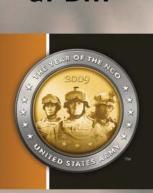


FAMILY MAGAZINE FALL 2009

ISSUE III VOL IV

Charleston Readiness Center Dedication

NewPost - 9/11
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2009

Year of the Noncommissioned Officer



Stanhope S. Spears Major General, SCARNG The Adjutant General

"Let me remind all of you who serve in the S.C. National Guard and your families of one thing - we are the best because of you!"

-Maj. Gen. Stanhope Spears



From the Desk of the Adjutant General

Since 9-11, we have deployed more than 10,500 Soldiers and Airmen from our great state and they have performed with honor and distinction. Each of them has been vital to the tremendous success of our unit operations during the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). These units have among their ranks some of the most dedicated, military professionals the world has ever seen. We call them Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs). I wish I could single out every outstanding NCO in the state, but suffice it to say, this magazine isn't big enough to list every one by name.

Unlike the United States military organizations we know so well, most nations still depend solely on a small number of officers to "oversee" enlisted soldiers. For those countries wise enough to have NCOs, few empower, train or educate them to their fullest potential. On the other hand, American NCOs are leaders with the tools capable of quickly "adjusting fire," so to speak,

Like the Republic itself, our NCOs were a unique American experiment. When Inspector General Friedrich von Steuben developed the American NCO concept while at Valley Forge in 1775 (during the American Revolution), he did so utilizing the best NCO traditions of the Prussian, French and British armies. Fortunately, these new Americanized models of the NCO proved to be what von Steuben called the "backbone of the Army." Von Steuben's NCO "Blue Book," or Regulations for the Order and Discipline of the Troops of the United States, has been updated a time-or-two since it was published over 200 years ago, but one thing has remained the same, our NCOs are the backbone of the Army.

to counter new, ever-evolving threats on the battlefield.

Since the Revolution, kings, tyrants and totalitarian regimes have tested our "backbone." They've proven they can build big, impressive armies, but without a strong NCO Corps like ours, they never have a more formidable army. Our Army is the best in the world because we have the best NCOs! As we celebrate our NCOs during this "Year of the NCO," please accept my deepest gratitude for the work each of you has done to make our S.C. National Guard the best in the nation.

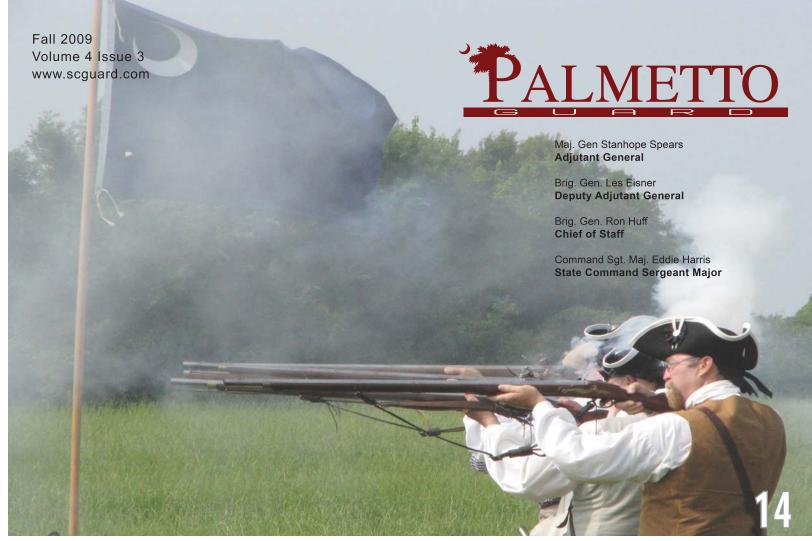
Let me also pass on my congratulations. As the Army National Guard's Year of the NCO initiatives seek to better inform and educate Congress, government institutions and the American people of the national treasure we've known as the NCO Corps, each of you NCOs should also personally benefit. The Guard's new education and NCO development initiatives include an Army Career Tracker pilot program; Phase 1, implementation of Structured and Guided Self Development; launch of the Warrior University Web site (includes College of the American Soldier); transformation of the NCO Education System; and an expansion in the number of online colleges nested under Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Army Degrees (SOCAD). These efforts should help you in your career progression while also ensuring the pre-eminence of America's NCO fighting force.

In conclusion, let me remind all of you who serve in the S.C. National Guard and your families of one thing – we are the best because of you! We're a "Go-To" state for difficult, high-priority missions here and abroad because you're the best this country has to offer. You make it a pleasure for me to come to work everyday and lead such a fine organization. I offer my deepest gratitude and appreciation to you. Thank you all for making the sacrifices necessary to keep the people of our state and nation free.

Sincerely,

Stanhope S. Spears Major General, SCARNG The Adjutant General

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ON THE COVER

The United States Army has designated 2009 as the "Year of the Noncommissioned Officer" and this cover honors the invaluable service of our S.C. Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs). The S.C. National Guard has dedicated this year to them and their contributions to our state and nation.

Cover photo by Sgt. Roberto DiGiovine Cover design by Staff Sgt. Jorge Intriago Revolutionary War re-enactors from the Castillo de San Marcos National Monument demonstrate the types of weapons and uniforms our S.C.Citizen-Soldiers used during their successful effort to repulse 2,500 British at Breach Inlet during America's first decisive victory at Ft. Moultrie on June 28, 1776. These National Park Service volunteers, who performed on June 28, 2009, are part of a year-long celebration honoring the bicentennial of Ft. Moultrie's completion. (Photo by Maj. Scott Bell, S.C. National Guard Historian)



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S.C. NATIONAL GUARD NEWS BRIEF



Lt. Col. Andrew W. Batten, the Assistant State Army Aviation Officer, is one of 20 S.C. residents between the ages of 25 and 45 selected for a prestigious two-year Liberty Fellowship.

