guardracing/jeffgordon

Going the Distance

SOLDIERS STRIVE TO MAKE ALL-GUARD TEAM

Intro by Christian Anderson

On May 3, 163 National Guard Soldiers from all over the country converged in Lincoln, NE, to compete in the Lincoln/National Guard Marathon. This event has become a mecca for runners in the military who want to compete to become members of the All-Guard team.

The race included 43 teams made up of Army and Air National Guard members from 42 states and territories.

To participate, runners must be members of either the Army or Air National Guard, but not just anyone in the Guard can participate. To qualify, you must have run in a long-distance marathon within the last year and finished in less than four hours.

Here are a few of the runners who went above and beyond for the National Guard.

Illinois

By SSG Stephanie McCurry

Four members of the Illinois National Guard (IL NG) were up to the challenge—Maj. Nancie Margetis, CW2 Rachelle McKay, SSG Trent Sinnett and OC Jason Watson.

“I run races because of the challenge of the actual race and the excitement of race day,” said McKay of the 129th Regional Training Institute.

“There’s a bond between runners on race day. Yes, there is competition, but at the end of the

race everyone gets congratulated, [whether] you finished first, last or somewhere in between.”

Out of the four participants, three qualified for, and are now members of, the All-Guard team. Sinnett finished 16th with a time of 3:00:46; Margetis finished 51st with a time of 3:30:57; and McKay finished 101st with a time of 4:05:57. “Running a marathon will challenge you physically; however, the mental challenge is to just keep running even though your body hurts,” McKay said.

Tennessee

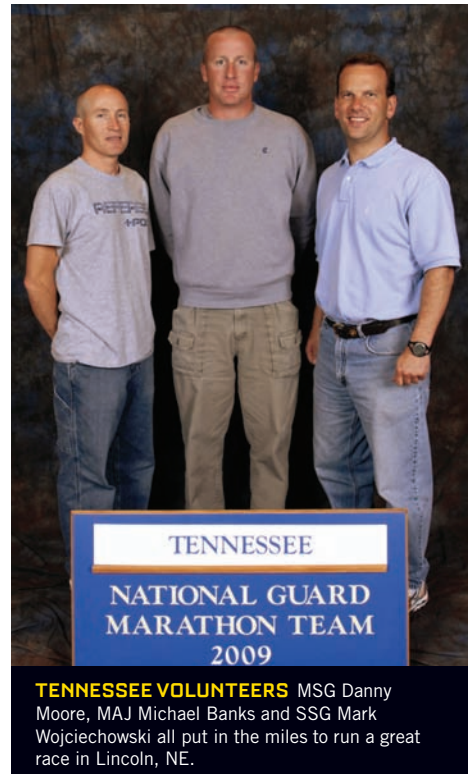
By Robin Olsen

MSG Danny Moore from the Tennessee Air National Guard’s 228th Combat Communications Squadron in Knoxville led the Tennessee trio, which placed 67th overall.

“It was an honor and a privilege to get the opportunity to represent Tennessee,” Moore said. “I didn’t want to let down my unit, the Air Guard or my state.”

“It’s nice to be known as one of the chosen few from Tennessee,” said MAJ Michael Banks, an Army National Guard Soldier assigned to Joint Force Headquarters in Nashville. He placed 107th overall.

“Running in a marathon takes a little athletic ability, but it really takes a lot of time, training and discipline ... plus some luck,” Banks added. He explained



TENNESSEE VOLUNTEERS MSG Danny Moore, MAJ Michael Banks and SSG Mark Wojciechowski all put in the miles to run a great race in Lincoln, NE.

that he usually starts training for long-distance races about four months in advance.

Moore said he officially started his training 18 weeks prior to the race and emphasized that good eating habits play an important part.

The third member to participate from Tennessee was SSG Mark Wojciechowski, Strength Maintenance noncommissioned officer, who placed 69th overall.

Banks has been in eight marathons, including one while deployed to Kuwait.

“The better shape you’re in, the better you’ll perform during a deployment,” he said.

These three men pushed themselves hard, fighting both muscle and mental fatigue.

“Those last few miles, I always just concentrate on maintaining my pace and finishing,” said Moore, who finished 19 minutes faster than his last race. “It’s an awesome feeling when you cross that finish line.”

“The 26.2 miles of pounding took its toll,” Moore said. “My legs and feet were aching really bad. I’ve never experienced any physical challenge on a deployment as physically demanding as running 20-plus miles. But completing a marathon gives me an attitude that I can accomplish anything.” **GX**



THE ILLINOIS PRESENCE Maj. Nancie Margetis, CW2 Rachelle McKay, SSG Trent Sinnett and OC Jason Watson all enjoyed the challenge of running in Lincoln, NE.

COURTESY OF THE NEBRASKA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

WWE and Guard Join Forces

By Fred McGhee II

THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD has entered a new partnership with World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE). The WWE has always been a staunch supporter of America's military, performing live shows overseas for troops in combat zones, so the new partnership was the next logical step for both organizations.

"It's fantastic! The WWE has openly shown its support for the military. I'm glad we can spread the word on what the National Guard has to offer," said John Cena, WWE Superstar.

The WWE's popularity is at an all-time high. The WWE broadcasts to more than 15.5 million fans each week in the U.S. Nearly 75 percent of that audience is between the ages of 18–24, with 77 percent being male.

"This partnership will definitely help with

recruiting. A lot of their fans are in our target age range, a lot of young athletic people," said SFC Orlando Duncan, a Guard recruiter. "It's good marketing for the Army National Guard."

The WWE is integrating Guard content throughout its social media outlets, including WWE.com and WWE Universe.

The partnership's success was evident when the Guard sponsored the 25th Wrestlemania on April 5. The wildly successful four-day pop-culture event was held at Reliant Stadium in Houston, TX, and set a record as the highest grossing live event in WWE history, with \$52 million in gross sales.

Approximately 72,744 passionate WWE fans from all 50 states packed Reliant Stadium, surpassing the attendance for Super Bowl XLIII. Millions

of fans from more than 100 countries watched the event via pay-per-view. Hundreds of local, national and international media outlets covered the event, giving the Guard significant exposure.

"The WWE made sure we received a lot of attention and recognition at all fan access events and WrestleMania as well," said Duncan.

Immediately following WrestleMania, the WWE broke even more records when its Web site received more than 105 million page views from ravenous fans eager for event results.

In the four days leading up to WrestleMania, the Guard presented "The Combat Zone," an interactive exhibit featuring an obstacle course and a helicopter ride at WrestleMania Fan Access. But the highlight of the four-day event was the virtual shooting range where fans could experience what it's like to be a Soldier in the field. The Combat Zone gave Guard Soldiers in attendance a chance to interact with and educate fans interested in the Guard.

