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THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

>> FEATURE

FORWARD MOTION

NATIONAL GUARD
AVIATORS KEEP THE
GUARD ON TOP

>> GX HERO

UNBROKEN CIRCLE

VETERAN KEEPS
SERVING AS CIVILIAN

>> LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

GENERAL CRAIG R. MCKINLEY

>> GEAR

ON TARGET THE M24 SNIPER RIFLE

PVT Ricardo
Aristizabal received
his high school
diploma from the
Patriot Academy on
March 18, 2010.

ARISTIZABAL

U.S. ARMY

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To the Men and Women of the National Guard,

I am deeply grateful to you and to your families for your hard work and sacrifice on behalf of our nation.

The Guard is more demanding of you today than at any time in recent history. I am enormously proud of the strength and resilience you demonstrate, how well you respond to what our country has asked, and for the extraordinary results you consistently deliver for the

American people. Indeed, every day you serve, you add value to America, and the appreciation shown by the American people for what the Guard does has never been greater.

I encourage you to make time for your family and seek opportunities to stay connected. They are our home-front Guard heroes, and we owe them a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Thank you for serving in our National Guard.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "CRMckinley".

Craig R. McKinley

General, USAF

Chief, National Guard Bureau

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IF YOU'D LIKE A LITTLE ADVENTURE IN
YOUR LIFE, START ADDING A LITTLE
EXCITEMENT TO YOUR MAILBOX.

“Back in Kuwait. Long plane ride, and up all night. Now to call home and wake everybody up. Have to get in sync with the rest of the world.”

▶ 1LT Andrew Cole, Feb. 1, 0147 hours

Over the past six years, we've had the honor of following your service through difficult but critical deployments. Through this, we've come to consider many of you close personal friends. It never gets easier to say “goodbye.” But, man, it feels good to say “welcome home.” We're looking forward to saying “welcome home” to our friends of the 230th Air Cav, who are flying in as I write this. And, it wasn't too long ago that we said “goodbye” to our buddies with the 278th.

With social media like Facebook, I'm more in touch with some Soldiers while they're deployed than when they are home! This past year, we've really seen a shift. Back in '04, we would receive sporadic emails—a few words or one massive message now and then from our deployed troops. We even received an occasional phone call from Iraq. Then, MySpace kicked up and that was, well ... pretty weird. Too much information, really. But I have to tip my hat to the Department of Defense for not running from social media. They have worked to understand it and permit it, while maintaining a constant eye on OPSEC. As a stateside supporter, it's been great to receive Facebook updates from my friend 1LT Andrew Cole. And, yes, he's looped in his PAO so his material is not violating OPSEC. I highly recommend keeping your PAOs in the loop. Andrew has shown us a current look at OIF life today, even down to local wildlife. His regular posts also keep us clued in on his morale. He's a hooah Soldier, and when he's feelin' good, we're all amped up. Check out a few thoughts from Andrew in our 278th article on p. 23.

It's an incredible honor to put the spotlight on our deployed heroes. The purpose of GX is to celebrate and support our troops. And that's the thing—this isn't just a job for us. This is our mission. Of the thousands of Soldiers and family members we've met over the years, every one of them has impacted our lives, and we are forever grateful. We think about you and pray for you through every goodbye to every welcome home, and all the in-between.

If your unit is taking the fight to the enemy, we'd love to give them the GX spotlight. Drop me a line at Keith@GXonline.com.




COURTESY OF 1LT ANDREW COLE

1LT Andrew Cole, second from left, of the 278th ACR, stands with Mississippi's A Company, 2/198th CAB. Mississippi troops include, left to right, SPC Hunter Brown, SGT Jackie Williams, CPL Mike Hawkins and SPC Mark Affeltranger. This crew, Hooligan 5, were about to hit the road for an escort mission to Joint Base Balad, which was Cole's first mission in Iraq earlier this year.

Thanks!

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



ON THE COVER
PVT Ricardo Aristizabal,
Patriot Academy graduate

COVER PHOTO BY
CLINT WOOD

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

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Mailbag

Keith,

I read with great interest the article on MAJ Paul Babeu. I served as a platoon leader when Paul was a company commander. He has had a profound impact on my life and career and is one of the most charismatic, driven leaders with whom I have ever served. What I remember most about Paul's leadership style was he challenged his subordinates to do first what they least wanted to do. He taught them to confront their fears head on and always take care of their Soldiers. Even now, when I find myself unwilling to do something, I remember Paul's words, "Suck it up and get after it!" He is truly one of a kind, and I hope the story inspires others.

MAJ Josh Goodrich
Massachusetts Army National Guard

I've been using the "Get ready for Basic Training" workouts in *GX* magazine. They've really been helping me feel more prepared.

Tyler Steven Splittgerber
National Guard Facebook fan

Tyler shipped out to Fort Benning on Feb. 17, 2010.

"Weekend Warriors"

Weekend warriors some may say,
But yearlong tours aren't far away.

Men and women have sacrificed all,
But still unafraid to answer the call.

From every state they come and train,
Soldiers from California to Maine.

Freedom fighters don't hesitate,
They help their city, country, and state.

Weekend warriors you may say,
But we're there when you need us,
night and day.

Deborah Warmbrod
Jackson, TN



This is a picture of my husband, Specialist Andrew Franklin, 747th Military Police Company, Massachusetts Army National Guard, sitting at the mural that was painted for his unit in Iraq.

Tiffany Franklin

Send your photos
and letters to
editor@GXonline.com

Letters From the Front



South Carolina Army National Guard Soldiers from A Company, 1/118th Combined Arms Battalion, demonstrate the use of an M203 "rifle-mounted grenade-launcher" to Japanese Soldiers on Ojojibara Maneuver Area, Sendai, Japan, on Feb. 11, 2010.

Greetings From Japan and Thailand

In February 2010, the South Carolina Army National Guard sent two units 6,000 miles away for Annual Training. With one unit in Thailand and another in Japan, the Soldiers strengthened the bonds between each other and their foreign counterparts, ultimately learning that Soldiers from around the world can work together to keep our world safe. Here are their letters from the front.

EXERCISE NORTH WINDS IN JAPAN was very interesting and fun. It was cold-weather training with Japanese Soldiers who know how to survive and live in those extreme environments. It was an adventure, to say the least.

I learned skills that will make me a better Soldier, like how to use ski poles to steady my weapon and how to effectively maneuver in snowshoes.

I was very impressed with the Japanese Soldiers' motivation, discipline and professionalism. They were polite, courteous and eager to share their vast knowledge with us.

SGT Owen Scott Nelson

Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
1st Combined Arms Battalion,
118th Infantry Regiment
South Carolina Army National Guard

I RECENTLY VOLUNTEERED for Exercise North Winds in Japan. The mission turned out to be more than just cold-weather training for me. The cultural and friendship experience was overwhelming and unique. The Japanese army was eager to share their knowledge with us and to learn from us as well.

Though the terrain was tough and weather was cold, we functioned well throughout our platoon and company objectives daily. With great leadership and Soldiers working together, the mission was a success. The Japanese army taught us their survival skills, and we taught them some of our tactical movements.

I received great training and acquired valuable skills on this mission thanks to my leadership, sergeants and Japanese friends.

PFC Brandon Smith

Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
1st Combined Arms Battalion,
118th Infantry Regiment
South Carolina Army National Guard

OUR MISSION DURING COBRA GOLD was more of a support role for the 4/118th Infantry

Battalion. My guys understood that we would not be in the forefront of the “action.”

We started off the tour of duty like any other support section, assisting in any way possible to help the main unit succeed. After the first few days, E Company Soldiers had “paid the rent” doing the small jobs necessary to support the mission. All was going well. Little did I know, the 4/118th had bigger plans for us.

We were asked to run a few of the live-fire ranges. This was a big plus for E Company, as we have a lot of experience in running ranges. Now, we were really in our zone. We were asked to run the less-than-lethal live-fire range for Thai and U.S. Forces. This was perfect, because

my guys had real-world experience with the weapon systems. My Soldiers took charge, and the range went great.

My hat is off to C Company, 4/118th, and the way they allowed my Soldiers to fall right in line.

1SG Don Evans

E Company, 1st Combined Arms Battalion,
118th Infantry Regiment
South Carolina Army National Guard

WHEN I WAS TOLD WE WERE GOING on a three-week exercise to Thailand, I imagined warm weather, palm trees and a vacation from cold, rainy Charleston, SC.

Fast-forward one week. I found myself

in a sweltering-hot troop medical center in Kanchanaburi, Thailand, with a line out the door of twisted ankles and blistered feet. It was not quite what I had expected.

I’m a healthcare specialist, but I have very little medical experience under my belt. To make things tougher, I was working with a unit I had never worked with before, the 251st Area Support Medical Company (ASMC) from Darlington, SC.

I didn’t know anyone I was working with, so it was a little rough at first. But the medics from the 251st ASMC were very friendly and welcoming. With their help, I quickly learned my job and was soon able to keep up. It was a great opportunity to gain medical experience that I don’t normally have access to.

It wasn’t all work. There were also some really fun parts of the trip. During our tours of Bangkok and the bridge over the River Kwai, I got the chance to ride an elephant, look at some amazing Buddhist temples and sample some extreme Thai cuisine. Fried grasshoppers, anyone?

During jungle survival training, we were taught how to drink water from vines and also how to make a cobra really mad without getting bit.

Overall it was a great trip and a wonderful experience. I am very proud to have been a part of it. If I ever get the chance to go to Thailand again, I would jump at it!

SPC Jessica E. Smith

Headquarters and Headquarters Company,
218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade
South Carolina Army National Guard

WHEN I FIRST FOUND OUT my company, C Company, 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment, was going to participate in Cobra Gold 2010, I was stoked! I was really excited to train with the Thai army.

My company was tasked to conduct close-quarters marksmanship. The task was monumental given the language barrier. But, despite that, we successfully trained more than 200 Thai infantry Soldiers. I even had a chance to fire their main infantry weapon, the TAR-21.

Our primary focus was the combined arms live-fire exercise that concluded the three-week training. The whole exercise went smoothly.

I came home to Charleston, SC, with my head held high from this amazing once-in-a-lifetime experience.

SPC Ray Dean Algood

C Company, 4th Battalion,
118th Infantry Regiment
South Carolina Army National Guard



SPC Brandy Anderson, left, and PFC Rebecca Nijba, from 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade’s Forward Support Company, South Carolina National Guard, reach for insects to taste from Master Sgt. Samraeung Kachanton, Thai army instructor for the Jungle Survival Training Course at Fort Surasee, Thailand.





» WELCOME HOME

[Savannah, GA]

Chaplain (CPT) Thomas Watson, left, and SPC Timothy Gilbert arrive at Hunter Army Air Field in Savannah, GA, Jan. 17, 2010. The Soldiers, both assigned to the North Carolina Army National Guard's 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, are returning from a nearly year-long deployment in Iraq.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Brian E. Christiansen, U.S. Air Force



Clinton, NC, to Savannah, GA, 261 miles





» PERFECT AMBUSH

[Sendai, Japan]

South Carolina Army National Guard Soldiers from 1st Platoon, A Company, 1/118th Combined Arms Battalion, attack their objective during platoon-movement training on Ojojibara Maneuver Area, Sendai, Japan, Feb. 13, 2010. The training was part of Field Training Exercise North Wind 2010, a joint exercise involving elements of the South Carolina National Guard and the 44th Infantry Regiment of the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force.

Photo by SGT Roberto Di Giovine, South Carolina Army National Guard



Columbia, SC, to Sendai, Japan: 6,667 miles



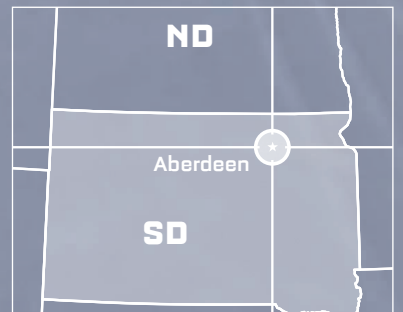


» REAL DIRTY JOBS

[Aberdeen, SD]

In response to massive flooding in late March 2010, Soldiers from the 139th Brigade Support Battalion rushed in from the surrounding area to build a wall of sandbags, protecting a transformer.

Photo by SSG Theanne Tangen



Milbank, SD, to Aberdeen, SD: 96 miles





» IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE

[**Camp Atterbury, IN**]

1LT Justin Kokernak fires an M203 grenade launcher at a firing range at Camp Atterbury in central Indiana, Jan. 14, 2010. Kokernak, a military policeman in the 86th Brigade Support Troops Battalion, is currently deployed in Afghanistan with the 86th Brigade Combat Team (Mountain), Vermont Army National Guard.

Photo by SPC John Crosby

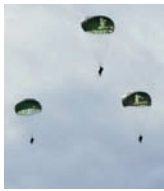


Montpelier, VT, to Camp Atterbury, IN: 768 miles



AFGHAN RADIO
Georgia Soldiers build radio station.

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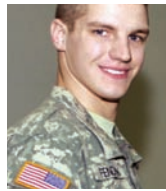
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"DISCIPLINE IS THE SOUL OF AN ARMY. IT MAKES SMALL NUMBERS FORMIDABLE; PROCURES SUCCESS TO THE WEAK, AND ESTEEM TO ALL."

>> GEORGE WASHINGTON



Silver Star for Ohio Green Beret

SFC MARK WANER HONORED FOR COURAGE UNDER FIRE

Story and photo by 2LT Kimberly Snow, Ohio Adjutant General's Office, Public Affairs | COLUMBUS, OH

Sergeant First Class Mark Waner prefers the label "Soldier" to "hero." The Ohio Army National Guard Special Forces medical sergeant stood unassumingly on a stage Feb. 6 in the Ohio Statehouse atrium to receive the Silver Star Medal—the nation's third-highest medal for valor in combat.

Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland and Major General Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general, were on hand to present Waner with the medal. It is the first such award for an Ohio National Guard Soldier since the Korean War.

"We are in the presence of greatness today," Strickland said. "Many people live their entire lives wondering if they've made a difference. But Sergeant First Class Mark Waner never has to worry about that, does he?"

Sergeant First Class Sean Clifton of Dublin, OH, was present. Fighting back tears, he recounted the day he almost lost his life after being shot multiple times during a raid on a Taliban compound in eastern Afghanistan.

The previous week, Clifton and his "A-team," Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) 9224, had received word that a known Taliban leader would soon be meeting with Taliban fighters at a known location in a nearby village. After waiting for five days with what Waner referred to as "tactical patience,"

the ODA received word that their target was in position.

The team had been training with their Afghan counterparts for nearly five months, and the plan was to allow the Afghans to take the lead and follow shortly behind. But when the ODA approached the village, the Afghans were already in trouble and the situation was deteriorating quickly. They had expected five or six Taliban fighters; there were at least 30. They reacted immediately.



SFC Mark Waner addresses the crowd of several hundred who came to honor his service. He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions in combat while serving in Afghanistan.

"I led some guys into a doorway, and that just happened to be the room that had 80 percent of the threat," Clifton said. "I knew something wasn't quite right. Then I got hit."

Clifton took at least four rounds.

He headed back out and found Sergeant First Class Matt Scheaffer, a team medic. Waner, the team's senior medic, realizing Clifton was hit, immediately ran to assist Scheaffer. Rounds

splashed the ground around them as they began working on their wounded comrade. Realizing the danger to their patient, they dragged him around to what they assumed was the safer side of the building.

As they worked on Clifton, Waner began to realize the extent of his wounds. He knew they couldn't move their patient unless they had a stretcher, so he ran to the vehicle to retrieve one. As he returned, they began receiving fire from a window about 15 feet away.

PRESENCE OF MIND

Waner coordinated suppressing fire on the window. He told Scheaffer to grab the fragmentation grenade Waner kept on the back of his body armor and toss it into the room from which they were taking fire.

The tactic worked. It subdued the enemy long enough for them to race Clifton to a vehicle for evacuation.