Over the next two years, Batten will attend 23 days of intellectually rigorous and highly interactive seminars hosted alternately at Wofford College, Pawleys Island and the Aspen Institute.

The privately-funded Liberty Fellowship is a highly selective leadership program which seeks to inspire outstanding leadership in South Carolina, empowering the state – and its future leaders - to realize their full potential. For more information about the Liberty Fellowship, please see: www.libertyfellowshipsc.org.

Members of the 169th Security Forces Squadron (SCANG), arrived home on Sunday July 26, after a six-month deployment to Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan. Twenty-three SFS members deployed as part of a total force security package, supporting the 376th Air Expeditionary Wing. The mission of the SFS was to provide installation and personnel security.

The SFS also performed humanitarian missions, including supporting a local orphanage. They assisted repair of some of the buildings in the area and raised and donated over \$1,000 for the "Kyrgyz Community Outreach." They also performed over 200 hours of charity work.

The unit returned in three separate groups, each being welcomed with hugs and cheers by friends and family members waiting their arrival at the Columbia Metropolitan Airport.



Photo courtesy of Georgetown County Bureau of Aging

Photo by Maj. Scott Bel



Sgt. Herman A. Vanderhorst, a recruiter from Georgetown, S.C., donates 25 box fans to Georgetown County's Bureau of Aging Services July 13. Vanderhorst's contribution is part of a community-wide effort to distribute fans to the elderly in an effort to beat the summer heat. Assisting him with unloading the fans are Pvt. Joshua Bridges (left), and Joanne Jacobs (right), manager of Georgetown County's Bureau of Aging Services.

Sgt. 1st Class Don Sornson, marketing director of the S.C. National Guard's Recruiting and Retention Command, poses in the inflatable Command Sgt. Maj. Claymore for a "Palmetto Soldiers and Sailors Camp" event held outside the S.C. State Museum on June 9.

The camp highlighted the tremendous contributions of the S.C. National Guard's 118th Infantry Regiment during World War I.

During the week-long camp, sponsored by the S.C. Confederate Relic Room and Military Museum, 24, 9-13 year-olds heard from guest speakers about South Carolina's role during the "Great War."





Members of the S.C. National Guard's 246th Army Band perform the finale of their concert at Ft. Moultrie on June 30. The concert is part of a series of special events held this year in honor of the bicentennial completion of Ft. Moultrie on Dec. 19, 1809. The fort is the site of America's first decisive victory in the American Revolution on June 28, 1776.

Approximately 200 people turned out to watch the show on blankets, lawn chairs, golf carts, bicycles and some from their back porches. Throughout much of the history of the fort, Army bands have entertained the Soldiers and residents of Sullivan's Island, S.C. where the fort is located.

The S.C.N.G. has joined the social media network. Become a fan of the South Carolina National Guard on Facebook or follow us on Twitter for news and updates. Please see http://scguardnow.net for information on the Air & Ground Expo to be held in Oct. 2009.



Story by Capt. Tim W. Irvin, 218th MEB Public Affairs Officer

The S.C. National Guard dedicated the new Charleston Readiness Center on Aug. 2. The massive building is the new home and headquarters of the 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade (MEB) and is located on Hagood Ave. at The Citadel. The Adjutant General of South Carolina, Maj. Gen. Stanhope S. Spears, dedicated the Readiness Center to the Washington Light Infantry (WLI) and Sumter Guards, which are the foundation of the S.C. Army National Guard in the Low Country.

In 1807, the citizens of Charleston organized the WLI in response to the attack on the U.S.S. Chesapeake by the British off the coast of Virginia. In 1842, the WLI was one of the major influences in the creation of the Military College of S.C., presently known as The Citadel. The WLI is one of the nation's oldest militia units of its kind.

The Sumter Guards, also known as "the Gamecocks," fought in every major American conflict since its founding in 1819. They continue as a proud military fraternity and active sponsor of the S.C. Army National Guard.

The Charleston Readiness Center, which adjoins the Johnson Hagood Stadium at The Citadel, is a magnificent six-story, 134,000 square-foot facility, which occupies one of the highest elevations in Charleston. Its state-of-the-art construction makes it the only facility of its type in the entire United States.

It took the cooperation of many people and organizations to make this facility possible. Essential to the effort was the Army National Guard's partnership with The Citadel and its members. The Citadel, along with its alumni, provided a large amount of the state matched funds required to begin construction. This project would never have

Soldiers presenting the American Flag, S.C. state flag, 218th Maeuver Enhancement Brigade flag and guidons from each of the 218th MEBs subordinate units, stand in formation outside of the newly constructed Charleston Readiness Center, which serves as the new home of the 218th. (Photo by Spc. Joshua Edwards 218th MEB Public Affairs Specialist)

been achievable without The Citadel and its members.

During the dedication ceremony, Spears thanked The Citadel and others. "Also richly deserving of our thanks are the architects,

Heery International and Glick/Boehm and Associates, the contractors, EllisDon Construction Services, Inc. and Cooper River Contracting, and, of course, our own Facilities Management Office and its fine professional staff led by Mr. Gary Grant," said Spears.