"It's a great partnership to be a part of. It's always a pleasure to go overseas and perform for the troops. It's very inspirational. We are very thankful for all the Soldiers do," said Jeff Hardy, WWE Superstar. **GX**

**"IT'S FANTASTIC!
THE WWE HAS OPENLY
SHOWN ITS SUPPORT
FOR THE MILITARY.
I'M GLAD WE CAN SPREAD
THE WORD ON WHAT THE
NATIONAL GUARD
HAS TO OFFER."**

>> John Cena, WWE Superstar

PARTNERSHIP OF THE YEAR The WWE and the Guard have joined forces to bring troops the latest in entertainment.

COURTESY OF WWE

Check back next issue for coverage of Tribute to the Troops—the WWE's annual overseas tour!

TWO POINTS OF CONTACT

No. 54 National Guard Suzuki racer Geoff May gets as low as he can go without tipping his Superbike over as he leans into a turn during a recent race.



Life Is a Drag

“THE BIKE NEVER WANTS TO TURN. IT JUST WANTS TO GO STRAIGHT, THE FASTER YOU GO. SO YOU REALLY HAVE TO MUSCLE THE THING AROUND TO MAKE IT DO ANYTHING.”

—GEOFF MAY

GEOFF MAY TELLS GX WHAT IT IS LIKE TO DRAG HIS KNEE

By Clint Wood

GEOFF MAY, pilot of the No. 54 National Guard Suzuki GSXR 1000 Superbike, blazes down the track at more than 180 mph on his blue and white rocket, approaching a tight turn.

For those of you who haven't seen an AMA Pro National Guard American Superbike race yet, May drags his inside knee on the pavement to minimize the lean-angle of the bike and keep as much of the tire on the pavement as possible. Knee pucks made of hard plastic or compressed leather are attached by Velcro to the outside of the suit's legs, and they actually touch the track.

GX: How do you knee drag?

GM: You basically just get on the binders, get on the brakes as hard as you can—and shift your weight to the inside. The rear end is trying to come around the front, so you're kind of sliding sideways a little.

You get the thing over on your knee and use your knee puck to feel the lean-angle, and then keep leaning to increase the turning radius.

As soon as you get the bike turned enough to where you can see the exit of the corner, you pick up the throttle and try to get it open as quick as possible. You break the back tire loose, and it will spin sideways. So, you're basically balancing. The front end will start to come up and wheelie as the tires sliding sideways come out of the corners. Then, you get the thing upright and drive out of the corner.

GX: What does it feel like to do this for several laps during a race?

GM: It's definitely a very demanding sport. It's similar to wrestling. If you look at the demands on these athletes, we need to be as light, yet as strong as possible, with the most endurance possible.

A motorcycle weighs about 395 pounds, and you're dealing with a lot of inertia and gyro effect, with the wheels spinning, and the motor and crankshaft spinning forward. The bike never wants to turn. It just wants to go straight, the faster you go. So you really have to muscle the thing around to make it do anything.

GX: Where did you gain your interest in motorcycle road racing?

GM: Honestly, I was more interested in car racing when I was growing up, watching my dad race cars as a hobby. He rode on the street, so I started riding with him to have something to do with my dad.

When I was in high school, we watched a race together at Road Atlanta. That is my home track now. I was hooked; I was like, “Man, that is what I want to do.”

On the street, I was really going too fast, and I guess I got to the point where I realized I needed to get off the street and onto the racetrack. So, that is where I am today. **GX**

To see Geoff May in action, go to
[YouTube.com/NationalGuard](https://www.youtube.com/NationalGuard)



Escaping the Guillotine Choke

Story and photos by SFC Donnie Maseley

Hello all, it's a pleasure to be back writing this article for all of you again. I'd like to thank SGT Kerkhoff for filling in for me while I was deployed. So you all know, SGT Kerkhoff is off again doing what good Soldiers do. He is one of my best friends in the world, and I want to tell him in this article, "God bless you brother, and we are all praying for your safe return."

I've received a couple of questions on more techniques to escape the "guillotine choke" from a guard. The first thing I have to say is, if you find yourself in someone's guard, you have to protect your throat! One of the best ways to do this is keep good posture. Sit up straight, like your parents made you do at the dinner table. If you stay hunched over, your opponent is going to break you down, making his or her attacks easier.

The other thing we have to keep in mind is that there is no "foolproof" technique. That's why we have to have a multitude of tools for any given situation. Along with that, we have to understand when we need to transition from one technique to another—especially when we find a technique failing us in any particular situation. So here we go: Let's train!

Step 1. I feel the guillotine being set up. I immediately grab my opponent's wrist to keep my airway safe for a little bit.

Step 2. Now, I'm going to post up on my legs, putting all of my weight on my opponent's stomach with my shoulder. If you do this right, your opponent will be very uncomfortable.

Step 3. Maintaining my balance and pressure on my opponent, I'm going to bring my legs together and strip my opponent's legs off my hips by pushing down on his knees with both hands.

Step 4. Now, I'm going to fall onto my hip opposite the side my head is on, working my legs the rest of the way out of his guard. This part is self-critiquing: If you fall to the wrong side, you're going to twist your neck.

Step 5. Finishing in side control. This is a pretty cool technique. It did take me a while to get it right, though. The first time I messed it up, I got the "baw-jeebers" choked out of me. So, don't sweat it if it takes you a while to perfect it. **GX**



THERE IS NO "FOOLPROOF" TECHNIQUE. THAT'S WHY WE HAVE TO HAVE A MULTITUDE OF TOOLS FOR ANY GIVEN SITUATION.

This is going to set us up for next time when we finish with a choke, or a kimura lock, depending on what our opponent does. You can send me your emails and suggestions at combatives@GXonline.com.

OPERATION IMMEDIATE IMPROVEMENT

15-day Army Physical Fitness Test Quick Fix

By Ken and Stephanie Weichert



FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET!

SGT Ken hits the track.

[RECEIVED]

SGT Ken and Stephanie,
Your workouts are amazing! I lost 24 pounds in eight weeks! My first sergeant uses your workouts for our unit PT. He loves them, too! I need your help. I have to take an APFT in a few weeks. I know it is short notice, but do you have an APFT crash course? If so, I need it! Thank you both for helping Soldiers get fit!

HOOAH!
PFC Michelle B.,
Mississippi Army National Guard

[RECEIVED]

SGT Ken and Stephanie,
First, let me start by saying that your APFT 30-day calendar called "Operation Pushing for Points" is awesome! I used it several months ago and raised my APFT score 33 points. Now, however, I have just a couple of weeks to get ready for my next APFT. Do you have any advice?