Waner continued to provide life-saving care as they bounced across the desert to a medical evacuation site, avoiding the main routes they knew to be laced with roadside bombs. When the medical evacuation helicopters arrived, Waner boarded with Clifton and didn't leave his side until Clifton was transported to the U.S. Army

hospital at Landstuhl, Germany, three days later.

"He was there every step of the way, ensuring I was receiving the best possible care," Clifton said.

"I was just the closest person to him that day," Waner said. "The real heroes are the whole team—our Afghan counterparts. The whole team's a hero because everyone did their part." **GX**

Soldier Earns Bronze Star With 'V' Device

By Craig Coleman, Walter Reed Public Affairs
WASHINGTON, DC

▶ A SOLDIER BEING TREATED AT WALTER REED for wounds sustained in Afghanistan received the Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device during a ceremony here in Doss Memorial Hall Feb. 26.

Specialist Christopher M. "Kit" Lowe, a forward observer with the 1/108th Cavalry Regiment, received the award for actions he took during combat operations in the Alasai Valley, Afghanistan.

Lowe, a six-year Veteran of the Georgia Army National Guard, was on a combat mission with the 48th Battle Training Brigade when he heard gunfire on the roof of the building he was searching. Lowe knew Marine Captain Matthew Freeman, whom he considered a friend, and the unit's medic were on that roof and in trouble. Lowe scrambled up a ladder to the roof and saw Freeman had been hit, with bullets still incoming.



SPC Lowe poses with several members of his unit at Walter Reed after Bronze Star presentation.

"My friend was shot and I needed to get to him," Lowe recalled.

Lowe crawled across the roof to the spot where Freeman lay unresponsive. "I went to get him, and I got hit," Lowe said.

As Lowe was pulling the medic to the ground, Lowe was hit by machine gun fire in the upper right thigh.

"It ruined a perfectly good uniform," Lowe quipped. "It was surreal. I never thought I was going to die, even after I was shot. I didn't realize the extent of my wounds.

I thought I'd be back at work the next day."

With shots still incoming, Lowe scanned the area. "When you come under fire, you want to know where it's coming from," Lowe said. "What I was trying to do was find out where [the enemy fire] was coming from so I could fire on the position."

He discovered the enemy was shooting from a house built into the side of a mountain, so that indirect fire would be ineffective. "You can land mortars on it, but all

you'd be doing is beating up a mountain," Lowe said. "You have to hit the house."

Although injured, Lowe returned fire until reinforcements arrived in a Mine-Resistant Ambush-Protected (MRAP) vehicle to neutralize the target.

"I really hate public speaking," Lowe told the audience assembled to witness his award. "But I'd better get used to it if I want to be president."

Lowe said of Freeman, "He was my friend. I wish they didn't have to give his Purple Heart posthumously.

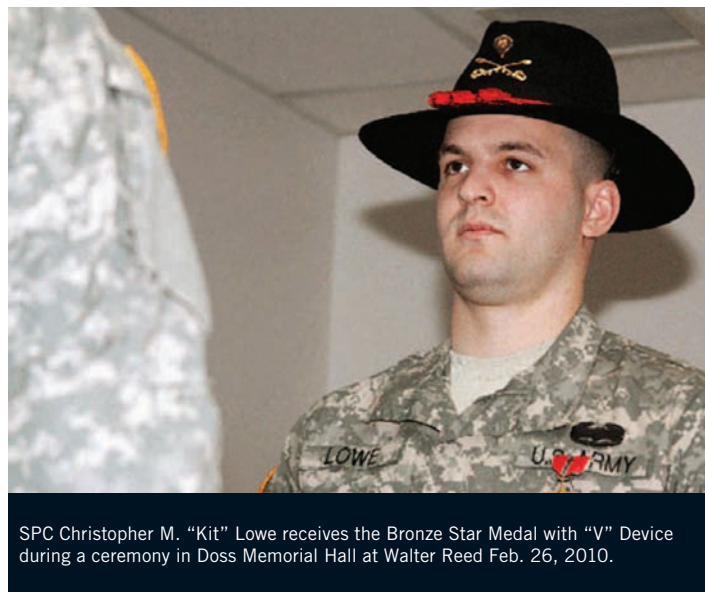
"I did what I was supposed to do. I did what I was trained to do. It reflects well on the Georgia National Guard."

"My main concern was Capt. Freeman," Lowe said. "I needed to get him and the medic with him off [the roof]."

Colonel Stephen Joyce, commander of the 48th Battle Training Brigade at the time of Lowe's actions, said his behavior was exemplary. "It's everything that's right about America, and everything that's right about the Army."

First Lieutenant Matt Smith, a member of the unit who earlier received the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in combat two months before Lowe's actions, presented the Bronze Star with "V" Device to Lowe.

"I was intensely proud of him and all the other Soldiers involved," Smith said. "Cavalry have a reputation as above average Soldiers, and his actions exemplified that." **GX**



SPC Christopher M. "Kit" Lowe receives the Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device during a ceremony in Doss Memorial Hall at Walter Reed Feb. 26, 2010.

CRAIG COLEMAN

>> 278th ACR >>

I Volunteer, Sir!

CAVALRY SOLDIERS RALLY FOR SECOND DEPLOYMENT TO IRAQ

By Clint Wood and Christian Anderson

In mid-February 2010, the Soldiers of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR) from Tennessee, Kentucky, Michigan and Texas landed in southwest Asia for a yearlong deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. This is the unit's second deployment in a decade.

In preparation for this deployment, the 3,000-plus Soldiers spent a two-month training period at Camp Shelby, MS, starting on Dec. 2, 2009. **GX** interviewed them there several times, and we'll continue to cover the 278th throughout their deployment.

COMMANDING THE VOLUNTEERS

Colonel Jeff Holmes, commander of the 278th, is looking forward to his time at the helm of one of the two cavalry units in the National Guard.

Currently on his second deployment with this unit, Holmes was the squadron commander in 2005, and will apply the experience and knowledge he gained to his new job as regimental commander.

GX interviewed Holmes on Jan. 15, 2010, at Camp Shelby.

GX: Has your mindset changed at all for your second deployment to Iraq?

JH: I know what to expect, and I think 60 percent of the Soldiers in the regiment know what to expect. We have the tremendous benefit of having a lot of battle-hardened and experienced leaders now.

GX: How will those Veterans lead the 278th in its current mission?

JH: Those who went over as staff sergeants and sergeants in 2005 have moved up to the rank of first sergeant and command sergeants major. Platoon leaders have moved up to captain. So they are able to prepare their Soldiers based on those experiences.

GX: Has the core of the 278th—the enlisted Soldiers—changed since the first deployment?

JH: The Soldiers are younger and tactically smarter than the Soldiers we took over in 2005.

It's amazing how many of the younger Soldiers enlisted after the war started. They knew they were going to be deployed to one of the two theaters.

These Soldiers can do anything they want to in the civilian world. Many of them are

professionals—lawyers, doctors, nurses, private business owners and contractors. They have chosen to put all that on hold to live this life for a couple of years. That's pretty impressive.

GX: How has the training changed to keep the 278th mission current?

JH: They received good, fast-paced and realistic training at [Camp] Shelby. It was tailored specifically for the actual mission.

Whereas before we performed offensive operations, this time we will assume a fully defensive posture. Now, we will have a larger area to control and will pull a lot of convoy security and force protection missions.

GX: What are your expectations for the deployment?

JH: We are bringing a highly professional, battle-ready regiment into a war zone, so we want to accomplish the mission and bring everybody home safely. We set lofty standards, and want to be known for excelling at everything we do. The training at [Camp] Shelby raised our standards.

GX: Your son is a Humvee gunner in the 278th. What is it like to be both his commander and his dad?

JH: I've seen him three times since mobilizing. I don't need to be in his business. His world is his platoon. We talk occasionally, but we try to stay professional.

I am extremely proud of him. He finished his degree and intended to go to law school, but put everything on hold to serve.

GX: How do you and your officers view leadership roles in the 278th?

JH: We will never ask our troops to do something we're not capable of doing. All leaders have passed the PT test and many have excelled. **GX**



COL Jeff Holmes, commander of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, deployed with the 278th to Iraq in 2005 and is amazed at how professional, prepared and motivated his Soldiers are for the 278th's current deployment in Iraq.

SSG RUSSELL KUJAK, 278TH PUBLIC AFFAIRS



1SG Terry Melton's career in the National Guard spans 40 years, including two tours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

>>SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT

First Sergeant Terry Melton

Troop E, 2nd Squadron, 278th ACR, Tennessee Army National Guard

By SSG Tom Greene, 278th Public Affairs Office

First Sergeant Terry Melton looks to be about average height, and his broad shoulders frame his barrel chest. His hands are as big as oven mitts, and his voice can boom like the report of cannon.

After almost 40 years of service with the Tennessee Army National Guard, Melton's career is testimony to his hard work, sacrifice, dedication and loyalty.

Melton is one of the oldest Soldiers in the 278th. He turned 59 in January, when he and his Troop Enforcer, 2nd Squadron were training at Camp Shelby.

Promoted to first sergeant in 1999, Melton admits he's old-school.

"I joined the Guard back in '72, and the military has changed so much since then," he said. "I grew up doing things the old way."

Melton has had many chances to retire over the years, but patriotism keeps him in the service.

"I feel it's my duty to serve for what my country has given to me," he said.

Captain Colby Tippens said Melton comes off a little "thorny," but that he has a big heart.

For example, Tippens recalled, during a deployment they were on together for Operation

Iraqi Freedom III, some of Melton's friends back in the U.S. sent boxes of deflated orange soccer balls for him to distribute to Iraqi children, who love soccer.

Every afternoon, Tippens would see Melton inflating the balls with a tiny air pump. When he would get several ready, they would take the balls to a village, where he could pass them out to the kids.

At one village, the kids ran up to Melton yelling "Toe-ba! Mistah toe-ba!"

Melton asked Tippens what "toe-ba" meant, and Tippens told him it meant "football." Melton's face took on a look of disgust as he boomed, "I don't have any footballs! All I've got is these soccer balls!"

Tippens explained that in Iraq, "football" is the word for "soccer." Melton's smile returned, and he passed out the balls.

In his many years in the service, Melton said he feels blessed to have worked for and with good people and good Soldiers.

Among them, he said, is Major General Max Haston, the 278th's seventh commander and now Tennessee's adjutant general. Melton called Haston one of his best friends, and a Soldier's Soldier.

"Haston will go up and talk to a Soldier, and it doesn't make any difference who they are or what their rank is," said Melton.

Melton's retirement day is right around the corner—July 2011. After that, he said, "I will continue farming and teaching a little."

As for the remaining time with his unit, he said, "I'll try to do my best. I'll give everything I have every time I put the uniform on. I will miss the service and the friendships." **GX**



1LT Andrew Cole, 278th ACR, poses with Iraqi children during a mission near Baghdad. Cole's children, along with their schoolmates, asked the community to donate soccer balls for the Iraqi children.

PHOTO COURTESY OF 1LT ANDREW COLE

NOTES FROM THE SANDBOX

By 1LT Andrew Cole, 278th ACR

I have gone on several missions here in northern Iraq to local villages around my Forward Operating Base (FOB). My company has a mission to provide security to the water pumping facility that feeds water to towns and villages all around the area. During these town visits, I have encountered hundreds of children, and I take their pictures and give them little treats.

Soccer is the most popular sport in the world, and wherever I go in Iraq, I see kids playing all the time. I mentioned this to my kids, who also play soccer, so they went to their school principal and asked him how they could raise money to provide soccer balls to the Iraqi children.

Their school, Donelson Christian Academy, asked the community for donations. They ultimately received close to 100 soccer balls, which will be sent to us so we can distribute them. The VFW in Nashville, along with a local radio station that my wife works with, is paying for the postage.

>> Check out the next issue of **GX** to find out more about the 278th's fighting history in WWI and WWII.



SFC Wesley Almeida has served in the Michigan National Guard for almost 15 years. See video of Almeida at YouTube.com/nationalguard.

>>SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT

Sergeant First Class Wesley Almeida

1073rd Transportation Company, 278th, Michigan Army National Guard

By Clint Wood and Christian Anderson

How does a Michigan Army National Guard Soldier find himself deploying with a bunch of Cavalry Soldiers to Iraq?

Well, if you get the chance to meet Sergeant First Class Wesley Almeida, you will get the answer and so much more.

Almeida, who owns a Web development company in Michigan, was born in Dallas, TX, to Brazilian parents.

Due to his dad's profession as a translator and interpreter, the family moved around the country a lot, living in Louisiana, Maryland, Chicago, New York and finally, Michigan. They had also spent time living in Brazil when Almeida was a child.

Almeida joined the Guard at age 17.

"[The idea] sounded cool, so I met with a recruiter," he explained.

The next step was to decide on a branch. He chose the Guard because he liked the idea of not moving around a lot, as Active Duty Soldiers did. He'd had his fill of that.

"The next thing I knew, I was in Basic Training," he laughed. "It was one of the best decisions I ever made, but it was definitely made on the fly."

Back in Brazil, as a child, he had watched American war movies.

"To actually be in the Army was great," he explained, "because when I was getting yelled at [in Basic Training] by the drill sergeants, I would think, 'Man, this is kind of cool. This is stuff I saw in the movies.'

"I would crack a smile and get in trouble for it," he continued. "I could never explain to them what was making me smile."

Almeida served in Iraq from 2004 to 2005 with the Michigan Army National Guard's 1073rd Transportation Company. He has been in this unit his entire career—almost 15 years.

When the company executed a maintenance mission in Iraq, Almeida was in charge of the electronics platoon. His company volunteered to do convoy missions.

"I usually ran one or two missions a month," he said. "We fixed the stuff but then we went outside of the wire as well."

Almeida tries to bring perspective to the guys who haven't been deployed before to ease some of their misconceptions and fears.

"It seems like they think that bad things happen all the time over there," he explained. "They do happen once in a while, but not every day."

"We played paintball and soccer in Iraq and even had an indoor archery range." **CX**



CPT Michael Hall, right, is at the end of a long line of Soldiers as they maneuver to fire their M4 carbines at close range during a reflexive fire exercise.



SGT Patrick Schlichting, left, provides rear security for PVT Noah Robnette and SSG Charlie Holt as they assault a building during a field training exercise.



A Civilian on the Battlefield (COB) explains to a 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment Soldier how upset he is with the U.S. Soldiers during a Mission Rehearsal Exercise at Camp Shelby, MS.



278th ACR Shoulder Sleeve Insignia The green background with three stars refers to the Hickory Crest of the Tennessee Army National Guard. The wavy and blue three-armed partition represents the coming together of the Holston and French Broad rivers to form the beginning of the Tennessee River in Knoxville, where the regiment's headquarters is located.

SFC ERIC/A EDINGTON

>>SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT

Chaplain (First Lieutenant) Geoff Whitaker

Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th ACR,
Tennessee National Guard

Story and photo by Clint Wood

In the span of a few years, First Lieutenant Geoff Whitaker went from routinely taking control of an enemy building to helping Soldiers find their faith.

Whitaker, who served as a Navy SEAL (Sea, Air and Land Forces) officer for 10 years, is the chaplain for the Regimental Fires Squadron of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

“The discipline that applies to being a high-level Soldier also applies to being a man of God,” said Whitaker.

The chaplain, a professor and wrestling coach at Temple State University in Chattanooga, TN, feels fortunate to still be a Warrior.

While on a mission overseas in 2003 as a SEAL officer, Whitaker suffered a horrific head injury. He was unconscious for 10 days and, even after several brain surgeries, had a 10 percent chance of survival. At the time, total recovery seemed out of the question.

Whitaker credits “the power of prayer” for his recovery. He received more than 60,000 letters from people praying for him all over the world.

“There is something about the power of prayer, and I try to communicate that a lot to my wrestlers,” he said.