The 218th MEB occupied the Charleston Readiness Center in early June. The 218th has been tasked with the Chemical, Biological, Nuclear, Radiological and High Explosive (CBRNE) Consequence Management Reaction Force, or CCMRF for short. The 218th will assume command of the CCMRF mission beginning on October 1, 2009. This new task force will deploy on the order of the President once requested by a governor to help support state and local officials with a manmade disaster. The Pentagon has chosen the 218th MEB to control more than a dozen Reserve and National Guard units throughout the United States and Puerto Rico. The 218th will be working along side many different civilian and military personnel when they are called upon.

"We are very grateful to have such an impressive new home for the 218th. With the addition of the new CCMRF mission and this wonderful new facility, I'm confident the 218th will continue to do great things," said Brig. Gen. Glenn A. Bramhall, commander of the 218th.

SWAMP FOXES TAKE ON RED FLAG





Members of the Swamp Foxes from the 169th Fighter Wing at McEntire Joint National Guard Base sharpened their aerial combat

skills in the skies over Alaska, during a 10-day Red Flag exercise held at Eielson Air Force Base from July 27 to Aug. 7.

The high-intensity training is designed to assist junior pilots experience realistic warlike scenarios. Red Flag-Alaska offers a unique training environment, with over 67,000 square miles of airspace for aircrews to plan and execute full-force combat missions. Together the good team (blue) and the bad-guy team (red) practice skills such as suppression of enemy air defenses, destruction of enemy air defenses, and other large scale integrated engagements in both air and ground.

"Red Flag evolved after the Vietnam War, when studies demonstrated most pilots were shot down during their first 10 combat missions," said Lt. Col. David "Oscar" Meyer, assistant director of operations for the 157th Fighter Squadron.

Wing pilots and maintenance specialists took eight F-16s to Red Flag. The exercise included 120 Airmen from McEntire, who joined more than 700 personnel from other active duty and Air National Guard units with different aircraft platforms such as B-1s, F-22s, C-17s and A-10s.

1st Lt. Justin "Alf" Dumais, one of the Swamp Foxes newest pilots, deployed to the exercise, where the team flew two sorties a day for eight of the 10 days, with a new threat scenario each time.

"Red Flag was an awesome learning experience," said Dumais. He was impressed to see all of the various Air Force capabilities fall into place during the exercise's engagements.

Col. Mike "Puff" Hudson, the detachment commander for the deployed Airmen, said the reputation of the Swamp Foxes preceded them. "They were very happy to see us," said

During the first day, the unit demonstrated their force protection capabilities by destroying all of their missile site targets, setting the tone for the rest of the participants.

Mission planning was a key element, as the large-scale exercise involved coordinating with package commanders and integrating intricate details on weather, rules of engagement, aircraft takeoff times and targets. Capt. Matt "Sherpa" Schroer, an active duty Air Force officer assigned to the Fighter Wing, had his first opportunity as a mission commander during the exercise.

"It easily takes twelve hours to prepare for a one-hour flight mission," said Schroer.

His planning effort encompassed everything from priority ordnance, targets and the integration of the platforms of each aircraft.

Following Red Flag, the jets and crews returned home to smiles and pats on the back for a job well done. Some returning Airmen were surprised to have family members greet them on the flight line.

"My husband usually tells me which

aircraft number he's flying, so we can watch when he's coming in," said Rachel Ferrario, the spouse of Maj. Michael "Vito" Ferrario. She came with the couple's two young sons, Matthew, 3 and Mitch, 5.

While the unit was at Red Flag, the couple's 5-year-old said something very amusing while watching a special on television about firefighters. "He said he was glad his Daddy is not a firefighter, because it's such a dangerous job," said Rachel Ferrario. "Right now, it's just Daddy coming home," she said.

Red Flag-Alaska was just the beginning of an active schedule for the Fighter Wing. Members will be preparing for and executing missions in Jordan and Louisiana, in preparation for their first 120-day "stand-alone" Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) mission to Southwest Asia next year.



Maj. Michael Ferrario is welcomed home to McEntire Joint National Guard Base by his family, spouse Rachel and two sons Matthew and Mitch after returning from Red Flag in Alaska. (Photo by Capt. Cindi King, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs)

READY TO STRIKE AND SOAR IN LONGBOW

Story by Sgt. Tracci Dorgan and Spc. Brad Mincey, 108th Public Affairs Detachment Photos courtesy of the U.S. Army



The S.C. Army National Guard's 1st of the 151st Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB) held a rollout ceremony for their new AH-64D Apache Longbow.

The ceremony took place at the Army Air Support Facility on McEntire Joint National Guard Base.

The 1st of the 151st is the second unit in the Army National Guard inventory to receive the Longbow.

Lt. Col. Jakie R. Davis Jr., commander of the 1st of the 151st (ARB), was proud to announce the arrival of the new Apaches.

"With this ceremony, we take another step forward in the development of our capabilities as warriors," said Davis. "I truly pity the next adversary these brave warriors face on the battlefield while flying the AH-64D Longbow."

Davis welcomed Maj. Gen. Stanhope Spears, the Adjutant General of the S.C. National Guard, Brig. Gen. Lester Eisner, the Deputy Adjutant General, Glenn Driggs, a representative for the Boeing Company's AH-64 Apache Business Development, Col. Dale Hall, the commander of the 59th Aviation Troop Command and many others, to include the Soldiers of the 1st of the 151st, who stood proudly in formation during the ceremony.

The 1st of the 151st has anticipated the

arrival of the new Apaches for many months. On the morning of Feb. 20, 2009, the first Longbows arrived.

Driggs said if it weren't for the combined efforts of Eisner and the Boeing Company, the Longbows may have gone elsewhere.