Thanks,
2LT Nathan T.,
Pennsylvania Army National Guard

[SENT]

Dear PFC and 2LT,
Thank you! We're glad you've benefited from our workouts! In between work and family time, test preparation can fall to the bottom of the to-do list. With little time to train for the upcoming APFT, we designed a 15-day training calendar. As a bonus, we have included tubing exercises for muscle recovery and strength training. Stay the course and keep us informed of your progress!

HOOAH!
SGT Ken and Stephanie



“SGT Ken and his cutting-edge fitness programs put the ‘fun’ in fitness. Having experienced his training firsthand, you not only feel like you have accomplished something—you can’t wait to do it all again!”
 —CSM David Ray Hudson, Senior Enlisted Advisor to the National Guard Bureau Chief

SECTION 1: Exercise Instructions

8-MINUTE ABS

You can also download audio exercises at:
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness

1. Flutter Kicks

- Perform Flutter Kicks for 60 seconds.
- Freeze your legs together approximately 12 inches above the ground for 20 seconds. Flex your feet.

2. Straight Leg Pulses

- Perform Straight Leg Pulses by moving both legs together, up and down, 12 to 18 inches from the ground for 30 seconds.

- Freeze your legs together approximately 12 inches above the ground for 20 seconds. Flex your feet. Raise your legs straight upward until your feet line up over your hips.

3. Straight Leg Drops

- Perform Straight Leg Drops by lowering your legs to 12 inches above the ground and raising your legs to the start position. Continue moving your legs up and down for 60 seconds.
- Hold your legs in the upward position. Point your arms toward your toes. Flex your feet.

4. Vertical Leg Crunches (Dying Cockroach)

Perform Vertical Leg Crunches by raising your upper body toward your toes and returning to the start

position. Continue moving your upper body up and down for 60 seconds.

5. Box and Reach

- Perform the Box and Reach drill by elevating your upper torso and reaching, with your arms, over your left thigh and dropping back slightly and reaching over your right thigh. Continue switching, left and right for 60 seconds.
- Bend your knees to 90 degrees of knee flexion, and place your hands behind your head, fingers clasped.

6. Cradle Crunch

- Perform the Cradle Crunch drill by raising your lower and upper body sections, at the same time. Return to the start position and repeat. Continue for 30 seconds.

- Straighten your body and turn over on your abdominals. Contract your rear end and lower back muscles until your chest and knees come off of the ground. Bend your elbows and tuck them in toward your sides and keep your hands level with your shoulders.

7. Modified Back Bends

Perform Modified Back Bends for 30 seconds.

8. Modified Child's Pose (Balasana)

- Perform the Modified Child's Pose stretch for 30 seconds.
- Roll your back up to a kneeling position.
- Elevate to your knees and stand up.

AEROBICS [WARM-UP EXERCISES]

Examples: Running in Place; Side-Straddle-Hops ("Jumping Jacks"); High Steps/Knees



ARMS EXTENSION WITH TUBING

START: Grasp the handles and position the tubing slightly behind your head with arms forming 90-degree angles, elbows level with shoulders and palms facing in. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward.

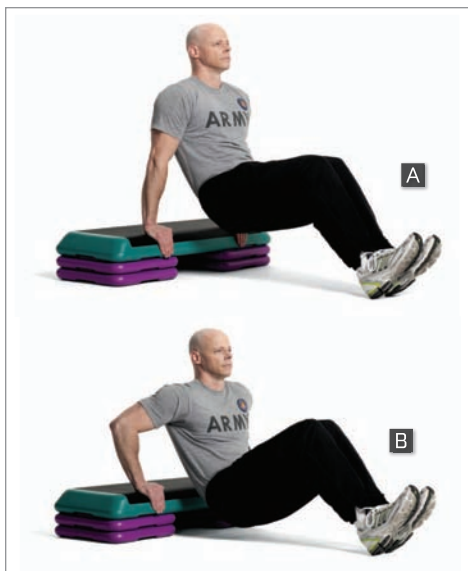
ACTIONS: Straighten your arms until parallel with the ground, palms facing up. Keep wrists firm. Return to the start position and repeat. Exhale through your mouth as you extend and inhale through your nose as you bend inward.



CHEST PRESS WITH TUBING

START: Grasp the handles and position the center of the tubing behind your upper back and under your shoulder blades, arms in front and level with shoulders, elbows bent and palms facing down. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent and toes pointing forward.

ACTIONS: Press your arms in front of you until fully extended. Keep wrists firm and elbows slightly bent. Return to the start position and repeat. Exhale through your mouth as you extend and inhale through your nose as you bend your arms.



DIPS ON A BENCH

START: Sit on the edge of a sturdy flat bench with your hands slightly behind your hips, gripping the bench tightly. With your legs together and knees bent 90 degrees, place your heels on the ground and point your toes in the air. Straighten your elbows, elevate your hips and move your hips slightly away from the bench.

ACTIONS: Slowly lower your body by bending both elbows 90 degrees. Point your elbows backward while lowering your body. Do not allow your elbows to point in or outward. Return to the start position and repeat until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you lower your body and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.



DIVE BOMBER PUSH-UP

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Position your feet several inches outside the width of your hips, hands slightly more than shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight. Next, raise your hips upward until you reach 90 degrees at your hips, head aligned with your arms.

ACTIONS: Lower your body to the ground slowly by bending at the elbows until your face reaches the ground. Continue moving downward to forward to upward by slightly dragging your upper body across the ground until your abdominals are over your hands, pressing your body upward until your arms are straight and your lower back is arched back. Return to the start position by reversing the steps. Inhale through your nose as you lower your body and exhale through your mouth as you return to the start position.

Want to listen to it or watch it on video? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness, Get Fit, Upper Body, Dive Bomber Push-Up.

FULL SIT-UP

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

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominal muscles and raise your upper body until your back becomes perpendicular with the ground and return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you raise your body and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

Notes: The repetition counts when you return to the start position. It is authorized to temporarily rest in the upward position without resting on your knees.

WARNING: Do not pull on your neck with your hands. Keep your elbows wide and your face pointing upward during the exercise.



HALF SIT-UP

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

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominal muscles and raise your upper body until your shoulder blades come off the ground and return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you raise your body and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

WARNING: Do not pull on your neck with your hands. Keep your elbows wide and your face pointing upward during the exercise.