Whitaker, who grew up in the mountains of North Carolina, said he joined the Navy to help cover his tuition at Georgia Technical College in Dublin, GA. While there, he enrolled in the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) and enjoyed the leadership training he received.

“There was nothing that fit me in the United States Navy more than the Navy SEALs,” he said.

This confident attitude, something SEALs are known for, also came from Whitaker wrestling at a young age. He considers wrestling the “world’s oldest and greatest sport.”

“It teaches young men a different kind of toughness,” said Whitaker. “You’re out there on a mat with another opponent for six or seven minutes in a controlled fight. It’s tough, and it teaches a different kind of preparation and determination.”

Amazingly, Whitaker fully recovered two



Chaplain (1LT) Geoff Whitaker, the chaplain for the Regimental Fires Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, said his goal for his Iraq deployment is to bring his squadron and those under it closer to God.

months after his injury and began his reintegration into a SEAL platoon.

SEALs train on ever-changing tactics and techniques, and Whitaker found it hard to blend back in with the unit at 100 percent.

“My skills were a little rusty, and it was a little rocky,” he noted.

At about same time, he began receiving advice from inside his SEAL platoon and from his church that maybe it was time to change career fields.

“I wasn’t really listening, because there I was, leader of Warriors at the highest level,” he explained.

But when a church pastor learned that Whitaker was in the military, and the pastor

asked Whitaker how to join the chaplain corps, it changed Whitaker’s direction in life.

“It was right there that God kind of quit whispering through advice from other people, and He was like, ‘Hey!’ He kind of made it clear he had a different plan for me,” said Whitaker.

He spent three years with the Navy chaplain corps. Near graduation, he intended to join the Navy Reserves.

Once he accepted the position at Temple State University, he learned that there were no vacancies as a Navy Reserve chaplain. So he chose the Army National Guard.

“Serving in our military is one of the most honorable, reputable and reliable paths that you can choose,” Whitaker said proudly. **GX**

'Rough Riders' in Nangarhar

Story and photos by SGT Tracy Smith, Combined Joint Task Force - 82 | NANGARHAR PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

A 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, Soldier assigned to 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, provides security for his Afghan National Army partners as they secure a former Soviet military facility during a contractors' rodeo.



respond to their needs and ensure a secure future of our people.”

The 1/108th “Rough Riders” offering security alongside their service and ANA partners was a show of unification.

But Staff Sergeant Jim Wilson, a scout platoon section leader from Ellijay, GA, saw the process as a platform for economic solidarity.

“This promotes competition and the need to keep the money in the country,” Wilson said. “Competition brings out the best in most folks, and this will help build their economy and ability to do quality control.”

As the FOB infrastructure takes shape, improvements outside the facility’s walls will be necessary.

Using the current Cash-for-Work program, civilian housing and road construction projects will inevitably follow.

Roach, smiling as he answered questions from the crowd, spoke with Samad about the future of the location, and the Warriors agreed it was a natural selection.

“With the advent of these projects, and other contracting possibilities, the economy and the security within the district will benefit greatly,” Roach added. **GX**

A fghanistan National Army (ANA) and Coalition Forces greeted potential contractors for a proposed new forward operating base (FOB) in the Shinwar district.

The proposed base was a British fort converted for use during the Soviet occupation more than 30 years ago. It will now be used as a modernized hub for the ANA’s 2nd Khandak, 201st Corps.

“This meeting is to give potential contractors a walkthrough of the area so they will have a solid overview of the scope of work,” said First Lieutenant Fernando E. Roach, 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, contracting officer assigned to 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

More than 135 builder candidates signed on for the open bid for three separate projects: container living spaces for ANA Soldiers and assigned Coalition Forces; renovation of former Soviet structures; and building a wall that will encompass approximately 2 kilometers.

Fairzahn, a young Afghan law student, accompanied his boss to the grounds to have a firsthand look at the process and to assist in deciphering the bidding guidelines and contractual legal terms. His future plans are greater.

“I will use this as a learning opportunity,” said the Jalalabad University student. “My hope is to make a difference in Afghanistan’s judicial system and also work to combat corruption.”

INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE

Civil engineers overseeing the construction process say this is the largest project to date in Nangarhar. The monetary value is great, but the opportunity to foster relations within the Afghan national security force and Shinwar communities makes the project an investment in Afghanistan’s future.

“This is a frontier district with an enemy attempting to cross our borders,” said Captain Abdul Samad, weapons commander, 2nd Khandak, 201st Corps. “The people support us, and once we establish our base here, we can



1LT Fernando E. Roach of Washington, DC, right, was among Afghan National Army Soldiers and Marines finalizing security and processes with U.S. Air Force civil engineers assigned to 4th Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, during the joint Afghan-Coalition contractors' rodeo in the Shinwar district.

Soldiers Open Radio Stations in Afghanistan

Story and photos by SGT Tracy Smith, Combined Joint Task Force - 82
SHINWAR DISTRICT, AFGHANISTAN

▶ **IN A PERFECT WORLD**, accurate information would be as close as a radio. For a country at war, accurate information is invaluable.

Georgia Army National Guard Soldiers of 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, gave the Shinwari and Muhmandari Mountain border villagers of Afghanistan their own voice through the gift of radio.

The two stations, located in the Shinwar and Muhmand Dara districts, will give outlying villages communication security while countering Taliban propaganda.

Popularly known as the Radio in a Box, the new media program is one of the initiatives of the International Security Assistance Force counterinsurgency process, and it will belong entirely to the Afghan people.

VOICE FOR THE PEOPLE

“It will not be a facilitator of military or security mandates,” Afghan border police (ABP), 6th Kandak Commander Col. Niazy said. He punctuated the importance of the mission by stressing how the station’s messages will embrace the needs of the community.

“It will be a powerful tool to give our people a voice—a resource,” Niazy said. “Our mullahs, district government leaders or local shopkeepers and villagers will have full access and know that in a crisis, they can come to us for honest information.”

The Kandak headquarters is a temporary location for the Shinwar radio station. It was also once the site for Radio Spin Ghar, part of a 2005 independent media opportunity project called Support for Independent Radio Stations in Afghanistan, which was co-sponsored by U.S. Agency for International Development.

Both stations are fully funded by the coalition with Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) partners, and employ full-time local Afghan station managers and on-air personalities.

“The Gate” (102.1 MHz FM) began airing full time Jan. 17 at Forward Operating Base Torkham in Muhmand Dara province near the Afghanistan-Pakistan border.

The Shinwar station (95 MHz FM) celebrated its debut Jan. 21 during the anti-Taliban Shinwari Pact *jirga*. The gathering of about 170 tribal representatives, the first of its kind, was organized by the 6th Kandak ABP and prominent tribal leaders. It was held embracing the strictest traditions of the six district Shinwari tribal councils to denounce Taliban tyranny and passive governance.

Afghan border police 6th Kandak commander, Col. Niazy, right, and Georgia Army National Guard’s 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, commander LTC Randall V. Simmons, center, prepare to broadcast a message to the people in the Shinwar district’s new radio station.



SSG Scott F. McElroy, left, and SGT Angelo O. Bravo, both 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry Regiment, communications noncommissioned officers, finalize the setup of the Radio in a Box broadcast stations at the Afghan border police 6th Kandak headquarters in Shinwar district.



The radio station gave prominent Afghan leaders and security forces a new media platform to announce their solidarity during the station’s first broadcast.

“It brings us together as one community,” Malik Usman said of the opening and the reading of the council’s decision to stand with their uniformed brothers-in-arms. “We can share information with the people immediately when a crisis is identified and ensure their safety.”

Council elders received gifts of handheld radios at the conclusion of the *jirga*. The same radios will also be distributed by ANSF and Coalition Forces during patrols to outlying villages.

Niazy welcomes the new media as an extension of service to the people. He says programming will be created by local people with call-in segments and unique on-air radio talk shows that will engage government and village officials.

“The station will have a strict traditional format, from the reading of mourners’ names, to *jirga* results and the distribution of public service information,” Niazy said. “They will celebrate with music programs, but we can reinforce their personal security with information.” **GX**



SPC Jaylon Halford, right, and SPC Jared Thomas provide security during a mission.

The Ghazni Beat

Story and photo by 1LT David Inbody, Texas National Guard

TEXAS AGRI-BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM (TX ADT) 3 has been up and running at Forward Operating Base (FOB) Ghazni, Afghanistan, since December 2009. Several missions and training opportunities around the Ghazni province have kept them busy.

In January, the team met several local Afghan men unloading fertilizer and stacking it in a barn that doubles as a feed mill. Shortly after the team's arrival, the DAIL (Director of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock) showed up along with the district agricultural (Ag) agent from Ghazni city. Major Ross Davis, Texas ADT Ag team chief, and Anthony Miller, USDA, began discussing the use of the feed mill and other projects.

Various missions took the team to locations around the province for both agriculture projects and route reconnaissance, to build familiarity with the roads and environment.

"I've been amazed at how well TX ADT 3 Soldiers have picked up this mission," said Colonel Jeff Adkinson, TX ADT 3 commander. "Many of these Soldiers came here already combat Veterans, but regardless of their experi-

ence level, they are so talented and cognitively mature that they were able to function at a high level on day one. I have never seen so many able NCOs and corporals within one unit. That kind of leadership makes all the difference."

The team's projects range in scope from small culvert repair projects at a demonstration farm, to wind and solar power projects, to livestock and poultry education programs. TX ADT 3 is bringing the projects into line with the DAIL's three-year plan to increase the agricultural base of Ghazni province.

"I HAVE NEVER SEEN SO MANY ABLE NCOs AND CORPORALS WITHIN ONE UNIT."

>> COL Jeff Adkinson, TX ADT 3 commander

The security force has been training on the team's MRAPs and conducting route reconnaissance, coupled with topographical, aerial and satellite intelligence-gathering, to increase their familiarity with the province's roads and towns.

"Our primary mission is the safety of the team and the safety of the civilians [we encounter]," said Captain Zeno McCoy, security force platoon commander.

The Soldiers of TX ADT 3 became familiar with operating in and around the medevac choppers. This high-speed training built confidence in their abilities.

"The training is motivational to the Soldiers and builds muscle memory. I wish we could conduct more training like this back home," said Staff Sergeant Logan, senior medic for TX ADT 3.

The final stop that day was Jungle Bah farms demonstration site, where TX ADT 3 horticulturist Captain Newman works with the DAIL's personnel to grow apricot, apple, almond and various ornamental seedlings for sale in the Ghazni market. The farm also grows poplar trees, a fast-growing hardwood species used for lumber across the region.

TX ADT 3 looks forward to expanding the farms' capabilities with a wind- and solar-powered classroom and education projects. **GX**



Soldiers from the 82nd Airborne and the Texas Army National Guard Special Forces jump into the Nevada desert during the MAFEX training exercise.

Texas Soldiers Parachute Into Southern Nevada

By CPT William Hermann, Texas Army National Guard

ON A COOL NOVEMBER MORNING over the southern Nevada desert, Texas Army National Guard paratroopers loaded down with combat gear see the mountain walls fly by just yards from the wing tips.

Suddenly, the C-130J banks and climbs to 1,000 feet as the troop doors open. In the blink of an eye, the green light comes on, the jumpmaster gives the command of “GO,” and the paratroopers swiftly exit.

SMALL DOTS IN THE SKY

Minutes later, small dots appear high in the sky as a Texas Army National Guard Special Forces team silently freefalls over the drop zone. At 4,000 feet, they open their chutes and fly down to the assembly area. Their trip to this remote stretch of Nevada desert began during the early morning hours at Kelly Air Force Base in San Antonio, TX, as they boarded the aircraft and conducted an in-flight rig.

As MQ-9 Reaper UAVs from Creech AFB (Air Force Base) silently circle overhead providing real-time video feedback to the command element, the teams assemble and move out to secure the area with the help of Air Force combat controllers who are directing the A-10s and F-15s now overhead.

They have to move quickly—C-17 Globemasters carrying paratroopers of the 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, from Fort Bragg, NC, will be arriving shortly.

They will be delivering the assault force of more than 400 Soldiers who will seize the airfield adjacent to the village and establish an airhead for follow-on forces.

Out of nowhere, the C-17s appear, and the sky is filled with parachutes. The jumpers slowly drift down to the valley floor below, move to their designated assembly areas and begin taking down the key infrastructure on the airfield.

TAKING FLIGHT TO THE NEXT LEVEL

All of this was part of the biannual U.S. Air Force Fighter Weapon School Instructor Course capstone exercise at Nellis AFB, NV, called “MAFEX.” The graduate-level course helps pilots learn how to plan, schedule and execute large-scale joint operations.

This is the fifth time the exercise has taken place, with this iteration involving more than 50 aircraft and 1,500 Service Members. Airframes ranging from F-15E Strike Eagles to HH-60 Pavahawks, C-130 Hercules and the MQ-9 Reaper participated.

For the Texas Army National Guard, it was an opportunity to validate the joint and combined arms team concept and practice airborne insertion techniques. For the newly formed 1/143rd Infantry Airborne Battalion, the only airborne infantry battalion in the National Guard, it was an opportunity to train with their active component counterparts and develop tactics, techniques and procedures for conducting vertical assaults. **GX**

VICTORY MAP



Columbus, MS

The 100th delivery of the UH-72A Lakota light utility helicopter was celebrated at a rollout ceremony here at the American Eurocopter facility March 11.

The American Eurocopter facility was significantly expanded to accommodate production of the Lakota, which created and supports hundreds of high-value aerospace jobs throughout the United States.

The 100th Lakota aircraft will be deployed to Germany with the Army's Joint Multinational Readiness Center, becoming part of this unit's Combat Training Center and further expanding the Lakota's mission applications.

Utica, NY

The American Red Cross of the Mohawk Valley has selected New York Army National Guard Sergeant Vincent P. Scalise of the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry, to be honored for his selfless service to the community to improve the lives of Veterans in Central New York.

Scalise, from Utica, served as a combat Infantryman in Iraq with his unit, returning to Utica in late 2004. When he returned, however, he dedicated himself to helping his fellow Veterans reintegrate with their families and communities.

Scalise first founded a charitable organization, The Utica Center for Development, raising funds to refurbish the former YMCA in Utica as the Central New York Veteran's Outreach Center. The facility in downtown Utica opened Nov. 11, 2009.

North Dakota

The North Dakota National Guard Foundation - Emergency Relief Fund (ERF) received a \$7,000 donation last week from the U.S. Bancorp Foundation.

Representatives of U.S. Bank in Fargo formally presented the check to Major General David Sprynczynatyk, adjutant general for the North Dakota National Guard, at their downtown Fargo office.

The ERF is a non-profit charitable organization whose purpose is to provide financial support in unforeseen emergency situations, such as natural disasters, accident, illness, fire or

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ON THE BORDER
SPECIAL FEATURE

Southwest Operation: NEW MEXICO RESPONDS TO BORDER VIOLENCE

By Christian Anderson

An OH-58 helicopter from the New Mexico National Guard flies a reconnaissance mission near the Southwest border in 2009 to detect illegal border crossings from Mexico.

Since the summer of 2009, Mexican drug cartel violence and crime has been spilling into the U.S. across the Southwest border at an all-time high, and led to the brutal murder of Arizona native Robert Krentz at his ranch on Mar. 27, 2010.

Arizona's Attorney General Terry Goddard is directing attention toward a Mexican drug cartel, since Border Patrol authorities seized 290 pounds of marijuana near Krentz's ranch the day before his death. Authorities are quick to point out they have no rock-hard leads as of yet, but locals, including Krentz's family, are calling for more security along the border. In response, the governors and adjutants general of Arizona, New Mexico, California and Texas asked the White House for help initiating a new federal border mission—to include the four states' Army National Guard Soldiers.

Modern-day border missions can be traced back to 2006, when President George W. Bush sent over 2,500 troops to the Southwest border for Operation Jump Start. This operation's goal was to fill in the personnel gap created when violence and border crossings hit an all-time high, and the Border Patrol and other agencies could not cover the vast expanse of the border.