"It was a long process to get the Apache Longbow here," said Driggs. "But because of the strength and proven success of the 1st of the 151st, there was no doubt they were going to get the new Apache."

The Longbows have dramatically improved capabilities over previous Apache models. One improvement enables crews to attack enemies from farther distances, keeping the aircrew safer.

"For situational awareness, this is an excellent aircraft," said Capt. Pete Wright, a pilot assigned to Company A, 1st of the 151st. "It's far easier to put an attack frame together and put steel on target."

The video and navigation capabilities are also greatly improved. These, and a host of other improvements, will better enable the pilots to react and complete any mission they are assigned.

"With the new FLIR (Forward Looking InfraRed) system, we can watch people and observe them farther than they can hear us flying," said Warrant Officer 2 Joel Gooch, a

pilot in Company C, 1st of the 151st. "If we can see it, we can shoot it."

The training program for the Longbow is between 18 months and two years. Every pilot has to go through the training, even if they are familiar with the older airframes, because the Longbow technology and new features are so dramatically different.

New pilots are being trained solely on the AH-64Ds, while those familiar with the older airframes are being retrained.

"It's a very user-friendly aircraft," said Wright. "But there is just significantly more information that you have to take in. You have to prioritize the information, or you could get an overload."

Having successfully flown the AH-64A Apache in numerous military operations, including Operation Joint Endeavor, Operation Southern Watch, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom, they will now have the opportunity to continue their success with the AH-64D Longbow.

"In the long history of the 1st of the 151st, we have always been the best of the best," said Davis. "We have earned this aircraft through blood, sweat and tears. Now we are ready to strike and it's time to soar."

Story by 1st Lt. Jamie Mulder, Joint Forces Headquarters Public Affairs *Information and logo provided by www.yearofthenco.com* Photo by Sgt. Roberto DiGiovine, Joint Forces Headquarters Public Affairs

In appreciation of their commitment to service and great sacrifices on our Nation's behalf, the Secretary of the Army established 2009 as Year of the NCO (noncommissioned

The U.S. Army's NCO Corps is renowned as the worlds most accomplished group of military professionals, with more than 200 years of service. Historical accounts and daily actions of life as an NCO are illustrated by acts of courage, dedication and motivation to do what it takes to complete the mission.

NCOs have been applauded for service in military operations ranging from Gettysburg, to charges on Omaha Beach and battles along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, to the current conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Each year, top NCOs are recognized across South Carolina through the NCO of the Year competition.

This making it to the state-level competition were Sgt. 1st Class Scott Jarman from

better. It's an NCOs responsibility to put a desire into Soldiers."

"It's about trying to make every Soldier

- Staff Sgt. Bryan Floyd

the 228th Signal Brigade, Staff Sgt. Bryan Floyd from the 218th Regiment (Leadership), Staff Sgt. Donnie Henderson from the 218th Maneuver Enhanced Brigade, Staff Sgt. Jonathan Perry from 263rd AAMDC, Sgt. Herald Fullerton from 59th Troop Command and Sgt. David McMillen from 59th Aviation Troop Command.

"Thank you for what you are doing. It's important that as we transform into an operational reserve, we have good, confident NCOs," said Brig. Gen. Lester Eisner, Deputy

Adjutant General of S.C.

Throughout the competition the points were close, but Fullerton pulled ahead and took the top spot as S.C. NCO of the year.

From company level to state level, these NCOs were tested physically and mentally. The competitions ranged from physical fitness, general knowledge, Soldier knowledge, and everything in between.

"When I was given the opportunity, I jumped at it," said Floyd.

"It was an intense three-days competing at state," said McMillen. We were all competing for the number-one spot but through the competition, the comraderie was high. All these people were thrown together in this mental and physical battle, but we all pulled together for support."

As well as competing for the top spot, these

NCOs want to pass along the word of what this competition can do for a Soldier and what they can get out

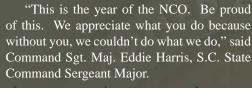
"All of us want to train Soldiers day in and day out," said Fullerton. We're willing to stand here and share what we've learned."

Henderson has already started passing along lessons learned to his own Soldiers. He has started a company-level competition that includes a six-mile road march and 20 warrior tasks.

"It's about trying to make every Soldier better. It's an NCOs responsibility to put a desire into Soldiers," said Floyd.

THE YEAR everything to another Soldier in the unit," said Fullerton. look for him to do real well." It's UNITED S important to these NCOs that every Soldier out there gets the chance to be the best they can be. Putting emphasis on the NCO of the Year competition forces Soldiers to train for years, ultimately bettering themselves.

"I've already passed on

















OF THE NCO



South Carolina National Guard NCO of the Year

Sgt. Herald Fullerton 59th Troop Command

Home: Barnwell, S.C. Years of service: 12 years, 8 months

Major Subordinate Command NCO's of the Year

Staff Sgt. Bryan Floyd 218th Regiment (Leadership)

Home: Pomaria, S.C. Years of service: 19 years, 10 months

Staff Sgt. Donnie Henderson 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

Home: Lattimore, N.C. Years of service: 11 years, 10 months Staff Sgt. Scott Jarman 228th Signal Brigade

Home: Sumter, S.C. Years of service: 23 years

Staff Sgt. Jonathan Perry 263rd AAMDC

Home: Aiken, S.C.

Years of service: 10 years, 2 months

Sgt. David McMillen 59th Aviation Troop Command

Home: Eastover, S.C.