“SGT Ken provided fitness training for our RSP Warriors. He did an outstanding job and it seemed to really motivate them! He also instilled hope in the Warriors with weight issues, and showed them what they needed to do to meet weight requirements and pass the APFT!”

—CPT Jim Ridings, East Region D&T, Tennessee National Guard Recruiting

PUSH-UP

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lower your body straight down by bending both elbows until your upper arms become parallel with the ground. Return to the start position and repeat. Inhale through your nose as you lower your body and exhale through your mouth as you return to the start position.

Notes: The repetition counts when you return to the start position. It is authorized to temporarily rest by raising your hips. You cannot sag your back, go to your knees, or lift your hands or feet off of the ground. You must return to the start position before resuming the exercise.



CLOSE GRIP



WIDE GRIP



PUSH-UP IMPROVEMENT PLAN #1

1. Begin the push-up exercise in the close grip position.
2. Continue as long as you as you can in this position.
3. Assume an authorized rest position.
4. Slide your hands outward to the normal grip position.
5. Continue as long as you as you can in this position.
6. Assume an authorized rest position.
7. Slide your hands outward to the wide grip position.
8. Continue as long as you as you can in this position.
9. “Go to muscle failure!”

Want to listen to it, or watch it on video? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness, Get Fit, Upper Body, Push-up Improvement Plan #1.



SGT Ken helped me tremendously! I knocked three minutes off my 2-mile run in less than a month of training under his program. I’m confident that with the improvement I’ve already made I can shave off even more time on the next APFT! Thanks!”

—SPC Michelle Waters, Human Resources NCO, Kentucky Army National Guard

PUSH-UP INTERVAL TRAINING

Push-up Interval Training is where you complete the most push-ups possible in 20-second intervals.

Example: Perform push-ups for 20 seconds and rest 20 seconds. Repeat this sequence for the required amount of time. 1 set x 4 minutes is 6 sets of push-ups at 20 seconds each with 6 resting periods of 20 seconds each.

PUSH-UP PULSES

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight. While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lower your body straight down by bending both elbows until your upper arms become parallel with the ground.

ACTIONS: Using your arms, raise your body upward 4–6 inches. Lower your body and continue until your goal is reached. Inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth naturally.

Note: These actions are performed quickly.



PUSH-UP WITH TUBING

START: Grasp the handles and position the center of the tubing behind your upper back and under your shoulder blades. Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, and legs and arms straight.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lower your body by bending both elbows until the upper parts of your arms become parallel to the ground. Return to the start position and repeat. Exhale through your mouth as you push up and inhale through your nose as you lower your body.



RUNNING LONG DISTANCE

Long-distance running is performed at moderate speeds.

Note: The best way to condition your body for the 2-mile run as part of a fitness test is to condition your body to run longer distances.

RUNNING INTERVAL TRAINING

Running Interval Training is running at moderate and fast speeds.

Example: Choose to run on a treadmill, track, or well-known route. After a thorough warm-up, run at a moderate speed (jogging) for 30 seconds and sprint as fast as you can for 30 seconds. Repeat this sequence for the remainder of your run. Or, if on a track, sprint the stretch and jog the curve.

Note: Be certain to time your sprint drills. That way, you can challenge yourself to sprint for longer periods of time each week.

Want to listen to it? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness, Get Fit, Aerobics, Running Interval Training.



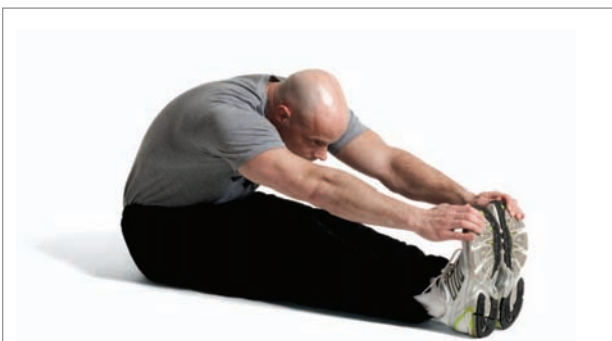
UNEVEN PUSH-UP

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Next, place your left hand on a platform that is 4–12 inches higher than the ground. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and right arm straight.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lower your body straight down by bending both elbows until the upper part of your right arm becomes parallel with the ground. Return to the start position and continue until your goal is reached. Switch arm positions and repeat. Inhale through your nose as you lower your body and exhale through your mouth as you return to the start position.

Want to listen to it or watch it on video? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness, Get Fit, Upper Body, Uneven Push-Up.

STRETCHING



STRETCHING EXAMPLE #1: SEATED FORWARD BEND

START: Sit on the ground or on a mat with your legs straight and together, feet flexed.

ACTIONS: Reach toward your toes or bring your chest toward your legs. Breathe deeply and hold the stretch for 30 seconds.



STRETCHING EXAMPLE #2: SEATED BUTTERFLY STRETCH

START: Sit on the ground or on a mat with your back straight, shoulders down, abdominals engaged, feet in front of you, knees bent 90 degrees and pointing outward, and bottoms of feet together. Grasp the outer parts of your feet with your hands.

ACTIONS: While keeping your heels on the ground, bring your elbows toward the ground and pull your chest toward your legs. Breathe deeply and hold the stretch for 30 seconds.

Want more stretching examples? Go to GX Fitness 6.2 (available at GXonline.com/pastissues), and FM 21-20 or FM 3-22.20.

Equipment Needed:

Tubing (short piece), medium to heavy strength, or an Ultra Toner from SPRI

Note: If using a long tube, fold it in half or use half the length. Otherwise, the Ultra Toner is the right length for the assigned exercises.

Bench or platform that is approximately 12–24 inches from the ground for the Dip exercise and 4–12 inches from the ground for the Uneven Push-up

“SGT Ken has an incredible program! He came to our RSP site and gave the Warriors a great workout, which included an insightful lecture on nutrition! I highly recommend SGT Ken for all RSP sites!”
 — SFC Lonnie Kilby, Tennessee Army National Guard Recruiting

SECTION 2: Putting It All Together

15-DAY APFT WORKOUT CALENDAR

Note: Perform at least 5 minutes of warm-up exercises and 5 minutes of stretching before and after each workout.