During Operation Jump Start, the Guard got involved with Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) to illuminate the desert night and detect illegal crossings; skybox operations, where Soldiers controlled cameras and other visual equipment to monitor the border; and simple foot patrols to show their presence—everything except direct law enforcement. The mission ended in 2008.

Now, almost two years later, trouble is plaguing the border once again, and the Guard is stepping up.

STRENGTH ON THE LINE

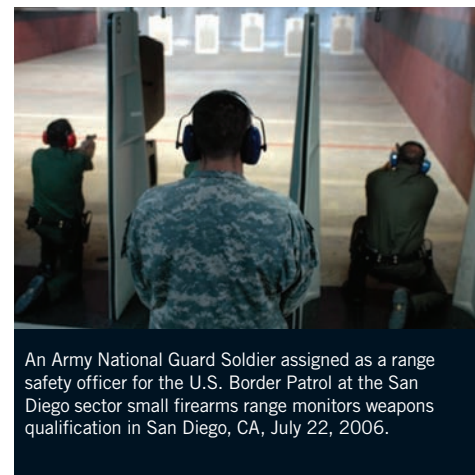
Colonel Richard Clark, commander of the New Mexico National Guard Counterdrug unit, is prepared to handle any requests that Gov. Bill Richardson may require of him regarding border operations.

"We have 102 people in our program, with 70 people dedicated to the border mission 24 hours a day, seven days a week," Clark explained. "They perform a variety of missions, including flare truck operations and skybox operations."

Skybox operations are when Soldiers operate cameras along the border via a U.S. Border Patrol station, essentially acting as eyes and ears in locations not currently staffed. When a sensor goes off, the Soldiers direct the cameras toward the sensor and determine if the Border Patrol needs to deploy to the area. The sensors are very

advanced, and since there is virtually no way to fool them, this particular system has proved invaluable at stopping illegal crossings and apprehending drug runners.

After meeting with law enforcement officials in late March, Richardson took into consideration the recent violence along the Southwest border and ordered the New Mexico National Guard to step up patrols in hopes of preventing further problems. Clark's unit responded immediately, taking their place on the border within 24 hours of the governor's call.



An Army National Guard Soldier assigned as a range safety officer for the U.S. Border Patrol at the San Diego sector small firearms range monitors weapons qualification in San Diego, CA, July 22, 2006.

SSG JIM GREENHILL, CPT AMANDA STRAUB

“Under the direction of Governor Richardson, we have shifted 25 individuals from our northern operations down south to augment the forces we currently have along the border,” Clark said.

DOUBLE DUTY

Although the counterdrug Soldiers will be operating under direct orders from the governor, they will still have to follow rules imposed by the federal government, which include not taking direct action against criminals unless in the role of self-defense.

“Under Title 32, we are not affected by the Posse Comitatus Act [meaning National Guard Soldiers cannot be used as law enforcement officers]. We are always in a support role,” Clark said. “The National Guard excels at the domestic operations mission because we can assist law enforcement agencies to the fullest extent.”

Clark appreciates the National Guard’s unique role of working directly for the governor, but also for the president of the United States when activated for war.

“I feel we are extremely capable in the domestic role because we are Citizen-Soldiers,” he explained. “We work in the communities,



A National Guard entry identification team watches the U.S. border near Columbus, NM. The National Guard is helping the Border Patrol secure the nation’s southern border in support of Operation Jump Start.

and we take pride in our state. We don’t train to go to war on the border—we train to do our counterdrug mission and protect the border.”

Clark’s troops are schoolteachers, police officers, and managers in businesses or factories—proud citizens of New Mexico and proud Soldiers of the National Guard.

“During Operation Jump Start, we spun up over 900 Soldiers and Airmen, and sent them to the border,” Clark explained. “So the New Mexico National Guard is ready to defend the country in its domestic role, along with its war-fighting mission.” **GX**

The Man Behind the Mission: MAJOR GENERAL KENNY MONTOYA



MG Kenny Montoya has been actively involved in border operations since he became adjutant general of the New Mexico National Guard in 2003.

▶ AS ADJUTANT GENERAL of the New Mexico National Guard, Major General Kenny Montoya is well versed in the complexities of the Southwest and the problem he has inherited—the border.

Since assuming his current role in 2003, Montoya has spent a lot of time focusing on border operations. This includes his state’s involvement in Operation Jump Start in 2006.

In the summer of 2009, Secretary of Homeland Security Janet Napolitano named Montoya to the revolutionary Southwest Border Task Force. This commission is comprised of national security experts who advise the Department of Homeland Security on border situations. Montoya’s involvement on this board is noteworthy in that he’s the only member currently serving in the National Guard.

GX spoke with Montoya recently.

GX: What is the specific role of the Southwest Border Task Force?

KM: We are trying to be a sounding board for Secretary Napolitano. We are trying to focus on border commerce and violence, primarily the violence that starts on the border and spills into the United States.

I think what it comes down to is having the proper amount of law enforcement. We want to make sure that when we recommend countermeasures and actions, they are realistic. The border is not the Wild West, but we can make it safer.

GX: How has the Guard’s role on the border changed in the past decade?

KM: For the last 20 years, counterdrug missions on the border were mostly patrols. In the last seven years, we have utilized sensors and cameras, in addition to the patrols. We also have several Kiowa helicopters constantly in the air at night. The mission has really grown greatly on a technical basis.

More importantly, we have worked more closely with Border Patrol, ICE and local law enforcement agencies. We realize, especially today, that the border has to be controlled by civil law authorities. We can’t stop everything with a military presence.

We also realized that Mexico is our neighbor and our friend. We have to cooperate and build a team effort to stop the drug trade from crossing the border. We have gotten to know their military and federal forces, and we respect them for their efforts. I see the border differently from 20 years ago in that we realize now it is a true team effort, with direction coming from our civilian leadership. The border agents are amazing and we’re honored to work with them.

GX: Do you ever take a moment to reflect on the men and women with whom you serve?

KM: When I put my uniform on in the morning, I realize that I am fortunate to get to serve with some of the greatest Americans I have ever known. Not just great Soldiers, but great people who believe in their families and their country. I am one of the luckiest guys in the world to be able to serve with these people. **GX**



New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Special Troops Battalion Soldiers march to their next task after completing shotgun familiarization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, PA.

On Range 17's firing line, Soldiers stood in a line, approximately 25 feet behind the green plastic silhouette-shaped targets.

The air was full of loud blasts and the frequent, distinct sound of shooters "racking," or chambering, more rounds into their weapons after firing.

Unlike the clean, single holes made by a rifle, the man-shaped targets were quickly peppered with a wide spray of multiple holes.

The model used by the 50th STB's Soldiers is the Mossberg 500, a civilian sportsman's model adapted for Guard use by adding a black non-glare finish. It fires buckshot shells with a capacity of five rounds. "It has an effective range of approximately 25 to 50

feet, and each shell contains approximately 30 to 50 pellets," Trew added.

WARRIOR-APPROVED

The weapon seems to be a hit with the 50th STB Soldiers. Even after marching 6 miles to the range, they were quick to offer enthusiastic praise for it.

"This is one of the easiest weapons to use and clean," said Private Daniel Kubik.

Though Specialist Andrew Davis has shot civilian shotguns before, he was amazed by the weapon's power.

"The powerful kick still gets me," Davis said. "You try to prepare for it, but it still surprises me."

"Their shoulders will be worn out after firing 15 rounds," Murphy joked.

"It's a beast, but I love it. This is a good back-up weapon," added Private First Class Eliezer Guzman. **GX**

New Jersey Soldiers Train on Shotguns

By SGT Christian Dejohn | FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, PA

The shotgun has always had a colorful aura about it, bringing to mind stage-coach robbers of the Old West.

When U.S. Soldiers began to adopt modified civilian shotguns for use in trench warfare in WWI, they appreciated the simple—but powerful—weapon's ability to clear enemy bunkers and trenches. After seeing how effectively a shotgun can clear or "sweep" enemy positions, they nicknamed them "trench brooms." Many of the original, hastily adapted civilian models from 1917 served on into the Korean and Vietnam Wars.

TRENCH BROOM TRAINING

The latest generation of Soldiers to use the shotgun includes the New Jersey Army National Guard's 50th Special Troops Battalion (STB). The battalion, which returned from an Iraq deployment in June 2009, conducted a shotgun familiarization course here March 6–7. The New Jersey Soldiers used four firing ranges.

Why continue to use the shotgun? "It's used today for 'urban breaching,' or shooting the lock

out of a door to enter a building," said Specialist Kyle Trew.

"Our combat engineers use them for blowing down doors," Sergeant First Class Thomas Hawkins said. "They have to be able to hit a door-knob at 5 feet, and you don't even have to aim it. You can kick open a door by firing a shotgun."



SPC Andrew Davis fires a shotgun during familiarization training at Fort Indiantown Gap, PA.

SSG DANIEL PALERMO



SSG Tracy Dice, an explosive ordnance disposal technician with the 430th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, disarms an improvised explosive device during training in Farmville, NC.

Guard Soldier Benefits From EOD Experience

By SPC Kelsey Blankenship, North Carolina Army National Guard | GREENVILLE, NC

STAFF SERGEANT TRACY DICE was a 12-year veteran of the law enforcement field when she decided to become an explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) technician in the North Carolina Army National Guard.

"I wanted to come out of the military with a strong cap for my law enforcement resume, and as we were looking at jobs, EOD popped up, and I asked if females could do that," she said. "When they told me yes, I said that it was for me. It was like the clouds parted and the angels sang."

Dice, who is a member of the 430th EOD Company, said EOD is a lot like law enforcement and sky diving, because they are both thought of as unsafe.

"There are a lot of safeties we have to adhere to in EOD, and you have to rely on your teammates," she said. "If you adhere to those safeties and trust in your teammates, it can be a relatively safe job."

WHAT IT TAKES

Dice said she believes that everyone can do the same work as long as they put their minds to it.

"I always did my work, and I always had a

good work ethic. When you put that first and foremost, nobody doubts you," she said.

Dice demonstrated her mettle during a deployment to Iraq from 2006 to 2008. She earned her senior badge after three years of conducting EOD missions and became the unit's first female team leader.

When she joined the Guard in 2004, there was one female EOD technician for every five companies, Dice said. Now, as many as four or five women serve in most EOD companies in the Active Army. But the National Guard, Dice acknowledged, has yet to achieve those kinds of numbers.

UNSPOKEN ALLIANCE

Dice said she likes the bond that is formed among EOD specialists. "I like the brotherhood," she said. "An EOD technician accepts another EOD technician like nothing else."

For example, if an EOD technician came into town and needed a place to stay, they are always willing to open their homes without any questions asked, Dice said.

"We understand what each other has gone through and are going to go through," she said. **GX**

VICTORY MAP



continued from page 29

theft. All North Dakota National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and their dependents are eligible for assistance.

The North Dakota National Guard Foundation is a private, non-profit charitable organization. One of its purposes is to provide support to programs that are beneficial to the National Guard, its members and families.

Arlington, VA

The chief of the National Guard Bureau congratulated 54 newly naturalized U.S. citizens, including a member of the Georgia Army National Guard, during a ceremony hosted by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services in Atlanta on March 10.

"In addition to all of the formal responsibilities asked of you as a new citizen, I would ask you to share with your fellow citizens that which makes you unique," said Air Force General Craig R. McKinley. "Let the people of this country learn from you—your culture—so that their lives might be enriched."

Specialist Damien Hewitt, who was born in Jamaica, was among the group sworn in on Tuesday. He is a member of the 178th Military Police Company based in Kennesaw, GA.

A new source of information for news about the National Guard is scheduled to debut March 1.

The "Minuteman Report" is a one-minute segment that will highlight news, current events and items of significance within the National Guard, said Guard officials.

The program, which is to be featured on the Pentagon Channel, Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS), the National Guard website, and possibly other outlets throughout the Department of Defense, is produced as a team effort between the NGB public affairs office and the broadcasting staff of the Air National Guard's Training and Education Center at McGhee-Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, TN.

Washington, DC

The Military Spouse Career Advancement Accounts program, commonly known as MyCAA, will resume March 13 for the more than

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A Soldier from the 609th Combat Engineer Company prepares for a simulated detonation on Fallon's Coleman Road Bridge during training in November.

The 609th currently has 43 Soldiers; 12 are still at Basic Combat Training. The unit's goal is to have 100 Soldiers within two years.

"I love these guys," said First Sergeant Shane Jensen, a Fallon resident and a 20-year Veteran who served overseas in Iraq with the 3rd Armor Division. "It's a family, not a company."

Of the 32 Soldiers who now drill, Jensen said about 25 percent are combat Veterans.

Jensen said the Fallon area offers unique training opportunities. "It's the only place like it in the state," he said.

Battalion Command Sergeant Major Robert Boldry echoed Jensen's assessment of the local training area.

"[The battalion] takes full advantage of Fallon and the training opportunities here," Boldry said. "There's a lot out here. Fallon is a hidden secret for good military training."

The National Guard and Naval Air Station Fallon also operate a small-arms range south of Fallon. The Navy built a small town at one of its ranges east of Sand Mountain for urban terrain fighting.

National Guard and other military services also use the training facilities and buildings at the Hawthorne Army Depot for other training scenarios.

"You never stop learning," Private First Class Adam Brayton said. "You can't be the best unless you stumble a few times."

Brayton said the combat engineers in the unit have a unique military occupational specialty.

"This is the best job you can have in the Guard," he said.

According to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the job of a combat engineer includes construction and breaching of trenches, tank traps and other fortifications; bunker construction; bridge and road construction or destruction; laying or clearing landmines; and general engineering tasks under fire.

Sergeant First Class Justin Hurt, the unit supply sergeant, said he is very pleased with the progress the unit is making.

"I've been in the Army for nine years, and this is the best group of Soldiers I've worked with," he said. **CX**

The 609th Takes on Fallon

NEW UNIT COVERS NEW GROUND

Story and photos by LTC (Ret.) Steve Ranson | FALLON, NV

▶ ASSIGNED A DEMOLITION MISSION, a platoon of Nevada Army National Guard Soldiers skirted along a set of railroad tracks and inched their way toward a major bridge across a canal. A second platoon of Soldiers trailed behind, concealing themselves in bushes and providing small-arms cover in case of enemy attack.

Although this could be a scenario in Iraq or Afghanistan, this mission took place in Fallon, NV, thousands of miles from any war zone.

One of the Nevada Army National Guard's newest units, the 609th Combat Engineer Company, recently spent a training day executing an operations order to disable a railroad bridge that crossed a canal.

"I thought we did pretty well," said Captain Nick Chavez, the company commander. "We spent only 25 minutes on the first objective."

He said once the demolition team arrived at the bridge, Soldiers immediately went to work setting up their charges along the rails at each end of the bridge.

Chavez said he was pleased at how each platoon established its position on time, like dominos falling into place. The company met at the rally point almost 90 minutes ahead of schedule.

The 609th first began recruiting Soldiers in March, but was completing its first true training mission during November's drill.



From left, Privates First Class Randy Jackson, Craig Kenison and Adam Brayton set up their explosives at one end of the Coleman Road Bridge during a training exercise in Fallon in November.



State CSM George Stopper presents the award for the state's Soldier of the Year to PFC Randy Fendryk at the award ceremony March 7.

Brueggen credited his unit leadership and his sponsor, Sergeant Josh Baranczyk, with his success.

"Without them getting me prepared, telling me where to be, what time, what uniform, I wouldn't be here right now," he said.

Fendryk said winning the Soldier of the Year award was a big deal, and praised his sponsor, Sergeant Troy Kind, for his assistance from the battery-level competition on up.

"He told me what I needed to study, what areas I should focus on more," Fendryk said. "Everything I've learned in Basic [Training] and Advanced Individual Training has helped. It's not one thing or another—it's really an accumulation of your Army history."