Years of Service: 12 years, 4 months



Information and logo provided by www.yearofthenco.com.
For your opportunity to participate in the S.C.N.G. NCO of the Year competition, please talk to your leadership or any of the NCOs from past competitions.

Staff Sgt. Bryan Floyd, Sgt. David McMillen, Staff Sgt. Donnie Henderson and Sgt. Herald Fullerton, NCO of the year competitors, with Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Harris (center).

















251st ASMC Earns

CCMRF Validation

Story by Spc. Brad Mincey, 108th Public Affairs Detachment Photo courtesy of the 251st ASMC

As the threat of domestic terrorism continues to be a concern, S.C. National Guard units are ramping up their training in preparation of such an event.

The 251st Area Support Medical Company (ASMC) based in Darlington spent several months training in preparation for the CCMRF (Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear High Explosive Consequence Management Response Force) mission they will assume on October 1. They completed their training on July 31 after a week of validation.

The unit received validation in triage, treatment, evacuation and decontamination.

"During this training, we provided medical support to civilian and military authorities," said 1st Lt. Mike Haley, commander of the 251st ASMC.

The CCMRF validation was one of the few times that the unit was able to work directly with their civilian counterparts.

"With us being under CCMRF, we can find more training opportunities with other units and civilian authorities," said Haley. "I think one of the best things for us working with the civilians is that they bring a little more thinking outside of the box. Both the military and civilians have something to offer that complements each other's mission."

During the training, mass casualties were one of the challenges Soldiers faced. The casualties would range anywhere from simple cuts and scrapes to radiation burns and sucking chest wounds.

"Each casualty had a medical casualty card and we would have to respond accordingly," said Pvt. Christopher Goodwin, a medic in the 251st. "We learned all of the basic information when we went through AIT (Advanced Individual Training), but this training has really enhanced our skills."

The 251st Soldiers also gained access to training they otherwise might not have gotten if not involved with CCMRF, as they were able to spend a portion of the month of June in Alabama going through Technical Emergency Response Training (TERT).

During the training, Soldiers experienced numerous types of chemical and biological agents.

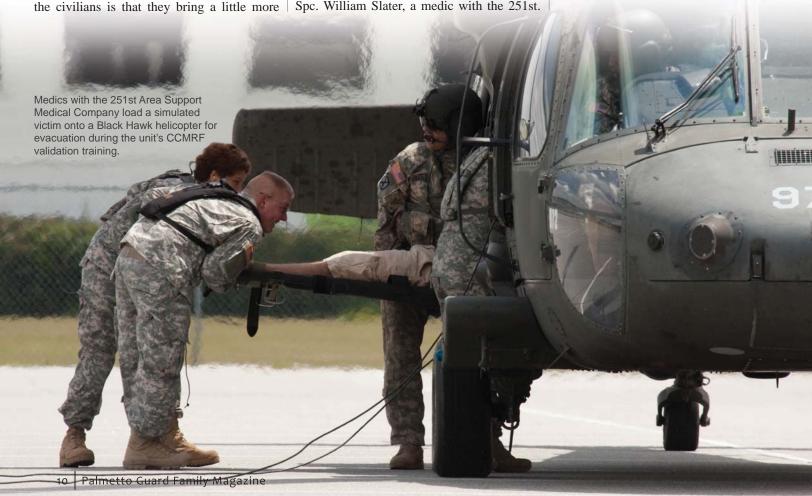
"I enjoyed the training in Alabama," said Spc. William Slater, a medic with the 251st. "We got to see each type of attack we may be involved with. We are more experienced and skilled having gone through that training."

Another benefit of CCMRF preparation was how it enhanced unit cohesion. At one time in the past, half of the unit was in Afghanistan while the other half was in South Carolina. The unit felt somewhat disjointed prior to getting validated for the CCMRF mission.

"This mission has really made us one cohesive unit," said Slater. "I'm very proud of the unit and everyone I work with."

Although this is a medical company, they also need those who support them to be prepared to go at a moments notice as well. The company's administrative support, supply personnel and cooks went through validation with the medics.

"We got to go through a lot of the same things the medics went through," said Sgt. Alexander McCall, a cook with the 251st. "We went through the decontamination and gas chambers like everyone else. It was good training and has brought us a lot closer."



"PALMETTO HAWKS" Still Setting the Standard

When you think of the UH-60 "Black Hawk" in relation to the S.C. National Guard, the first thing that comes to mind is firefighting or a taxi-cab. However in June, the S.C.N.G. welcomed home Company A, 2-149th Aviation, the "Palmetto Hawks," from their second combat deployment to Iraq in four years.

The Palmetto Hawks, in true Palmetto Citizen-Soldier fashion, did not disappoint. During their absense from home, they made a long

lasting impression on those they served along side. Their daily professionalism and steadfast loalty exceeded all standards and set the operational bar high enough to be recognized by the top two commanders in Iraq.

The Palmetto Hawks (known in Iraq as Rebellion Flight) brought a wealth of experience to the table with more than 60% of its Soldiers serving in one or more previous combat tours. Alpha Company was designated as the command and control element for the battalion. Based on their history, experience, knowledge and exceptional performance during the mobilization process they were chosen to serve as Gen. Ray Odierno, Commander, Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I) and Lt. Gen. Lloyd

Austin, Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) Commanding General's personal flight company.

While operating as a forward-deployed asset from the battalion, the unit was stationed in Baghdad, Iraq. This 34 Soldier company and four attached Soldiers, operated six of the unit's eight assigned helicopters with a 100% mission accomplishment rate – unmatched by the other units in the brigade. They accomplished more than 7,000 hours of aircraft maintenance, between the 331 missions and over 3,000 combat flight hours, with no missions dropped due to maintenance, personnel or operational complications.