DAY 1

- Push-up Improvement Plan #1 x 2 min.
- Bench Dips x 10–20 repetitions
- Half Sit-ups x 2 min.
- Repeat entire series x 2 sets
- Running x 1–2 miles

DAY 2

- Running Long Distance x 2–4 miles
- Half Sit-ups x 2 sets at 2 min. each

DAY 3

- Push-up Improvement Plan #1 x 2 min.
- Tubing Chest Press x 20–30 repetitions
- Tubing Arms Extensions x 20–30 repetitions
- Half Sit-ups x 2 min.
- Repeat entire series x 3 sets
- Running x 1–2 miles

DAY 4

Rest

DAY 5

- Tubing Push-ups x 1 min.
- Bench Dips x 20–30 repetitions
- Tubing Arms Extensions x 20–30 repetitions
- Half Sit-ups x 2 min.
- Push-up Improvement Plan #1 x 2 min.
- Half Sit-ups x 2 min.
- Running Interval Training x 2–4 miles

DAY 6

- Push-up Interval Training x 1 set at 6 min.
- Half Sit-ups x 2 sets at 3 min. each
- Running x 2–3 miles

DAY 7

- Push-up Improvement Plan #1 x 2 min.
- Tubing Chest Press x 20–30 repetitions
- Tubing Arms Extensions x 20–30 repetitions
- 8-min Abs
- **Note:** 8-min Abs is available as an audio workout on www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness
- Repeat entire series x 3 sets
- Running x 2–3 miles

DAY 8

Rest

DAY 9

- Tubing Push-ups x 1 min.
- Dive Bomber Push-ups x 1 min.
- Uneven Push-ups x 1 min.
- Push-up Pulses x 1 min.
- 8-min Abs
- Repeat entire series x 3 sets
- Running Long Distance x 4–6 miles

DAY 10

- Push-up Interval Training x 1 set at 6 min.
- Uneven Push-ups x 1 min.
- Push-up Pulses x 1 min.
- Tubing Arms Extensions x 20–30 repetitions
- Full Sit-ups x 2 min.
- Repeat entire series x 3 sets
- Running x 2–3 miles

DAY 11

- Push-up Improvement Plan #1 x 3 min.
- Tubing Arms Extensions x 20–30 repetitions
- Full Sit-ups x 2 min.
- Push-up Improvement Plan #1 x 2 min.
- Tubing Arms Extensions x 20–30 repetitions
- Full Sit-ups x 1 min.
- Running Long Distance x 4–6 miles

DAY 12

Rest

DAY 13

- Push-ups x 2 min.
- Full Sit-ups x 2 min.
- Running x 2 miles

DAY 14

- Push-ups x 1 min.
 - Full Sit-ups x 1 min.
 - Running x .5 miles
- Strategy:** Taper your fitness training 24–48 hours prior to the APFT or PRT.

DAY 15

Rest

Strategy: Perform no fitness training 24 hours prior to the APFT or PRT.

REMARKS:

Repeat the entire 15-day schedule in order to accomplish a 30-day APFT workout program.

GLOSSARY:

1. **APFT:** Army Physical Fitness Test
2. **PRT:** Physical Readiness Test

NUTRITION ADVICE:

1. To lose additional body fat, try reducing your intake of breads, pastas, dairy products and sugar.
2. Check with your physician before making any changes to your diet or exercise plan.
3. Want to read more diet advice? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness. Get Healthy, and read Operation Diet Dissection.

Watch fitness videos and download workouts at www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness or email SGTken@GXonline.com.

Warning: Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or shortness of breath.



EVAN BAINES

KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT

A six-time Soldier of the year and Veteran of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie, a certified personal trainer, founded the START Fitness® program, a San Francisco-based group exercise and hiking business that delivers military-inspired, boot-camp style workouts to Soldiers and civilians. The program now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors. Ken is currently a staff sergeant in the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Squats, Sweat and Sweet Success

KENTUCKY COURSE CHALLENGES SENIOR ENLISTED LEADERS

Story and photos by Clint Wood

FRANKFORT, KY—Nearing the halfway marker of the 2-mile trail at the Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort, KY, I had no idea what was next.

This was no ordinary 2-mile run. It was a run interrupted by a series of insanely hard obstacles. There was no turning back, though.

Known as the Joint Forces Urban Challenge, the event was designed by GX's own Ken Weichert—aka SGT Ken—for the 2009

National Guard Bureau Joint Senior Enlisted Leaders Conference.

If you're familiar with SGT Ken, you know that the 54 senior enlisted Guard leaders in attendance at this summit got the workout of their lives. I know I did. Weichert is a Master Fitness Trainer.

I had just cleared four 4-foot-high hurdles, spaced about 4 feet apart, and executed several bounding long-jumps for 30 meters.

The next obstacle on the steep rocky path was 30 squat-thrust jumps. Like most Soldiers, I dread

this cardio exercise. It works your entire body, and 30 squat-jump-thrusts at once is considered an advanced workout.

After running the course himself in just 14 minutes, Weichert was now shouting at me from the sidelines. "Come to my pit and do 30 squat-thrust-jumps," he barked. Easier said than done.

METHOD TO THE MADNESS

The Joint Forces Urban Challenge was designed to show these senior enlisted leaders how to set an example for their Soldiers.



FIRST UP THE HILL

CSM Larry Zimmerman of the South Dakota National Guard leads the pack up a hill that has a 9-degree slope.



PREPARING FOR COMBAT

SGT KEN encourages the following exercises to help Soldiers become fit to fight:

HURDLES—prepare Soldiers to hop over fences or other combat obstacles

BOUNDING LEAPS—prepare Soldiers to withstand jumping activities in combat

SQUAT-THRUST-JUMPS—prepare Soldiers to jump from a truck and recover quickly, or to jump from cover and quickly return fire

PUSH-UPS—develop strength and training to push the enemy off



“We’re demonstrating how a simple run can be turned into a fun, challenging event that incorporates the exercises people would do in combat,” Weichert explained. “Once you win over the heart and mind of sergeant majors, the troops will do what they say, because they’re the voice of the people in the field.”

For me, on this afternoon, Weichert was the voice in the field. His drill-sergeant demeanor had taken over.

During my first squat-thrust-jump, I decided to double-check something with him.

“Thirty?” I asked. “Thirty,” he confirmed. “Three-Zero.”

The first 10 went smoothly, but then I started sucking air. I was really struggling. Weichert knew it—and was enjoying it.

“You shouldn’t have had that burger before you got here,” he said with an evil laugh.

Waiting for me after the pit was a hill with a 9-degree slope. Then it got worse. The next slope was 17 degrees; and a few feet from the top, we had to do 30 push-ups in knee-high grass.

Next came two more hills. Then, finally, the finish line with four hurdles directly in front of it. “Just to show it’s never over until we say it’s over,” Weichert quipped.

AGAINST ALL ODDS

“This was a challenging course, yet rewarding when you see that finish line at the end,” said CSM Mark Breece of the Tennessee National Guard. “I think the 2-mile run is always a drag, but the obstacles were pretty fun.”