ADMIRATION SOCIETY

Stopper recognized each sponsor with a coin and words of praise.

"If you could have sat back and watched the motherhen looks on your faces when your competitor was going into the breach, it was awesome to see Soldiers care that much about fellow Soldiers, worry that much about their performance," he said.

Fendryk, who joined the Wisconsin Army National Guard in February 2009, appreciated the meaning of

his selection. "It's just so rare," he said. "Not many people can say they come up to Fort McCoy for a Soldier of the Year competition.

"It's just a great feeling to tell [people] it's just going to be me and a few other guys competing to see who's the best Soldier in the National Guard at the state level," Fendryk added.

Both Brueggen and Fendryk acknowledged areas they intend to improve before heading to the regional, such as their performance before a board of three sergeants major.

As tough as the state competition was, Stopper said it was a warm-up for the regional, which, like the state event, will be held at the Wisconsin Military Academy at Fort McCoy, WI.

Stopper said the competition gives the best Soldiers the chance to showcase their skills and compete against their peers. It also gives senior noncommissioned officers the opportunity to interact with some of the best enlisted Soldiers in the Wisconsin Army National Guard.

"We generally walk around for four days with big smiles on our faces," Stopper said. "Our Soldiers are absolutely phenomenal. Our Midwestern work ethic is evident in all our competitors. Those that endure will come out on top."

Specialist Seth Winchel of Detachment 1, 107th Maintenance Company, was named First Alternate for Soldier of the Year. Sergeant William Atkinson of Headquarters Troop, 1st Battalion, 105th Cavalry, was named First Alternate for NCO of the Year.

Last year, Specialist John Wiernasz won the annual Soldier of the Year competition and Sergeant Raymond B. Heilman won the NCOY competition. Both are members of Detachment 1, 950th Engineer Company, a unit that specializes in mine clearance. Wiernasz advanced to the Army National Guard's Best Warrior Competition last August at the Warrior Training Center, Fort Benning, GA. **GX**

Wisconsin Names Soldier and NCO of the Year

Courtesy of Wisconsin National Guard Public Affairs

► **A FIELD ARTILLERY SOLDIER** in the second year of his military career and a maintenance company repairman were named the Wisconsin Army National Guard's Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year (NCOY).

Private First Class Randy Fendryk and Sergeant Cody Brueggen will advance to the regional Soldier of the Year competition in May, where they will face their counterparts from six other states for the right to advance to the National Guard's Best Warrior Competition in August.

STIFF COMPETITION

"The competition was unbelievably tight—again," said state Command Sergeant Major George Stopper. "I'll tell you, it always works that way, and it always comes down to the last minute, the very last event, to figure out who the winner is. If you keep your head in the game and apply yourself during the whole iteration, you never know."

Fendryk and Brueggen earned the distinction of being the Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year by completing a rigorous schedule of a dozen events—a physical fitness test, qualifying on M4 rifles, competing in hand-to-hand combat drills and answering questions on military knowledge before a panel of three sergeants major.

This year's competition included, for the first time, a stress-fire event—in which competitors with an elevated heart rate fired their weapon at a target, simulating real demands in the urban warfare seen overseas. Stopper applauded the competitors who did not advance to the regional.

"What an accomplishment," he said. "Those of you not walking out of here with any hardware, walk out of here with your head held way high."

Brueggen said that winning the NCO of the Year competition required a lot of effort. "The competition was very tough," he said. "It's an unbelievable feeling to be standing here."



Soldiers with the 3666th Support Maintenance Company helped provide clothing and other donated items to the local community during a humanitarian aid mission March 21 near Contingency Operating Base Taji, Iraq.

them and are hoping we can get some more and do it again.”

Specialist Zandrast R. Rast, a supply clerk with the 3666th SMC, said her job was handing out the clothes as soon as they arrived at their destination.

“I was on the team to hand out the clothes and candy,” she said.

When she arrived, Rast could tell they needed help.

“From what I saw, the little kids didn’t have much,” she said. “It felt good to give

them clothes and to see their faces when they saw their gifts.”

Rast said it was important to show they cared. “A lot of kids need help and some people just don’t want to do it because they think it’s their parents’ responsibility. Sometimes they can’t

help the situation that they’re in. It felt good, and if I were ever given a chance to do this again, I would,” Rast said.

Baxter said watching everyone hand out bags to the smiling children was an amazing feeling. “It seemed like it went too fast,” he said. “We were only there for a short period of time. We can’t help all the kids, but to help some of them is great.”

Baxter said he thinks the Soldiers will value the experience they were given.

“I think if you have a chance, an opportunity to help somebody, whether it’s the Iraqi kids or even U.S. kids, take the time and do it,” he said. “The way you feel inside after you help somebody is just great. I have kids of my own and I love volunteering. I was really happy to do this mission.”

Baxter said his favorite part of the event was hearing the other Soldiers when they returned from the mission, talking about how great it was and how they planned to volunteer again.

Mattie said this was not her first time on a humanitarian aid mission.

“I really like doing this kind of stuff,” she said. “I’ve had some experience before, going to Africa and to Jordan for a cultural mission. I think it’s a great idea mainly for my troops to get out there and see different [cultures] because I’ve had these experiences.

“I wanted to make sure I could get some of our Soldiers out there ... to experience what is outside this military role.” **GX**

Arizona Soldiers Bring Clothes to Iraqi Community

Story and photo by SGT Ryan Twist, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE TAJI, IRAQ

Soldiers with the 3666th Support Maintenance Company provided clothing and other donated items to the local community during a humanitarian aid mission March 21 near Contingency Operating Base Taji, Iraq.

The items were donated through the Arizona Army National Guard, by a local organization in Arizona called Students Helping Students, started by a fellow Soldier to give to those in need.

Staff Sergeant Rose L. Mattie, the operations noncommissioned officer in charge with the 3666th SMC out of Phoenix, 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 15th Sustainment Brigade, 13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), said the mission provided a chance for the local community to see the Soldiers do something positive.

It also gave the Soldiers a chance to see the culture and life outside the wire.

Chief Warrant Officer Three Raymond L. Baxter, an Allied Trades supervisor with the 3666th SMC, said the opportunity to conduct

the mission came before they left the United States.

Baxter said he was approached a week before the deployment by Lieutenant Colonel Dawn E. Latting, the Defense Movement Coordinator for the Arizona National Guard and a special education teacher who started the program, and asked if the unit would be interested in bringing clothing to distribute to the local Iraqi children.

“We were able to bring five tri-wall boxes full of clothes for the kids,” he said.

Students Helping Students gives deployed Arizona units a chance to give back to the local community and offer some much-needed help to the children at the same time, said Baxter.

After they arrived in Iraq, the Soldiers cleaned the clothing and other items and sorted them, removing anything inappropriate.

Mattie said the clothing ranged from toddler to young adult, and they put together a complete outfit for each bag.

“We had 50 female and 50 male outfits that we put together,” she said. “We distributed all of

Miranda Lambert

NOTHING BUT LOVE FOR THE SOLDIERS

By Camille Breland | NASHVILLE, TN



▶ THROUGHOUT HER CAREER, country music star Miranda Lambert has steadfastly supported our troops. From military concerts to personal visits with Wounded Warriors, she leaves no doubt about her commitment to give of herself to those who serve.

One way she supports the military is by staying in close touch with *GX* magazine. We caught up with her recently for a one-on-one chat, and she shared the latest about her life, music and recent visit to Walter Reed Army Medical Center.

GX: When was the first time you performed the National Anthem?

In high school, at a pep rally, and I sang it in the gym. It was very nerve-wracking, and it still is. It's so much pressure—because of the meaning it has to so many people. There's so much history behind every word. I'm an all-American girl, and patriotic and proud to be where I'm from. Singing it is definitely an honor, and every time I've had the privilege of doing so, I try to represent the song well. I sang it at a [Dallas] Cowboys game and a NASCAR race. There were 100,000 people there and it was on national TV—so, no pressure!

GX: We know you're a hunter—what do you hunt, and what do you use?

Deer, turkey, mostly big-game hunting. I started bow hunting a few years ago, and that's been something I really enjoy doing. I have a lot of different bows.

I used to hunt with my dad. My dad used to reload his own ammunition, so I hung around with him and when he would bring home an animal, I would watch

him clean it. I was really interested in it. When I was 17, I started getting into it. I killed my first deer when I was 18, and cleaned it myself, and we ate it for Thanksgiving and Christmas dinner.

It's mainly about time spent with people I love and [being in] nature. Being able to bring home meat that feeds your family is a really cool thing.

GX: Have you toured any more for the military, like the Spirit of America?

I've played at quite a few bases, and I'm actually doing one this Sunday in Kansas.

I went to Bethesda and Walter Reed when I was up in the DC area. I got to hear so many stories—I'm supposed to be there lifting their spirits, but really, it lifts mine.

It's so amazing to hear these guys and girls tell about their experience in Iraq or wherever they were injured. They have such big hearts. All they can talk about is how they wish they were back in battle because they don't want their team of Soldiers to fight without them. It's very encouraging.

GX: How do you feel about Americans who serve as Citizen-Soldiers?

I think anyone who's willing to put their life on the line for other people is an amazing human being. It's really neat how certain people are called to do that. It's really cool, when you think about people who have that passion. Just like I'm passionate about music, they're passionate about serving their country and state, and their fellow American citizens.

GX: What have you learned in the music industry?

I've learned a lot about myself and about business. I didn't know the music industry was so much business and not so much music. I learned a lot about how to run a company and have employees, how to stick with it, and how to be really strong in who I am. It's been like college, I guess. I didn't go to college, but I went to the school of hard-knocks!

GX: Is there anything you'd like to say to the Soldiers?

Thank you. There are no words that would mean enough. It would take an hour-long interview to say everything that I feel. Thank you for being one of those people who's a giver. **GX**

Watch Miranda give a shout-out to National Guard Soldiers on the National Guard YouTube channel: YouTube.com/nationalguard

VICTORY MAP



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136,000 spouses who already have established an account, the defense official who heads up the program announced today.

Officials announced a temporary halt in the program Feb. 18, pending a top-to-bottom review, after a six-fold spike in enrollments in January, a surge that overwhelmed the system and caused the program to nearly reach its budget threshold.

"We made a commitment to our military spouses when they established a career advancement account, and we will be true to our promises," said Tommy T. Thomas, deputy undersecretary of defense for the Pentagon's office of military community and family policy.

The Defense Department will resume the program for the 136,583 military spouses currently in the program at noon EDT March 13, Thomas said.

"We sincerely apologize to our military spouses for the added burden caused by the pause in operation," he added.

While the program will resume for enrolled spouses, new MyCAA accounts or financial assistance applications will not be accepted yet, Thomas said, noting that the comprehensive review of the program is still under way.

Tigard, OR

The first group of Oregon's Citizen-Soldiers returned to Fort Lewis, WA, on April 3, signaling the beginning of the end of the 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team's (IBCT) nearly year-long deployment to Iraq.

"It's good to be home," said Specialist Howard Pierson of B Troop, 1/82 Cavalry Regiment. "I never thought it'd be nice to see cloudy rainy weather, but it's good to be home."

Howard, along with about 120 of his fellow Soldiers, was greeted by Brigadier General Charles Yriarte, the 41st's rear detachment commander, as they stepped off their plane at McChord Air Force Base, WA.

The Oregon Army National Guard Soldiers represent the first of the nearly 2,700 troops with the 41st, who have spent the last year in Iraq conducting missions such as convoy security, force protection, and assisting with the developing infrastructure. **GX**



Soldiers from the 44th CST take a ride in one of the Coast Guard's newer fast boats while cross-training in Florida.

Training Forges Bond Between National Guard and U.S. Coast Guard

By Master Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa, Florida National Guard Public Affairs | JACKSONVILLE, FL

A RECENT TRAINING EXERCISE in Northeast Florida involving the Florida National Guard and the U.S. Coast Guard could be the beginning of a lifesaving partnership along Florida's coastline.

On March 10, members of the Florida National Guard's 44th Civil Support Team (CST) traveled to the U.S. Coast Guard Station Mayport near Jacksonville, FL, and spent the afternoon training and exchanging information with personnel at the station.

Members of the 44th—all experts in the detection of chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials—briefed the Coast Guard on their civil support team mission and what to expect if they discovered a ship was contaminated with chemical agents. The Coast Guard in turn instructed the 44th members on techniques for boarding maritime vessels.

According to Major Michael Ladd, commander of the 44th Civil Support Team, the joint training exercise was the start of an important professional partnership between the two agencies.

"We see this as the beginning of a much more robust relationship," Ladd explained. "This is just at the tactical level at this point; we're going over

how we would get our detection equipment and our experts on board [a ship] to do that detection mission."

Training the 44th CST in maritime operations is important because Florida has an extensive coastline of more than 1,100 miles. Ladd said they need to be prepared for any missions that could involve a chemical or terrorist threat.

"With as much Florida coastline as we've got, it doesn't take too much imaginative thinking to think up a scenario where this may apply," he added.

Throughout the afternoon, the Guard Soldiers and Airmen practiced boarding techniques on several different Coast Guard ships, from small inflatable rafts to a 175-foot cutter.

Lieutenant Commander Mark Kuperman, Incident Division Management chief for U.S. Coast Guard Sector Jacksonville, said the purpose of the boarding training was to give the CST members a sense of how to move themselves and their detection equipment from one ship to another while at sea or in the river.

"They need to be able to operate in that maritime environment," he said. "If they can do it

with our ships that are smaller, they won't have a problem doing it on a larger vessel."

Kuperman, who observed all the training and offered his expertise on maritime operations to the CST, said he hoped the exercise would continue to foster a strong relationship between the National Guard and the U.S. Coast Guard.

"The ability that the 44th Civil Support Team brings is not just as a National Guard component, but they are also linked into the state of Florida," he said. "So for an emergency response organization like the U.S. Coast Guard, this brings a tremendous amount of versatility, in that we're able to tie into both state and federal partnerships simultaneously in working with the 44th Civil Support Team."

Boatswain's Mate Justin Pickler, who delivered the 44th CST Soldiers by boat to the larger ships at the Coast Guard station, said it was just a good opportunity for his team to meet the civil support team and learn about their mission.

"It's always nice training with other agencies," Pickler said. "[We see] how they do things on their side of the house, and they see how we do things on our side of the house." **EX**

COURTESY FLORIDA NATIONAL GUARD

Guard Soldiers Partner with Coast Guard to Save Hiker

By MAJ Guy Hayes / CAMP DENALI, AK

▶ **THE ALASKA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD** and Coast Guard teamed up March 10 to help rescue a 28-year-old hiker stranded without food for days on Meade Glacier near Haines, AK.

The 11th Rescue Coordination Center requested support from the Army National Guard, on behalf of the Coast Guard, after the Coast Guard was unsuccessful in its attempts to rescue the hiker the previous three days.

The Alaska Army National Guard Army Aviation Operations Facility in Juneau was tasked with the mission. Crews departed on a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter carrying Juneau and Douglas Mountain Rescue crews.

JOINT EFFORT

“Local rescue groups, Alaska State Troopers, Coast Guard and Alaska Army National Guard aircrew members had been working together since March 8, but poor weather conditions in the search area kept us from joining the rescue attempts earlier,” said Chief Warrant Officer Two Nate Maplesden, UH-60 Black Hawk pilot with the Alaska Army National Guard. “A plan for the Coast Guard to take three mountain rescue hikers to the search area via the Lace River and for the Army National Guard to access the Glacier from the Katzeihin River was made, and that’s what we first attempted.”

Both the Alaska Army National Guard Black Hawk and Coast Guard MH-60 Jayhawk helicopters launched and proceeded as briefed. The Coast Guard was unable to access the glacier and had to abort at 8 nautical miles from the search area. Meanwhile, the Army National Guard helicopter, or “Icy 94,” was working its way in the Katzeihin River in poor weather conditions.