During their tenure in Iraq, they also had personnel serve with distinction in the MNC- I C3 Air and Task Force Joker battle captain's offices. As experts in their field, the Palmetto Hawks were additionally tasked as consultants for the construction of the VIP Flight Facility and operational compound on Baghdad International Airport, writing the aviation standard operating procedures for MNF-I and MNC-I commanding generals. They were instrumental in improvements to landing zone security, SOP development for helicopter operations at the New Embassy Complex in Baghdad and the annexation of a former

> medical evacuation helipad to increase the VIP support capability for future units.

> The Palmetto Hawks were awarded eight Bronze Stars, 12 Combat Action Badges, 52 Air Medals, four Meritorious Service Medals, three Army Commendation Medals and four Army Achievement Medals. Because of their professionalism and high standards, they were assigned to carry many distinguished visitors during the rotation to include the Vice-President of the United States, White House Cabinet members, the United States Central Command Commander, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and numerous foreign dignitaries such as Iraqi President Jalal Talabani.

Additionally, the Soldiers of Alpha Company were recognized as "commendable" by the U.S. Army Department of Evaluation and Standardization, during their out-brief following the tactical observation of the unit in February of 2009. Alpha Company was the only unit in the brigade to receive this high rating.

Like other S.C. National Guard units who have deployed over the past few years, the Palmetto Hawks returned home as a unit leading from the front and setting the standard for everyone else to follow.

Post - 9/11 Montgomery GI Bill

Story by Spc. Tracey Martin, 108th Public Affairs Detachment

Many changes have occurred in this country since the terrorist attacks on Sept.11, 2001. As a result, a war ensued, requiring more "boots on the ground." Military volunteers and "warriors" rose to the task of defending this great nation to sustain its freedom.

Prior service Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines rejoined the ranks, while vigilant citizens changed course to enlist and join the fight to defend the United States of America. Some left jobs, families and higher pursuits of education behind, to see this task through, ensuring and securing domestic tranquility.

Most S.C. National Guard servicemembers returned from deployments to their jobs and families. Now, thanks to the Post 9/11 Montgomery GI Bill, many can continue their higher education goals.

"The service members need to be aware the first step to obtaining this benefit is to go to www.gibill. va.gov to apply for eligibility," said Deborah A.

Godfrey, the Veterans Affairs Coordinator at Midlands Technical College. She said it is currently taking Veterans Affairs six to nine weeks to process eligibility claims.

The website, www.gibill.va.gov, has information on the "Yellowribbon Program," the application to apply for the benefits, payment rates, approved education programs, transferring Chapter 30 (old active GI Bill) to Chapter 33 (New Post 9/11 GI Bill), and transferring

benefits to dependents.

"Most Soldiers are looking to transfer their benefits to their dependents, due to their age or current education status," said Sgt. Larry Coleman, GI Bill Manager in the Education Office of the S.C. National Guard Joint

Forces Headquarters.

"The service members have to have served six active duty years to transfer the benefit to their spouse and ten years to transfer to their child," said Coleman.

There are so many details for the service member to consider when deciding whether to continue in the old GI Bill versus the new Post 9/11 GI Bill, or in establishing eligibility for the benefits, based on their military status.

Coleman said he has been receiving numerous phone calls since last year about this new benefit. "We encourage units to contact us so we can conduct training on this new Post 9/11 GI Bill and answer questions in a

group setting, so we can best serve the community," said Coleman.

The S.C. National Guard Education office is located in the Bluff Road Armory at 1225 Bluff Road, Columbia, SC 29201:

Telephone: (803) 806-1560 Email: larry.i.coleman1@us.army.mil





S.C. Guard Family Named

Volunteers of the Year

Story by Spc. Joshua Edwards 218th MEB Public Affairs Specialist

Sgt. Kenneth W. Messick along with his wife Nora and two sons Daniel and Kenneth James received the National Family Programs volunteer of the year award. This award was presented by Gen. Craig R. McKinley, the National Guard Bureau Chief, on July 26 in Dearborn, Mich.

The Messick family received this award for their selfless dedication to the families and Soldiers of the National Guard. This is the first time Family Programs has given this award. It is awarded to the family that has dedicated themselves to volunteering within the Army and Air National Guard.

When asked about how he felt about receiving the award, Messick said, "We are very excited to be recognized at a national level. My wife and I don't care for the lime light but we are honored that the Guard thinks that much of us."

Messick is assigned to Bravo Battery of the 178th Field Artillery Battalion based in Spartanburg, S.C. Messick and his spouse have spent the past few years organizing events and working closely with the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) conducting bake and hotdog sales to raise money for Family Programs.

Every drill weekend, Mrs. Messick delivers a coffee and biscuit breakfast donated by a local restaurant for the Soldiers of the 178th.

In October of 2008, Mrs. Messick was awarded the Molly Pitcher Award at the

178th's annual Field Artillery Ball. Honorable Order of Molly Pitcher recognizes women who have voluntarily contributed in a significant way to the improvement of the field artillery community. Mrs. Messick was presented the award for past accomplishments and dedication in supporting 178th Soldiers and families. This is the highest award presented to a civilian from a field artillery battalion

Messick will be deploying back to Afghanistan with the 178th sometime next year. Mrs. Messick and their two sons will be hard at work doing what they can, volunteering to help the families and Soldiers of the Army National Guard.