3 GRUELING DAYS OF PREP

SGT KEN prepared the senior enlisted leaders with the following schedule:

DAY ONE: 45 minutes of aerobic exercises

DAY TWO: Exercise outside, performing each circuit for longer periods of time to reach muscle failure sooner. (Exercises included leaping squats while holding a medicine ball, step-ups off of a 24-inch step and push-ups.)

DAY THREE: Repeat the second day’s routine, but add running up and down 15-degree slopes



Alaska National Guard CSM Gordon Choate, 45, came in first place. He told me this was his second year training with Weichert at this conference.

Choate, in the Guard for 24 years, commented that this program is excellent for overall fitness. “It changes up the muscle groups,” he noted.

The run made him sore, though.

“The obstacles make it tough,” he explained. “And then that 17-degree slope at the backside is enough to take the wind out of you. It was a lot of fun, though.”

In an assessment, CSM John Gipe, Senior Enlisted Advisor of the Army National Guard, said, “[SGT Ken] uses a no-nonsense, practical approach to physical fitness. His methods require little in the way of equipment, are functional and can be done just about anywhere.

“Most of the equipment he uses is transportable,” Gipe continued, “so you can stay fit any place or any time, in any environment. Bottom line—he trains you like a Guard Soldier needs to be trained.”

CSM David Hudson, Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, wrote in his review that Weichert and his cutting-edge fitness programs make fitness enjoyable.

“When your exercise session is over, you not only feel like you’ve accomplished something—you can’t wait to do it all again,” Hudson said.

“It was so satisfying to see these sergeant majors and command chief master sergeants enjoying something that they told me they would never do on their own,” Weichert shared.

The senior enlisted leaders better start training now for next year. I’m sure Weichert will amp it up. And I better start now, too—just to keep up! **GX**



ONE BARRIER AT A TIME
CSM David Hudson, Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, clears one of the four hurdles near the finish line.



CHALLENGE COMPETITORS Participants of the Joint Forces Urban Challenge smile—or grimace—after the competition. SGT Ken is kneeling in the front.

Check out more of SGT Ken’s fitness tips on page 92 and online: www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness.

Riding in Style

GUARD SOLDIERS EMBRACE CAIMAN MRAP

By 1LT Robert Conner, 267th MP Co., Tennessee Army National Guard

BEFORE YOU HEAR IT COMING ... before you see it coming ... you're going to feel it coming.

I'm talking about the BAE Systems Category II Caiman 6 x 6—my taxi of choice on the streets of Baghdad. Albeit, the larger streets. Due to the alarming threat increase caused by IEDs (improvised explosive devices)—the primary tactic of insurgents—the Department of Defense set a requirement for a new vehicle specifically designed to defeat these deadly bombs. The result is the MRAP (Mine Resistant Ambush Protected) vehicle.

The Caiman, a member of the MRAP family, is replacing the Humvee as the primary troop-mover in Iraq and Afghanistan. A surprisingly plush ride, it can carry a crew of seven, and we rely on it to get us from one police station to the next. BAE Systems didn't try to reinvent the wheel when it dreamed up the Caiman. The company based it on the existing FMTV (Family of Medium Tactical Vehicles), which it also manufactures.

The FMTV already had a 93-percent operational-readiness rate, and since the Caiman and FMTV share an 85-percent parts commonality, the Caiman has the added benefit of quicker maintenance turnaround and fewer parts issues. That's a real bonus for Soldiers in the field, who count on our vehicles day in and day out.

With a base weight of 36,000 pounds and a width of 8 feet, it takes a weeklong course to be certified to drive. However, that doesn't tell the full story. By the time the Caiman is fully mission-capable, its weight has ballooned to 45,000 pounds and its width has grown to 12 feet. I still watch in amazement as my Soldiers wheel this beast through serpentine, gates and Baghdad's rush-hour traffic. For Soldiers used to driving a Humvee, the Caiman feels like a semitruck—an experience they're not likely to forget.

From larger crew and cargo capacity to built-in litter racks, the Caiman allows us to move more efficiently and safely. And with an air conditioner that blows cold and legroom to spare, it has won my loyalty.

Watch out when we come down the road. **GX**



Vehicle SPECIFICATIONS

VEHICLE CURB WEIGHT WITH FUEL: 37,092 lb

PAYLOAD: 5,400 lb

TOWED LOAD: 12,000 lb

MAXIMUM SPEED: 73 mph

RANGE: 74 gal, 401 mi

CAB: Armor Protected 2-10 Crew Cab

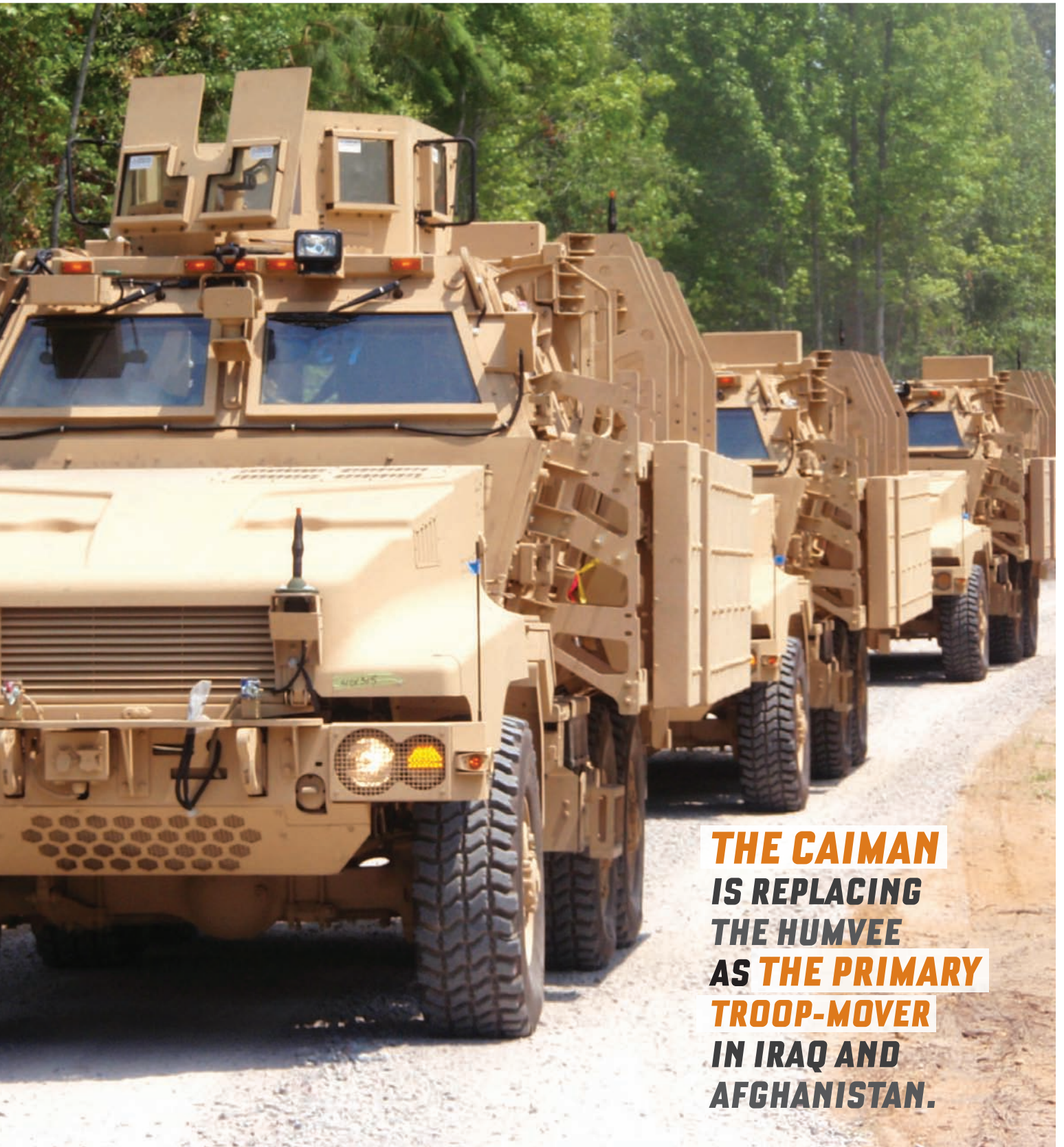
TIRES: Michelin 395/85R20XML All-Terrain