“A snow shower was restricting our visibility down to half a mile. However, we could see the tops of mountains at 1,000 to 2,000 feet,” Maplesden said.

“The sun was beaming through the cloud layer so we were optimistic, but once we reached the ‘toe’ of the glacier, conditions had not improved enough to continue,” he said.

The National Guard crew agreed that it might be worth setting the helicopter down for a few minutes and wait for a shift in weather.

At 10:15 a.m., the Black Hawk took off for one more look at the glacier and crews were surprised to see that visibility and ceilings were good.

“We made it to where the glacier was approximately 4,000 feet,” said Maplesden. “We were only a mile and a half from the hiker’s location but could not continue again due to visibility conditions in the search area.” “Icy 94” had to return to Juneau, as weather conditions appeared to be worsening and fuel was running low.

PERSISTENCE PAYS

At 2:30 p.m., Coast Guard and National Guard helicopters took off again with the intent to drop ground teams as close to the search area as possible to search on foot.

“The Coast Guard was first in the area and reported that conditions were improved, with cloud layers at 6,500 feet,” Maplesden said.

Both helicopter crews maintained constant communication and worked together to find the hiker’s location.

“A moment after we had discussed our search plan, the Coast Guard received a message from the hiker via a radio that had been dropped to him by the pilot that was originally chartered to pick him up days before,” Maplesden said.

The Coast Guard helicopter crew quickly spotted the hiker in the middle of the glacier, waving outside his tent.

The Coast Guard crew dropped orange markers at his position, marking the area for the

An Alaska Army National Guard Black Hawk helicopter sits on Meade Glacier while Mountain Rescue teams aid a hiker stranded March 7–10.

SEE VIDEO OF THIS RESCUE AT
[YOUTUBE.COM/NATIONALGUARD](https://www.youtube.com/nationalguard)

Army National Guard Black Hawk helicopter to land at the 5,100-foot level of the glacier.

“After laying orange markers, Chief Warrant Officer Steve Lewis, the pilot on the controls, touched down approximately 30 meters from the hiker’s position,” Maplesden said. “Snow skis on the Black Hawk provided a large surface area, and we are able to keep from sinking into the deep fresh snow.”

Juneau and Douglas Mountain Rescue personnel were quickly dispatched and safely transferred the hiker into the Black Hawk.

The hiker was transported to Haines in stable condition, where Alaska State Troopers waited to take him to the local clinic. He was tired, weak and had not eaten in four days. Troopers estimated the area where the hiker was stranded had received 12 feet of snow since Feb. 20.

FLAWLESS TEAMWORK

“The teamwork between the Coast Guard and Army National Guard crews was seamless. There was constant communication both on the ground and in the air,” Maplesden said. “Planning between the commanding pilots was professional, and this rescue highlighted the ability of both organizations to function together in a highly effective manner.”

The Alaska Army National Guard Juneau Army Aviation Operating Facility has served as a staging and planning hub for search and rescue events for more than a decade. The Alaska Army National Guard was awarded one save for this mission. **GX**

FORWARD

The UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter came in steep and fast, its landing gear bouncing off the rocks as the pilot touched down to deliver his occupants into battle in the Tora Bora Mountains of Afghanistan in October 2001. The Soldiers dismounted rapidly, firing their machine guns and fanning out to secure the Landing Zone.

The American response to 9/11 was official.

The AH-64 Longbow Apache combines the world's most advanced technology with awesome firepower to provide Army National Guard Soldiers on the ground devastating fire support.

SGT ROBERTO DI GIOVINE,
SOUTH CAROLINA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



MOTION

**NATIONAL GUARD AVIATORS
KEEP THE GUARD ON TOP**

BY CHRISTIAN ANDERSON

"I loved the complete sense of speed, control and freedom"

MOMENTS AFTER THE ASSAULT BEGAN, IT WAS OVER. The enemy had been caught by surprise, and their resistance proved no match for the determined and well-trained Special Forces and Navy SEAL operators.

These were the same mountains where hardened Afghan warriors had ousted the Russians in 1989, after years of bloodshed. But the Americans in 2001 had an advantage that the Russians never properly utilized: the helicopter.

From the weeks following 9/11 to the current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the National Guard has fought on foreign soil and kept global terrorism at bay. The helicopter has afforded them the ability to move troops throughout the deserts of Iraq and up into the mountains around Afghanistan.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

The concept of the helicopter can be traced as far back as the 1500s, when Italian artist and inventor Leonardo Da Vinci produced several sketches of a flying machine that resembled a modern-day helicopter.

Since then, many other visionaries and inventors attempted to produce a helicopter that actually flew. But, in spite of sound theories, they lacked the material and technology to make it work.

In 1942, Igor Sikorsky became the first person to successfully fly a helicopter, changing the principles of aviation forever. Soon, the U.S. military—specifically, the Army National Guard—realized that the helicopter made the troops' movements and general operations much more efficient, allowing Guard Soldiers to respond rapidly to any need.

During the Korean War, the U.S. experimented with helicopters for medical operations. These units, known as Mobile Army Surgical Hospital units, pioneered helicopter support and response, and became famous about 20 years later via the hit TV series "M*A*S*H."

By the 1960s, the concept of attack by air was not new. The Americans and British had used air assault in WWII. But it wasn't until the Vietnam War that the military solidified the helicopter in its arsenal.

Lieutenant Colonel Hal Moore and the men of the 7th Cavalry made history when

they became the first Soldiers to officially use the helicopter for a large-scale assault on Nov. 14, 1965, in Vietnam. During the vicious three-day battle that followed, Moore and his troops were supported by the helicopters that brought in additional Soldiers and ammo every 30 minutes.

CHASING THE DREAM

To get in the pilot's seat of a helicopter in the Army National Guard, a Soldier has to follow one of two military career paths: become an officer or a warrant officer (see sidebar).

Captain Caralyn Cain, 2/151st Aviation (Security and Support), Florida Army National Guard, chose the path of an officer. Originally, her goal was to be an airplane pilot, but she switched to rotary craft while a student at the Florida Institute of Technology, which specializes in aviation. While there, Cain enrolled in the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), which introduced her to the Army National Guard and its opportunities in aviation.

"At the end of my sophomore year, I had the choice of commissioning into the Guard or Active Army," she explained. "I started drilling with the Florida Guard in my last two years of college. I had my fixed-wing licenses when I joined the Guard, and had always felt there was no way a helicopter could be more exciting than a fixed-wing aircraft. But that thought got pushed to the wayside. It has been so amazing to fly helicopters for the National Guard."

Chief Warrant Officer Three Rich Fayman, 106th Aviation Air Assault Battalion, Illinois Army National Guard, said that Warrant Officer Candidate School (WOCS) was more than memorable. The six-week course turns exceptional Soldiers into exemplary leaders and experts in their field.

"WOCS was hectic," Fayman said. "I expected it not to be too bad, but somehow it was like Basic Combat Training all over again. We got yelled at the first day."

Warrant officer candidates are often called "Snowbirds" the first week they arrive. Legend

has it that this is because penguins can't fly. They're isolated in a special section of the school, where they receive uniforms, instruction on how to use equipment and strict protocol for wearing their uniforms.

"After that first week, we went to the main part of the camp, where our instructors started yelling at us, making us do push-ups, and giving us a glimpse of what WOCS was really like," Fayman said. "There were required reading materials, and we had to do book reports on them. Classes went all day, and when we were done in the evening, we had to clean the barracks before we could study. Then, lights out, before we started all over again the next day."

WOCS instructors emphasize that things must be done correctly, the first time.

"For instance, if you didn't fold your sock the right way, you had to write a memo about why you failed to fold your sock correctly," Fayman laughed.

Once Fayman graduated from WOCS, he was officially Warrant Officer Rich Fayman, and one step closer to flying a helicopter for the Army National Guard.

THE MAKING OF AN AVIATOR

Regardless of their rank, all aspiring pilots must complete Aviation School at Fort Rucker, AL. There, they must prove they have what it takes to pilot high-tech machinery. Graduation is not guaranteed.

"When I got to Fort Rucker, I knew it was showtime," Fayman explained. "So I prepared mentally as much as I could."

Like many aviators, Fayman experienced his time in Alabama as a bit surreal, due to the fast pace.

"It was very intense," he said. "We went to the flight line hands-on training in the morning, then ate lunch, and then went to the classroom until dinner," he explained. "We also did PT early in the morning or late in the afternoon—as if we didn't have enough to do already."

The first step at Fort Rucker, called "primary," is where Soldiers learn to fly and

I felt on my first solo.” >> CPT Wangson Sylvien, Apache pilot, Mississippi Army National Guard



CW4 Jolly Harper, Apache pilot with the 111th Helicopter Attack Squadron, Florida Army National Guard, waves at the camera while flying a mission in Afghanistan during his deployment in 2004.

The Warrant Officer

land a TH-67 helicopter, work with traffic patterns and fly on autopilot.

After primary, students move on to the second phase of the school, called “instruments.” There, still on the TH-67, students learn to fly by instruments alone. After instruments, they take academic courses.

Pilots say that the first time they solo is often one of the most memorable moments of their lives.

“I loved the complete sense of speed, control and freedom I felt on my first solo,” said Captain Wangson Sylvien, an AH-64 Apache pilot with the 151st Aviation Battalion, Mississippi Army National Guard. “It was almost like sensory overload. I love every minute I spend in the air, but that first flight took the cake.”

Toward the end of flight school, students learn how to fly either a UH-60 Black Hawk or an OH-58 Kiowa Warrior, developing some exciting skills like tactical maneuvers, nap-of-the-earth flying, and night flying—with and without night vision goggles (NVGs).

“Flying with goggles is definitely challenging because it’s unnatural,” Cain said. “It really takes time to learn how to use them. You will never forget that first time flying with them.”

The next step is to fly in the dark, without NVGs, which some pilots compare to driving down the highway at night with your headlights off.

“Flying without NVGs was crazy,” Fayman exclaimed. “I was a crew chief on a chopper before I went to Fort Rucker, so I had some

A WARRANT OFFICER is a highly disciplined and skilled specialty Soldier. In the chain of command, they are situated above enlisted ranks and below commissioned officers.

There are five ranks within the corps: Warrant Officer (WO1), Chief Warrant Officer Two (CW2), Chief Warrant Officer Three (CW3), Chief Warrant Officer Four (CW4) and Chief Warrant Officer Five (CW5).

These specialists are technical experts who manage and maintain complex battle-field systems. They possess a high degree of specialization in a particular field, in contrast to the more general assignment pattern of other commissioned officers.

To learn more about becoming a warrant officer go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/careers/become-a-warrant-officer

SGT Hector Lima Bermudez, 2/135th General Support Aviation Battalion, Colorado Army National Guard, dumps water onto a simulated fire from a Black Hawk helicopter at Camp Ashland, NE, in June 2009.



“Every time we go up, it may be a training mission, but it’s as real as it can get, minus bullets flying at you.”

**>> CW3 Rich Fayman,
Illinois Army National Guard**

TECH. SGT. ALEX R. SALMON, NEBRASKA AIR NATIONAL GUARD

experience on a helicopter at night, but it was different actually being at the controls.”

After this test, students hone basic leadership and flying skills until they ship out to one of the toughest programs in the military: SERE school.

THE WILL TO SURVIVE

Every aviator fears being shot down behind enemy lines. If this happens, the key is Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape, more commonly known by the acronym SERE.

Founded by the Air Force in 1953, the 21-day SERE school is far from textbook, as students are taught what it takes to survive any bad situation.

Air Force Captain Scott O’Grady, an F-16 pilot who was downed over Bosnia in 1995, is a living testament to the training and instruction at SERE. During his six days behind enemy lines, O’Grady successfully evaded his captors until U.S. Soldiers rescued him. He survived by eating grass and bugs.

The Guard sends all of its aviators to SERE, where they learn to live off the land—hunting, fishing, trapping and constructing shelter from the elements. Students also learn methods for resisting interrogation and how to make weapons for personal defense.

“I found SERE school to be very informative and exciting because it was so different from anything I had done in the past,” Cain said. “There was a lot of hands-on instruction and a lot of basic survival skills—skills that you hope you never have to use in real life.”

After graduating from SERE, Soldiers report back to their units and begin their career as a National Guard aviator.

NO SUCH THING AS A MILK RUN

Although aviation crews have to show up for monthly drill like any other Guard unit, their weekend can hardly be called a “drill.” The crews often perform missions where many lives, including their own, are dependent on their safety and professionalism.

“Every time we go up, it may be a training mission, but it’s as real as it can get, minus bullets flying at you,” Fayman said. “Some missions might seem like a milk run, but you have to be prepared for everything. We might be moving VIPs, hauling troops to Fort McCoy,

UH-60 Black Hawk

THE GUARD’S WORKHORSE

Info courtesy of Sikorsky Aircraft

The **UH-60 Black Hawk** is the modern-day workhorse for the Guard, performing the lion’s share of helicopter missions.

Often taxiing troops to battle, carrying precious cargo and acting in the medevac role, this helicopter is extremely crucial to Guard operations around the world. Part of its success is due to its versatility.

The Black Hawk began replacing the UH-1 Huey in the 1980s, with National Guard receiving their first birds shortly after Desert Storm in 1991.

Along with air assault, air cavalry, medevac and gunship roles, the Black Hawk performs well in a support role and is able to move a 105 mm howitzer, its crew and enough ammunition for a firefight to support troops on the ground.

Black Hawk crews were highly active in 2005 during Hurricane Katrina, with National Guard crews performing missions around the clock.



A pair of UH-60 Black Hawks land in the middle of the Iraqi desert to pick up Special Forces Soldiers and their Iraqi counterparts.

Wisconsin, or performing search-and-rescue operations during any given drill period.”

Every year, there is an annual pass-or-fail check ride. Staying current with training requirements is always important because of possible deployments.

“We are constantly in training mode, every time we fly,” Cain said. “In the annual check ride, there is a ground portion and an air portion, and we perform that with an instructor every year. If we don’t pass it, we don’t fly.”

For Sylvien and his pilots in the Mississippi Apache attack squadrons, there’s no room to fall behind during drill periods or Annual Training.

“Here in the 151st, we treat every drill as if tomorrow, we are going to war,” Sylvien said. “Our war fight mission is to engage hostiles, no matter what capacity they’re in, and to keep our boys on the ground protected. If we start to let up on our gunnery skills and overall flight training, we not only risk our own lives, but also those of the ground pounders, which is unacceptable.”

STEPPING UP TO THE PLATE

Since the invasion of Afghanistan in 2001 and Iraq in 2003, the National Guard has

taken a huge portion of the operations overseas and performed alongside Active Duty Soldiers. For Chief Warrant Officer Two Brian Thacker, time on the frontlines in Iraq meant supporting the high operational tempo of the Guard.

“Our primary mission was air assault,” said Thacker, a pilot with the 2/149th General Support Aviation Battalion, Oklahoma Army National Guard. “But we ended up performing a variety of missions—transporting VIPs, moving equipment, or giving Soldiers a lift to and from rest and relaxation. Whatever the Guard needed, we did it.”

To Thacker, the most exciting missions were when he and his crew delivered Soldiers into battle. Although Black Hawks are armed with a pair of M240B machine guns, the landings and takeoffs in “hot” (dangerous) landing zones could be unnerving.

“When we land and take off is when things can get hairy,” he explained. “Our gunners are alert, and the Soldiers on the ground are doing their best to protect us, but once we touch the ground, a few minutes can seem like an hour.”

Sometimes, Thacker and his crew had an escort—usually, an AH-64 Apache, which provided devastating fire if the enemy was spotted.

AH-64 Apache

Info courtesy of Boeing

The **AH-64 Apache**, the Guard's primary attack helicopter, has proved to be a great troop supporter in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. Originally, the Apache's mission was to destroy high-value targets, but its current missions involve more

offensive efforts in coordination with Soldiers on the ground. With its two-member crew, it fights and destroys, disrupts and delays the enemy—day or night, in all types of weather. It has a full range of aircraft survivability equipment, travels up to 145 miles per hour and can withstand hits from rounds up to 23 mm. It is invaluable to Guard operations worldwide.