New Additions to the

Family Programs Staff

The Family Programs Office is continuing to grow. Each of the five new outstanding team members has brought a wealth of experience and talent to our organization, which will allow us to better serve you. Please join us with a hearty "Welcome Aboard!"



Jeffrey Rose Director of Psychological Health jeffery.rose@ceridian.com 803-429-1315



LaTarsa Williams Military OneSource Consultant latarsa.williams@ militaryonesource.com 803-873-8333



Tina Brown Military Family Life Child and Youth Consultina.l.brown@mhn.com 803-767-6973



Ashley Durant Survivor Outreach Specialist Coordinator ashley.durant@us.army.mil 803-526-3793



Kelly Earley Military Family Life Adult and Family Consultant kelly.l.earley@mhn.com 803-834-0013

WOUNDED WARRIOR RETREAT

Relaxing fun for Soldiers and their families

Story by Sherry Marsh, S.C. National Guard Family Programs Office and Sgt. Roberto DiGiovine, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Photos by Sgt. Roberto DiGiovine

The S.C. National Guard, the Ft. Jackson Soldier Family Assistance Center and the American Red Cross hosted 50 "Wounded Warriors" and their family members during a free, fun-filled weekend of relaxation and activities at Bethel Woods Lake Lodges and Camp Grounds, in York, August 14-16.

The annual Wounded Warrior Retreat is designed to promote healing and foster family cohesion during a Soldier's recovery process. The event opened with a warm welcome from Maj. Gen. Stanhope Spears, the Adjutant General of S.C. During his informal comments, he focused on the selfless sacrifice of Soldiers and their families – both past and present.

"Throughout our nation's history, we've been very fortunate to have folks like you willing to serve our country," said Spears.

Soon after Spears' comments, the Wounded Warriors and their family members began

exploring the tranquil environment of Bethel Woods. The vacation weekend is designed to be relaxing and filled with fun outdoor activities for the entire family. Such activities included canoeing, swimming, rock wall climbing and fishing.

Lt. Col. Clarence Bowser, the S.C. National Guard's State Family Programs director feels the retreat is a tribute to the sacrifices our Soldiers and their family members have endured through the hardship of combat.

"We endeavor to make this retreat refreshing and renewing both personally and professionally," said Browser.

For more information about obtaining a reservation for the next Wounded Warrior Retreat, please contact Sherry Marsh at (803) 806-1641, or visit: www.guardfamily.org.







Fall 2009

If These Walls Could I Part 2: From Victory Over Great Britain to Victory Over Spain

Story and photo by Maj. Scott Bell, S.C. National Guard Historian Archival photos provided by The National Park Service

Editor's Note: As our state commemorates the bicentennial of the completion of Ft. Moultrie on Dec. 19, 1809, the "Swamp Fox History" pages of this magazine will showcase South Carolina's epic service at the fort in a personified three-part series called "If These Walls Could Talk."



ey ya'll! Welcome back to Ft. Moultrie! Thanks for dropping by to celebrate the 200th anniversary of my completion. Since your last visit, a lot of folks have stopped in to see me. The S.C. National Guard's 246th Army Band performed for me on June 30th. Sure glad they didn't have to march here from Columbia like our Guardsmen use to have to do! Others have visited dressed the same way our National Guard did in the 1800s. All of these gestures mean a lot to me and bring back some very exciting memories.

Since I mentioned the 1800s, let me share a few thoughts following our victory over Great Britain through our victory over Spain in 1898. You might think when my job in the American Revolution wrapped up in April 1784, they would have put this ole' war horse out to pasture. Let me share a secret with you, they did give me about a 10-year vacation. Now, how would you school kids like to have a summer break last that long?

Unfortunately, the lasting peace our great Citizen-Soldiers hoped for after the Revolution didn't last. By June 1794, the British were up to their old tricks again and my boss – Governor William Moultrie – ordered his folks to give me a facelift. Just two months later a British squadron sailed right up within my view, boarded our ship *Norfolk* and took four of our country's Seamen. Wish I'd been in fighting form by then to give those bullies the same kind of whipping we gave Parker's squadron in 1776! Fortunately, cooler heads prevailed and several months later the Jay Treaty was

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signed.

Needless to say, despite King George III of England's reassurances, the folks here in Charleston still didn't trust him. They pitched in over \$12,000, more than a few hundred thousand dollars in today's money, to help our nation pay for my second new look. When I went back to work on Nov. 1798, I was 17-feet tall, had six 12-pounder cannons and 10 26-pounders.

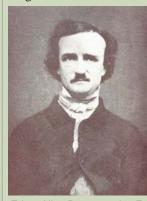
Like the ancient warrior Achilles, I felt impenetrable but secretly, I too had an "Achilles heel," so to speak. Mine was a new 50-foot-wide glacis, or sloping wall of ground facing Charleston harbor. When the hurricane we call the "Tremendous Storm" of Sept. 7, 1804, rolled through here, it nearly wiped me out. But, we S.C. folks are resilient and my friend Alexander Macomb, who later became the commanding general of the U.S. Army, came in here and finished me up on the third try. After a five-year vacation, I was back to work protecting Charleston on Dec. 19, 1809. Although my 15-foot-high brick walls have taken a beating many times since, I think the saying "third time's a charm" proved true for me.

The next couple of years reminded all of us in S.C. that in order to have peace, you must have a strong military. Unprovoked British attacks on U.S. shipping occurred and more and more Citizen-Soldiers began joining S.C. militia units. When war was finally declared against Britain in 1812, militia units were here preparing me for another British invasion. Fortunately for the Brits, they never came within firing distance of me during the War of

1812. I guess they learned their lesson on June 28, 1776! Peace between our two countries came on Christmas Eve 1814. We've pretty much been friends ever since.