RUNFLAT DEVICES: Single Molded Piece with Integral Beadlock

SELF-RECOVERY WINCH: (Optional) Electric, 18,000 lb

To check out Gear videos, go to
www.YouTube.com/nationalguard

COURTESY OF BAE SYSTEMS



**THE CAIMAN
IS REPLACING
THE HUMVEE
AS THE PRIMARY
TROOP-MOVER
IN IRAQ AND
AFGHANISTAN.**

“This has been an amazing journey, and I’ve learned a lot. I didn’t have a road map or blueprints. I just wanted to make his life better.”

>> MAJ David Howell





From Iraq, with Love

By Christian Anderson

Photography by Tom Gennara

November 6 is a day MAJ David Howell will always remember. Insurgents were planning a suicide attack in the streets of Iraq. Howell and his men established a casualty collection in the town, expecting the worst.

A LIFE-CHANGING EVENT

It all started with a stare from a kid. Howell, a physician assistant attached to 3rd Squad, 3rd Platoon, Charlie Company, 1/125 Infantry Regiment, Michigan Army National Guard, was on a mission to respond and provide medical care in the wake of the possible attack.

It was Martyr Payday, a three-day event for Iraqi women to collect a monthly death benefit for their husbands and sons who have died in the line of duty as Iraqi policemen. Insurgents planned to attack as many civilians as possible.

“I saw this boy walking by with his mom,” Howell said. “The people were gathering away from us because they were afraid, but not this boy. He just kept looking at me.”

Howell was very busy that day, keeping his men alert and anticipating the attack, but for some reason he kept thinking about the child. The boy had suffered serious burns on his face, and Howell could not get the image out of his head.

“Two days later, on the last day of Martyr Payday, I was able to locate a local construction worker and an Iraqi policeman who were familiar with Mohammed’s family,” Howell said. “The construction worker went and brought Mohammed and his mother back to me at the ECP at the Provincial Government Center.”

MOHAMMED’S STORY

Mohammed’s family had been entangled in the horrors of war, and his family had paid the ultimate price. Mohammed’s father had been a translator for the Marines in Ramadi. After learning of his cooperation, the local insurgency members kidnapped and killed him.

This unexpected and brutal death shocked the family, but the insurgents did not stop there. As Mohammed’s uncle was at the morgue identifying the body, the insurgents abducted and killed him as well. Then the insurgents threatened the rest of the family.

“He asked me if I was going to save him and take him back to America. This touched me, and I knew I had to do something. They have sacrificed so much; I felt like we had an obligation to repay them.”

“When I first met Mohammed, he explained to me what happened to his father,” Howell said. “Then the gunmen told Mohammed’s mother that if she had any contact with the Americans, they would kill her.

“He asked me if I was going to save him and take him back to America,” Howell added. “This touched me, and I knew I had to do something. They have sacrificed so much; I felt like we had an obligation to repay them.”

Howell was heartbroken as he listened to the boy’s story. But what touched him the most were the scars that covered the boy. When he was younger, Mohammed had been burned over 30 percent of his body after an oil lamp exploded. His family was not able to get him proper medical care, so he never healed properly. He had severe burns on his face, left arm, left hand and left foot. He also has limited use of his hands and needs reconstructive surgery on his nose, ear and left eye.

Howell knew he had to do something for Mohammed, so once the Soldier was back in Michigan, he started a nonprofit charity fund to raise money for the boy’s medical care. The goal would be not only to help him physically, but also to improve his emotional well-being.

“Back in Iraq, other children shun him due to his condition,” Howell said. “He wears a hat and pulls it down over the burnt side of his face. I decided to do everything in my power to help him return to a normal life in Iraq.”

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

But the path for this father of three would not be easy. He would have to rely on any resources available.

When he left Camp Ramadi, he depended heavily on people still stationed there to keep in touch with Mohammed and his mother, while he pioneered his plan.

He contacted Dr. Edward Lanigan, Chief of Reconstructive & Plastic Surgery at Michigan State University. Dr. Lanigan was willing to donate his time to help Mohammed, agreeing to do the surgery free of charge. The boy would need several serious operations, including skin grafts, hair transplants, reconstructive nose and ear surgery, and hand surgery.

“Dr. Lanigan is a savior,” Howell said. “He has been a magnificent help. Without him, none of this would be possible.”

JOURNEY OF A LIFETIME

After everything was organized stateside, Howell’s next move was to go back to Iraq for Mohammed.

“I went to Baghdad in April and met with Mohammed’s mother, and she allowed me to bring him to America on one condition: That I promised to bring him back,” he said.

At only 10, Mohammed had already experienced more than most adults, and he was about to embark on a voyage that would open his eyes to the world. His first night in Jordan was only a hint of what was to come in America.