An AH-64 Apache climbs to evade enemy fire while supporting troops on the ground somewhere in Afghanistan near the Pakistan border in 2009.



“We didn’t always get an escort, but it sure felt good when we did,” Thacker laughed.

PERMISSION TO ENGAGE

One of the most feared weapons in the Guard inventory is the AH-64 Apache, which is exactly why it’s being used extensively in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Apache was designed during the tail end of the Cold War for one purpose: to destroy tanks.

In 1991, during Desert Storm, and again in 2003, in the invasion of Iraq, Apaches destroyed Saddam Hussein’s massive armies of tanks using their advanced technology. Able to fly at night and engage targets through sandstorms and smoke, the Apaches could find anyone.

After the initial invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, Apache crews began to run out of tanks to destroy.

“We found ourselves engaging mostly personnel and soft targets,” said Chief Warrant Officer Four Jolly Harper, 111th Helicopter Attack Squadron, Florida Army National Guard. “We did a lot of escort missions and a lot of ground support missions, engaging enemy forces that were attacking our guys on the ground.”

Harper flew more than 705 hours in the Apache while in Afghanistan and often found himself in the role of “intimidating” the enemy by flying escort next to Black Hawks

or Chinooks around Afghanistan. But sometimes, the Taliban fighters thought they had what it took to fight an Apache. Harper proved them wrong.

In June 2004, Harper and his wingman were providing escort for several hundred Marines when enemy forces on the ground sprung an ambush, pinning the Marines down.

Harper witnessed the beginning of the ambush and turned his Apache into the enemy fire, letting loose a volley of 30 mm cannon fire and taking heavy fire himself. The enemy targeted the two Florida National Guard Apaches with machine guns and rocket propelled grenades (RPGs), while Harper and his wingman “unleashed hell” back on them. The Taliban were entrenched in the surrounding hills, protected from the Marines, so Harper and his wingman engaged them with accurate and steady fire.

After close to nine hours of fighting, two visits to an outpost to re-arm and refuel, and dodging several RPGs, Harper had successfully repelled the Taliban forces, leaving all 513 Marines on the ground to fight another day. He later received the Distinguished Flying Cross for his heroism in the battle.

FLYING AMBULANCE

Of all the missions Guard aviators perform, the role of medevac may be the most important.

Medevac crews respond when a Soldier is wounded. With a medic on board, medevac crews pick up where the ground medic leaves off, keeping the wounded stable and getting them to the hospital faster than a ground vehicle can.

To become a flight medic, a Soldier must undergo rigorous training and learn to save lives with nothing but their basic medical pack. They must also be proficient with helicopter mechanics, in case something goes wrong with the aircraft.

“We’re combat medics, but we also have to pitch in and give the crew chief or pilot a hand if needed,” said Staff Sergeant Chad Beals, also of the 2/149th.

Beals explained that the missions are always different and that teamwork is crucial for their success.

“We all work together to make sure the missions go as planned,” he said. “Each of us has different training and therefore different roles, but we have to work together to be efficient.”

Although the Geneva Convention bars medevacs from using offensive weapons, the crewmembers pack some impressive heat.

“Although we can’t have M240Bs on our aircraft, we do carry an M9 9 mm pistol each and several M4s in the back, strictly for defensive purposes,” Beals added.

HOMEFRONT RESPONSE

On Aug. 28, 2005, Hurricane Katrina devastated the coasts of Mississippi and Louisiana, leaving hundreds of thousands of people without food, water and electrical power. Many were stranded on their roofs, especially in New Orleans. Rescue by vehicle was almost impossible for first responders.

Within the first few hours after the storm receded, Guard helicopters were in the air working to evacuate people to safety. Sergeant David Tillman was on one of them.

A technical inspector for the 2/149th General Support Aviation Battalion, Oklahoma Army National Guard, Tillman was on a Black Hawk and participated in rescue operations on the scene for several days.

“We were constantly in the air taking people to safety,” Tillman explained. “And when we weren’t rescuing people, we were moving supplies around the region. So we were pretty much in the air 24 hours a day.”



CPT Caralyn Cain poses by her UH-72 Lakota before a mission in support of Guard operations in Florida.

Although a Black Hawk can seat only around 11 people, many crews removed the seating to make room for more. In some cases they'd transport 20 individuals at a time.

"Sometimes, we had to drop supplies to people because either we were either too full already or low on fuel," he explained. "But, because we had a winch lift, we could hoist multiple people up pretty fast if we had to."

Like many involved in the rescue operations, Tillman has memories of what he saw that remain with him to this day.

"We were hoisting this family off of a roof, and as I began to assist the last person,

which I assumed to be the father, he suddenly hugged me," Tillman admitted. "He was so grateful for what we were doing."

FUTURISTIC FLIGHT

Never has the Guard relied more on helicopters than in the past decade. From contingency operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, to keeping the peace in Kosovo and Hurricane Katrina rescues, Guard helicopters have been there. As the Guard focuses on becoming more mobile, aviation units will continue to find themselves in the forefront of operations.

In February 2010, the Army announced that it would buy more helicopters and create more aviation units for the Active Duty Army and the Army National Guard. Missions in Iraq and Afghanistan have highlighted the need for the ability to maneuver in harsh regions with few roads.

Helicopters have been crucial to the success of the Guard, and with the advent of new technology, they'll continue to be updated with better avionics and power plants.

And, just like the Soldiers who fly them, these machines will be ready to answer the call. **GX**



Soldiers from the 19th Special Forces Group and their Afghan National Army counterparts disembark a CH-47 Chinook during an operation in Afghanistan.

Colorado Hoist Rescue

Intro by SSG Joshua Moyer, Flight Medic, 2/135th General Support Aviation Battalion, Colorado Army National Guard

Story by Roy Knoedler

The story that follows is an experience I'll never forget. It's the sole reason I joined the National Guard, rather than the Active Duty Army—to not only serve my country, but also, the people in my community.

The only thing that could complete the experience was to see that the two hikers that assisted me in the rescue were properly thanked and recognized for their efforts. Without their assistance and the expert precision and tenacity of the CH-47 crew, this extremely dangerous, challenging and technical rescue would have been exponentially more difficult and dangerous.

ON TUESDAY, JULY 7, 2009, I had a climbing accident after summiting Challenger Point in Colorado.

I suffered some fairly serious injuries, but survived thanks to a dramatic rescue by seven Colorado Army National Guard Soldiers of the Army Aviation Support Facility at Buckley Air Force Base in Aurora, CO. They flew to the scene in complete darkness and conducted the rescue using night-vision goggles.

Around 3:30 p.m., I was descending a steep slope at around 13,000 feet, when I slipped and hit a rock.

I blacked out. When I woke up, I yelled for help to a group of hikers below. They called farther down to two more experienced men in their group—Craig Reynolds, 53, and Jesse Houghtalen, 25. Craig and Jesse started climbing up. When they reached me, they called 911. Helicopters first flew by around 6:30 p.m. but couldn't find a place to land.

Around 12:30 a.m., another helicopter came. This time, it hovered, and lowered an Army flight medic—Staff Sergeant Josh Moyer.

Moyer and the other two guys tried to put me on the pallet, but it was a tough task on the 65- to 70-degree slope. It took so long that the helicopter had to go back to Colorado Springs for more fuel. Sometime between 3 and 4 a.m., they lifted us out. I was taken to St. Mary Corwin, a trauma hospital in Pueblo, CO, where I learned that I had multiple skull and face fractures, a broken nose, a severe gash on my forehead, a broken arm, chipped teeth and missing fillings.

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to everyone involved in my rescue. I'm in awe of the skill and professionalism of the CH-47 Chinook crew. To see them in action would make anyone proud of our Armed Forces. **GX**

CH-47 Chinook

Info courtesy of Boeing

The **CH-47** is a twin-engine, tandem rotor helicopter designed for transportation of cargo, troops and weapons during day, night, visual and instrument conditions.

The minimum crew for tactical operations is four—two pilots, one flight engineer and one crew chief. For more complex missions, such as night operations and air assaults, commanders use five crewmembers and an additional crew chief.

The amount of load a cargo helicopter can carry depends on the model, the fuel on board, the distance to be flown and atmospheric conditions.

Info courtesy of Bell Helicopter

The **Kiowa** can be armed with several different types of weapons. With two weapons pylons that allow for quick weaponry change, the Kiowa allows a pilot to change his weaponry quickly. HELLFIRE missiles, Air-to-Air Stinger missiles, HYDRA 70 rockets and a .50 cal machine gun are some of the weaponry that allow the Kiowa to get down and dirty with the bad guys.

With cutting-edge optical equipment, the pilot can fly, observe and engage targets day or night. The Kiowa can be folded up and transported in a C-130 Hercules to any location around the world in rapid response.

Back From Iraq

AIR CAVALRY SOLDIERS REFLECT ON YEARLONG DEPLOYMENT

By CW2 Chris Hyde, 1/230th Air Cavalry, Tennessee Army National Guard

The 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron (ACS)—aka Task Force (TF) Desperado—is an accomplished Army National Guard aviation unit.

The squadron has flown 3,590 combat missions and over 24,000 combined combat hours in six months.

The troop of Black Hawks transported over 8,000 passengers and 4 million pounds

totaling 30 aircraft, one troop of UH-60 Black Hawks with 10 aircraft, two aviation maintenance troops and a forward support troop with a 3/5th platoon.

1/230th ACS Desperados deployed to Fort Sill, OK, on April 1, 2009, from three locations in Tennessee and one in Mississippi.

The Desperados flew 3,000 hours from April 1–June 3, 2009. After completing all pre-mob tasks and training, the 1/230th began

Troop D (“Moonshine”) flew 4,638 combat hours while maintaining an operational readiness rate of 75 percent. The troop moved 8,000 passengers and 4 million pounds of cargo to over 30 different Helicopter Landing Zones from Baghdad to the Turkish border.

Armed Reconnaissance Troops A, B and C, respectively known as Assassin, Blackjack and Comanchero, collectively flew 19,488 combat hours while maintaining an operational readiness rate of 80 percent. They expended 124,000 rounds of .50 cal and over 4,000 2.75-inch high explosive rockets.

Security missions were flown in support of ODA/OCFI, troops-in-contact, Syrian Border over-watch and LRS air assault missions.

BlueMax and Apache Warrior provided the attack reconnaissance capability for 1/230th. Together, they have flown their AH-64D Longbow Apaches over 2,750 combat hours with an operational readiness rate of 75 percent. The Longbow pilots and Soldiers fired 11,000 rounds of 30 mm and 1,500 2.75-inch high explosive rockets.

The Soldiers of Executioner and Titan Troops performed 132 scheduled 40-hour inspections, 44 scheduled 120-hour inspections, 12 UH-60A phase inspections and 650 OH-58D Progressive Phase Maintenance Inspections.

Troop G provides ground maintenance and 3/5th Platoon capability. Since arriving in USD-N, it has safely driven approximately 3,200 miles while conducting 50 combat logistic patrols. They have pumped 2.8 million gallons of fuel for 10 different airframes and a multitude of ground vehicles.

The 1/230th leadership managed a five-FOB enterprise. Leadership never wavered. **GX**



The Kiowa Warrior is one of the 1/230th's key weapons in its many combat missions.

of cargo during their 4,638 combat hours. Three troops of Kiowa Warriors flew 19,488 combat hours.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

The 1/230th projected its power across United States Division-North (USD-N) to protect and assist U.S. forces, Iraqi Army, Iraqi Security Forces and the 3.5 million citizens of the Ninewa and Irbil Provinces.

The 1/230th is comprised of a headquarters troop, three troops of OH-58D Kiowa Warriors

the journey to join OIF 09-11. By June 20, the squadron had reached its quarters at five different FOBs.

The 1/230th and its six operating bases provide support for over 60,000 square miles in Northern Iraq.

While operational control to 10th Mountain and 25th Infantry Divisions, the 1/230th supported four brigade combat teams. They were direct support to the 3/1st Heavy Brigade Combat Team and the 2/3rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

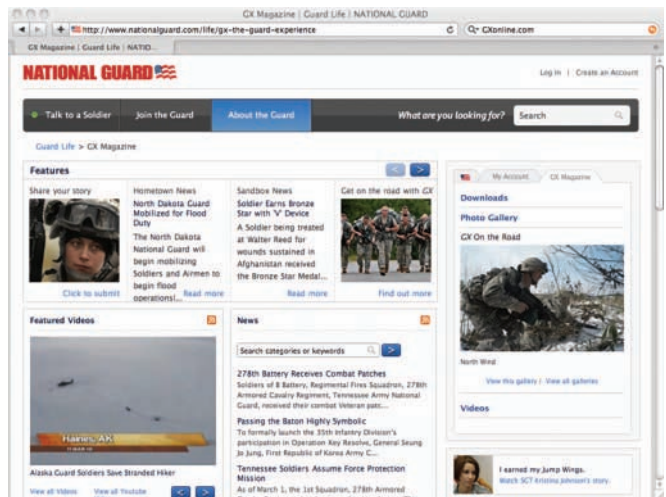
The Bugler is a tool to help Soldiers in all aspects of recruiting. From the Recruiting NCOIC to the Recruiting Assistant (RA), all new information about the latest and greatest recruiting tools and programs can be found right here in each issue of GX.

Info and images courtesy of NGB-ASM



>> PATH TO HONOR ENTRANCE NATIONAL SECURITY QUESTIONNAIRE INTEGRATION

Recently, the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) added several new questions to the SF86 form. To stay up-to-date with the recent changes, Path to Honor personnel added all of the new questions to the applicants' Path to Honor (PTH) packet. As an applicant completes the Path to Honor application, the local RRNCO can click on the e-NSQ tab and view all of the new data requested on the SF86. By April 2010, all of the required questions transferred from Path to Honor to RZ2, and the packet validated properly for an applicant to be processed.



>> GXONLINE.COM

GXonline.com (GXO) has been revamped to provide you with more up-to-date news postings, video footage and photos from Soldiers in the field. Visit GXO to submit your story, take a reader survey, sign up for GX or visit the GX On The Road page. Go behind-the-scenes with the GX On the Road team to read blogs, see extra photos and capture the full experience of Guard events like the Best Warrior Competition, Combatives tournaments, Airborne School and more! Visit GXonline.com.









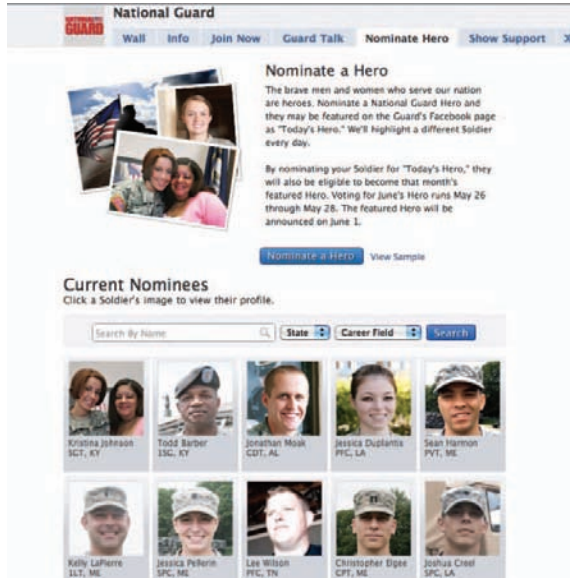
Today's Hero:
SGT Fredesvin Quintana
Infantry, WA

He served two tours in Iraq, and he's always ready to help fellow Soldiers and his country. He's a

Today's Hero:
SGT Julian Ross
Aviation, CA

A medevac crewman, Julian has served in Bosnia, has assisted with the California wildfires and will soon deploy to Afghanistan.