For the next 36 years, a variety of Guardsmen from our state and others in the southeast occasionally marched down here to do their annual training with the U.S. Army. Most of the time, the barracks were full so they'd set up tents around me, drill and work on their artillery skills. I also got to meet some famous folks during this time.

One of them was a feller by the name of Edgar Allen Poe. He was stationed here with



Edgar Allan Poe served at Ft. Moultrie from 1827 - 1828.

Company H of the 1st U.S. Artillery 1827 from 1828. Back in those days, a lot of people worked on farms and didn't have time to get an education. But he did. And while he was here, he wrote a lot. In fact, Moultrieville, now the town of Sullivan's Island,

was the inspiration for "The Gold Bug," his famous buried pirate treasure tale. He even mentions me in the story!

Another colorful figure was Osceola, the great Seminole Indian chief who lived here during the Second Seminole War. To this day, I still feel sorry for the man. When he, 116 of his warriors and 82 women and children were



treacherously taken into custody under a white flag of truce, they were imprisoned here in January 1838. We tried our best to make them comfortable. In fact, Osceola became a celebrity and got to take in a show in Charleston before his death several weeks later. We gave him a full military funeral with honors. He and my dear friend William Moultrie are buried here.

Do any of you like baseball? I'm a huge fan! Abner Doubleday is another famous character who served here as an artillery officer in the 1860s. He's often credited for "inventing" baseball. Whether the legend is true or not, one thing's for sure, there's been a lot of great baseball played here ever since. Every time I see parents playing catch with their kids out here, I'm reminded of the brave, young captain I knew, who was here at the outbreak of our

nation's tragic Civil War.

As someone who had friends on both sides of that conflict let me tell you, I hope our nation never has to go through that again. When S.C. became the first state to secede from the United States on Dec. 20, 1860, I again became the focal point for both sides in controlling Charleston harbor.

Soon after, a couple thousand S.C. troops stationed themselves about a mile or so north of me. The day after Christmas 1860, Maj. Robert Anderson, my commander, abandoned me and secretly sent his entire force to Ft. Sumter in the middle of the harbor.

The next day, I was under S.C. control. I kept hoping an all-out shooting war wouldn't happen but on Jan. 9, 1861, the first shots were fired. President James Buchanan didn't listen to S.C. Governor Francis W. Pickens' warning about any attempt to resupply Ft. Sumter. Buchanan sent the Union supply ship Star of the West anyway. As they watched the ship near Ft. Sumter, Citadel cadets on Morris Island (located across the harbor from me) fired into the vessel. My defenders then fired a couple of volleys forcing the ship's hasty retreat. Tensions continued to rise until April 12, 1861, when General P.G.T. Beauregard ordered all Confederate artillery batteries around Charleston harbor to open fire on Ft. Sumter. Two hours later, Doubleday fired the Union's first shots of the war at me in response. Hardly put a scratch on me. The cannon balls just bounced off my walls. I didn't take it personally. Doubleday was just doing his duty.

For the next four years, I did my duty and protected both Charleston harbor and my S.C. defenders through many battles. I got battered but I never broke. I reckon that's why both sides pitched in to fix me up after the war ended in 1865. Like me, our country was healing and by March 1869, Congress allowed S.C. to have a state militia again. A year later, they started calling themselves the S.C. National Guard. By 1876, I was as shiny as a brand new penny and people from all over the country began coming to visit me. It sure felt good to live in a united country again.

Soon after I became a tourist attraction, our nation entered the "modern era" of coastal defense and I had another growth spurt. Even

though we were at peace, European nations began building a lot of huge steel sea monsters called battleships. Here's another little secret, those ships were stronger than anything I had ever had to fight. President Grover Cleveland decided to even the odds in 1885. A little more than 10 years later, I had Batteries Jasper and Capron helping me protect Charleston. Capron had 16, 12-inch mortars and could lob 16, 700pound shells on an enemy ship at the same time. I couldn't imagine the weight of four cars falling on me at the same time! Battery Jasper had four, 10-inch rifles that could fire rounds about the weight of a refrigerator at a ship more than eight miles away! By the way, I have another secret to tell. I think Battery Jaspers rifles were magic. They would disappear after you fired them. Then, all of the sudden, they would just pop back up when you had to fire again.

Anyway, it's a good thing I got Jasper and Capron when I did because in February 1898, a fairly new U.S. battleship called the *Maine* blew up in Havana, Cuba. Everybody was sure Spain sank it, so two months later Congress declared war on them. Expecting Spanish Admiral



Members of the S.C.N.G. camp outside Ft. Moultrie's walls during the Spanish-American War.

Pasquale Cervera to sail into Charleston harbor at any time with his battleships, I was glad I had Jasper and Capron to protect Charleston.

> As in previous wars, the S.C. National Guard was "Always Ready - Always There" to man my guns. Fortunately, an attack never came and four months later, the Spanish-American War was over.

> Well, friends, I hope you enjoyed your second visit today as much as the first. I think you'll agree, those years following our victory over Great Britain through our victory over Spain were memorable ones. I even got to share a few secrets with you! I'm looking forward to the next time you come. When you do, I'll share some stories about our Citizen-Soldiers who served here during World Wars I and II. I'll even reveal a few more secrets. See you next time!



Col. Roswell Ripley's 1st S.C. Artillery Battalion mans Ft. Moultrie's 32-pounder cannons pointed at Ft. Sumter during our nation's Civil War.



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