“When we arrived at the hotel in Jordan, he asked me where all the water was going,” Howell said, laughing. “I had to tell him about indoor plumbing!”

“Back in Ramadi, he either went barefoot or wore sandals. All he came with were the clothes on his back. But since he has been here, we’ve received clothing donations. Literally, he had nothing, but now through donations, he has clothes and possessions.”



AMAZING FOOTWORK Mohammed has amazed his American friends, including MAJ Howell, with his exceptional soccer footwork.

FRIENDS FOREVER Since coming to America, Mohammed has developed an incredible friendship with MAJ Howell. He calls Howell every night before he goes to bed.



A local Iraqi family came forward and offered to take care of him. “They have two boys who go to the school with Mohammed,” Howell explained. “He stays with the host family during the week and with me on the weekend.” The school accommodated all of Mohammed’s needs, including an Arabic-speaking tutor. He did speak a little English already, though, thanks to a few of the U.S. Marines with whom his father had worked.

“He’s very bright and energetic, and it turns out he’s a tremendous soccer player,” Howell said with pride. “He calls me every day after school and then again before bed.”

LOCAL CELEBRITY

All who have interacted with Mohammed have been swept off their feet by his kindness, innocence and his good nature. Howell says he is enjoying the process of getting to know the child.

“Although I first met him and spent time with him in Iraq, I didn’t get to know him until he came to the States with me,” Howell said. “Everyone who meets him absolutely falls in love with him. He has a lot of support, more than he knows.”

For instance, a local basketball team decided to honor him during halftime at one of their games. This team just happened to be the National Basketball Association’s (NBA) Detroit Pistons.

“The team invited us to come to one of the play-off games,” Howell explained. “That night, Mohammed quickly learned how much support he had.”

TAKING IT ALL IN

“This has been an amazing journey, and I’ve learned a lot,” Howell said. “I didn’t have a road map or blueprints. I just wanted to make his life better.”

Howell says he feels blessed to have the privilege of helping Mohammed. For every hour on the phone and every penny spent, he has received so much more.

“After this journey of helping Mohammed, I am more thankful for what I have here, and that we were able to help him,” Howell said. **GX**



Howell looked around his garage as well, recognizing that certain items he and his family took for granted would be worldly wonders to young Mohammed.

“I have two teenage boys, and when we brought Mohammed over, we fixed up one of my boy’s old bikes,” Howell said. “Now this bike is Mohammed’s most prized possession. He has never had a bike or a soccer ball. He didn’t even have a jacket.”

ADAPTING TO HIS NEW LIFE

When Howell brought Mohammed to Michigan, he thought it was best to house the boy with people of his own culture, for familiarity and also to give him a jump-start on his education by enrolling him in a nearby Islamic school.

Editor’s note: Mohammed came to the United States in April and was scheduled to undergo five surgeries for burns. As of this print date, he had completed two surgeries, both of which were successful. Mohammed is enjoying his stay in America and plans to return to Iraq in April 2010. Although Dr. Lanigan of the MSU Department of Surgery has donated his services, the charges for Mohammed’s hospital care and anesthesia service for his two surgeries have exceeded \$18,000. MAJ Howell is actively seeking tax deductible charitable contributions to cover those expenses, plus the remaining expenses of the next three surgeries. 100 percent of all donations are used to cover Mohammed’s medical expenses. To learn more or donate, go to MartyrMedicalFund.com.

FIGHTING FOR HIGHER GROUND

AFGHANISTAN, MARCH 5, 2004—SFC JOSHUA D. BETTEN AND SFC ANDREW LEWIS OF COMPANY A, 3RD BATTALION, 20TH SPECIAL FORCES GROUP, FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD, LEAVE THEIR FIRE BASE ON THE BORDER OF AFGHANISTAN FOR A SIX-DAY, TWO-MAN SNIPER/OBSERVER MISSION TO PROVIDE EARLY-WARNING TO THE BASE AND INTERDICT ENEMY INFILTRATION.



AFTER REACHING THEIR LOCATION, THE MEN PREPARED A NIGHT POSITION ABOUT 1,600 METERS FROM THE BASE. SUDDENLY, THEY WERE ENGAGED BY A LARGE FORCE OF THE ENEMY MOVING ON THEIR POSITION. LEWIS FIRED A CLAYMORE MINE SET TO COVER THEIR POSITION, ELIMINATING TWO ATTACKERS WITH HIS PISTOL. SIMULTANEOUSLY, BETTEN OPENED FIRE ON OTHER ENEMY FORCES, PUTTING THREE DOWN. THE TEAM FOUND THEMSELVES UNDER FIRE FROM TWO SIDES AND WERE FORCED TO COVER EACH OTHER AS ONE RELOADED AND THE OTHER FIRED.



THE ENEMY FORCES ADVANCED SO CLOSE THAT LEWIS THREW THREE GRENADES, TEMPORARILY BREAKING UP THE ATTACK, THOUGH THEY REMAINED UNDER INCESSANT RIFLE FIRE. LEWIS WAS IN CONSTANT COMMUNICATION WITH THEIR BASE. THEY WERE TOLD IT WOULD BE 10 MINUTES BEFORE A RELIEF FORCE COULD ARRIVE.

WHEN THE PAIR TRIED TO MOVE TO A LESS-EXPOSED POSITION, THEY CAME UNDER MACHINE GUN FIRE FROM TWO DIRECTIONS. AFTER EXPENDING ALL THEIR RIFLE AMMUNITION AND WITH ONLY THEIR PISTOLS, THE TWO MEN SLID ABOUT 500 METERS DOWN A CANYON CLIFF, WHERE THEY FOUND COVER WHILE WAITING FOR THE RELIEF FORCE COMPOSED OF OTHER SPECIAL FORCES MEMBERS AND AFGHAN SOLDIERS.



ONCE RESCUED, THEIR REPORT MADE IT OBVIOUS THAT A LARGE (AT LEAST 30-MAN) ENEMY FORCE WAS MASSING TO ATTACK THE BASE. BUT THE SWIFT AND DETERMINED ACTIONS OF THESE TWO SOLDIERS GAVE ENOUGH ADVANCE WARNING THAT THE BASE WAS SPARED AN ATTACK. BOTH MEN DEFENDED NOT ONLY EACH OTHER, BUT ALL MEN AT THE BASE, AND BOTH WERE AWARDED THE SILVER STAR FOR THEIR BRAVERY AND QUICK RESPONSE IN THE FACE OF AN OVERWHELMING ENEMY ASSAULT.

END



EXPERTS



NEEDED

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BE A LEADER

PROMOTE YOURSELF

Become A Warrant Officer

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