National Guard
Wall Info Join Now Guard Talk Nominate Hero Show Support











Nominate a Hero
The brave men and women who serve our nation are heroes. Nominate a National Guard Hero and they may be featured on the Guard's Facebook page as "Today's Hero." We'll highlight a different Soldier every day.

By nominating your Soldier for "Today's Hero," they will also be eligible to become that month's featured Hero. Voting for June's Hero runs May 26 through May 28. The featured Hero will be announced on June 1.

[Nominate a Hero](#) [View Sample](#)

Current Nominees
Click a Soldier's image to view their profile.

Search by Name State Career Field

 Kirstina Johnson SCT, KY	 Todd Barber 1SG, KY	 Jonathan Mook CDT, AL	 Jasica Duplantier PTC, LA	 Sean Harmon PVT, ME
 Kelly LaPiere 1LT, ME	 Jessica Peferin SPC, ME	 Lee Wilson PTC, TN	 Christopher Digos CPT, ME	 Joshua Creel SPC, LA

>> TODAY'S HERO FACEBOOK APPLICATION

A Facebook application called "Today's Hero" allows fans of the National Guard page to submit a photo and information about their National Guard Soldier for possible selection as a featured Hero. Each day, a new Soldier's photo and information is highlighted on the National Guard Facebook profile page as "Today's Hero." View the application at Facebook.com/nationalguard under the "Nominate Hero" tab.



>> HERO ON CALL (HOC)

Specialist Daniel Crowley, right, a team member with HOC, was selected as the Hawaii Army National Guard's Soldier of the Year. Crowley will now compete for Soldier of the Year in Region 7, which is composed of eight states. The HOC team is also celebrating three new hires in Denver, CO, who are all 79T qualified.



Oklahoma's RSP: Getting Recruits to Basic Sooner Than Later

By SFC Darren D. Heusel, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

▶ **OKLAHOMA CITY**—By now, every U.S. state, territory and the District of Columbia has implemented some form of Recruit Sustainment Program, as directed by Major General Raymond W. Carpenter, acting director of the Army National Guard.

The objective of the program is to reduce the overall training pipeline loss by ensuring RSP Warriors are physically fit, mentally prepared and administratively correct to successfully complete their Basic Training and become qualified in their Military Occupational Specialty.

Since its inception in 2006, Oklahoma's program has always been in line with the desired end-state as outlined by Carpenter.



RSP Warriors with the Oklahoma National Guard prepare to conduct a paintball training exercise to hone their tactical and leadership skills.

But, what has set the Oklahoma Army National Guard apart from other states, according to Lieutenant Colonel Curtis Bohlman, commander of Oklahoma's Recruiting and Retention program, which oversees the RSP, is that his recruiters have taken ownership of their RSP Warriors throughout the entire process.

"Back in the old days, recruits would report for one non-prior service weekend to receive some basic military instruction in rank structure, drill and ceremony, and the like," said Bohlman. "Then, they would report to their unit of assignment and, in some cases, get cast aside until it was time for them to report to Basic Combat Training.

"Now, with the advent of the Recruit Sustainment Program, our recruiters are involved in the process from start to finish. We'll be involved from the time the recruiter first makes contact with a prospective Soldier until we do the Battle Handoff with their new unit of assignment. Not all states do that."

The results have been extremely positive, said Bohlman, as evidenced by the increasing number of Citizen-Soldiers who have completed the program.

"By becoming personally involved with these RSP Warriors, and implementing some fun and meaningful training throughout the entire process, I believe we've helped to reduce the culture shock, and prepare these young men and women for what lies ahead," Bohlman said.

In Oklahoma's case, the proof is in the pudding. Many of the current graduates have earned the title of Distinguished Honor Graduate during their Advanced Individual Training (AIT) or earned a slot in a specialized school mostly reserved for the Active Duty component.

Private Teneisha Baker, 18, recently returned to Oklahoma City after being named the Distinguished Honor Graduate at AIT and credits the RSP program for her success.

"I think it's a great program," said Baker, who attends Oklahoma State University and will soon join her parent unit, the 1345th Transportation Company out of Midwest City, OK. "It puts the National Guard Soldiers a step ahead at Basic. Whenever our drill sergeants would bark out an order, we knew exactly what to do, while everyone else would be running around like a chicken with its head cut off."

Private Matthew Liao, 19, of Edmond, OK, was so high-speed when he left the RSP in June that he requested a slot to Airborne school after AIT. He was one of a handful of National Guard Soldiers to be selected.

"As you get closer to your ship date, [the training] gets more intense," he said. "The RSP gets people to thinking about what they can expect in Basic and it keeps their interest throughout."

Liao added that he thinks the Guard has made tremendous strides with its RSP and is sending recruits off to Basic ready to meet the challenges that lie ahead.

"I know in my Basic Training and AIT classes, both honor grads were from the National Guard," he said. "What it really comes down to is self-discipline. I'm happy about the fact that they're stressing battle buddy teams—having someone with you all the time. To me, they're training you for combat and to work as a team. It all goes back to that old adage that two heads are better than one."

Sergeant Cody Caywood, shipping coordinator and training noncommissioned officer with the 90th Troop Command RSP in Oklahoma City, recruited and shipped both Baker and Liao.

Caywood says the RSP is a great program and continues to make positive strides. "When I look at how it was when I went to Basic, I didn't know anything," he said. "This is a great program. We try to get [the recruits] squared away as much as possible before they ship—physically, mentally and administratively. When they leave here, they know what to expect and aren't intimidated."

One measure of the program's success, Caywood said, is the decreased number of training pipeline losses and the increased number of Soldiers who actually ship, compared to just a few short years ago.

"While they're here, they're our main priority, and we try to get them spun up as much as possible," he said. **GX**

For more on RSP, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/gx/oklahomanrsp

A Healing Experience

BECOMING A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT THROUGH IPAP

By COL Darlene McCurdy, AMEDD

THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PA) is a critical member of the military healthcare team and provides a broad range of medical services traditionally performed by physicians.

PAs are the primary medical provider to Soldiers in battalion- and division-level units and provide garrison healthcare to Soldiers, family members and other eligible beneficiaries. The PA



Real-life training gives a physician assistant the tools they need to tackle any problem they may face in the National Guard.



For a physician assistant to succeed, they must learn to work with the patient to resolve the problem.



Physician assistants can gain valuable experience treating small children and babies.

has served the nation in all conflicts and peace-keeping missions since the Vietnam War.

Since its inception in 1972, the Army Medical Department's (AMEDD) PA program has grown tenfold. In 1993, there were 550 physician assistant authorizations in the Active Duty force structure. Now there are 748. However, the Army National Guard boasts a whopping 984 PA authorizations.

The Army's Interservice Physician Assistance Program (IPAP) is not just for the Army, but the students do initially begin their training at the Army's largest medical training location—Fort Sam Houston, TX, in San Antonio. Students are members of the Army, Air Force, Navy, National Guard, Army Reserve, Coast Guard and U.S. Public Health Service. Graduates earn a Bachelor of Science at the end of the first year. Ultimately, they receive a Master of Physician Assistant Studies and a commission as a first lieutenant.

The IPAP is four to six times larger than most civilian PA programs. In 2010, the program will train 78 students per class, three times a year.

COL William L. Tozier, director of the program, states that the IPAP is under pressure to expand to train more people due to deployments and MTF backfill missions.

Traditionally, the PA program was considered to be a method of advancement for enlisted personnel. However, in 2001, the Army began

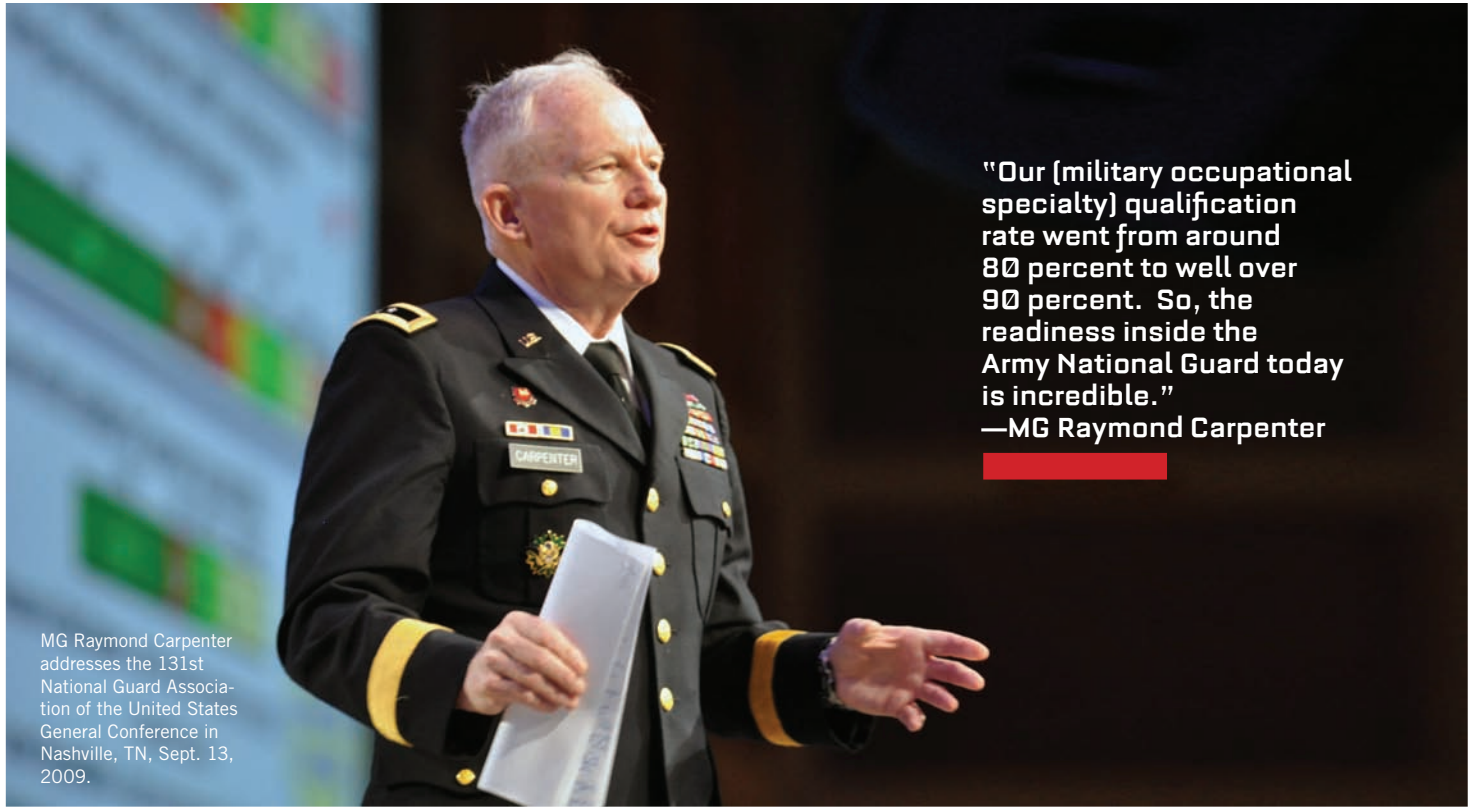
accepting officers, as well as enlisted personnel, into the IPAP.

PAs perform many of the same functions as a doctor or nurse. They can handle all but the most complex cases. Typical duties include ordering, analyzing and interpreting diagnostic and lab tests; prescribing medication; functioning as the primary healthcare provider working with physicians on a referral or consultant basis; and examining and treating patients.

Managerial duties, supervising various medical staff and ordering supplies are also part of the job.

As a physician assistant, you can leave a great legacy and affect many lives. If you are seriously looking for a career to fulfill your passion for serving others while you are serving your country, then consider a career as an Army National Guard physician assistant. **GX**

To learn more about becoming an IPAP student, call (210) 221-6341 or (703) 607-7822.



“Our (military occupational specialty) qualification rate went from around 80 percent to well over 90 percent. So, the readiness inside the Army National Guard today is incredible.”

—MG Raymond Carpenter

MG Raymond Carpenter addresses the 131st National Guard Association of the United States General Conference in Nashville, TN, Sept. 13, 2009.

Guard's Readiness Incredible, Says MG Raymond Carpenter

By Air Force Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith,
National Guard Bureau

▶ **ARLINGTON, VA**—The Army National Guard's readiness is “something to be proud of,” the Reserve component's top leader said in a recent interview.

“The recruiting numbers that we got today are incredible, the retention rate is unbelievable, and the quality of our Soldiers that we have inside of our formations is nothing short of inspirational,” Major General Raymond Carpenter, acting director of the Army National Guard, said in late February during an interview with military reporters.

The Army National Guard reported its January end strength at 358,442. A total of 4,402 Soldiers were recruited, surpassing a goal of 4,100, which is 107 percent. Retention numbers for January were reported at nearly 124 percent of the assigned mission, with 3,115 Soldiers retained.

Future recruiting and retention targets, said the general, will more than likely remain

steady in Fiscal Year 2011. “I really believe this depends upon what happens in the world, what happens in the United States [and] what is the responsibility of the National Guard,” Carpenter said.

Although referral dollars earned through the Guard Recruiting and Assistance Program (G-RAP) provide incentive for Guard Soldiers to recruit friends and family, the general said it really requires people who like being a part of the National Guard to bring in others.

“So recruiting has to be vigorous and viable,” he said. “It has to be adaptable; it has to fill those 44,000 slots [annually] that we have out there.”

Carpenter said leaders learned a lot after 9/11 about the Guard's identity and its importance as a family organization that takes care of Soldiers, families and employers.

“If you're going to ask people to mobilize and deploy on fairly frequent cycles ... you have to give consideration to the whole family—to what's going on inside that Soldier's life,” he said.

Carpenter also noted that family readiness groups grew well beyond their pre-9/11

role to being an integral part of the command team now.

“They are a functioning part of our team in the National Guard, and that's a big deal,” he said.

In addition to those readiness successes, officials here reported that the Army National Guard reduced the number of non-prior-service recruits awaiting their initial training. Last year, leaders pointed out those delays as a problem.

Guard officials said increased collaboration with the Army for training seats as well as the creation of an inactive duty Recruit Force Pool Program reduced their training pipelines by 37 percent—that pipeline is currently 29,855 Soldiers compared to 47,169 Soldiers one year ago.

Carpenter also said the Guard's requirement to reduce 10,000 Soldiers in its end strength by September 2009 allowed it to select and keep the “highest quality Soldiers” in its ranks.

“Our [military occupational specialty] qualification rate went from around 80 percent to well over 90 percent during that period of time,” he said. “So, the readiness inside the Army National Guard today is incredible.” **GX**

Black Achievers Award Goes to Massachusetts Soldier

By SGT James C. Lally, Massachusetts National Guard Public Affairs

Staff Sergeant Crosby A. Bennett of the Massachusetts Army National Guard was presented with the 2010 YMCA Black Achievers Award in Boston, MA, Jan. 7, 2010.

Bennett, a finance specialist at the Joint Force Headquarters, was nominated for the award by his employer, the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center (BIDMC). The ceremony was held at the medical center.

The program was founded in 1971 at the YMCA in the Harlem area of New York City. Its mission is to help young African-Americans develop a positive sense of self, and set high education and career goals. Recipients are selected for having a history of achievement in their field, demonstrated potential for advancement and commitment to volunteer service for young people.

The YMCA presents the award in January because it asks the recipients to commit to a minimum of 40 hours of community service for young people in the upcoming year.

INSPIRATION

Willie Sherman, director of the YMCA of Greater Boston chapter of the program, said, "The program works closely with businesses and sponsors like BIDMC to hold events that are focused on education and career development. Role models like Staff Sergeant Bennett accompany youth and teens to the events and pass on their experience and life lessons to inspire them to complete high school and hopefully move on to college."

The chair of the MLK Black Achievers committee at BIDMC, Jacquetta Hester, said, "Managers or directors nominate a person of color who exemplifies the goals of the YMCA Black Achievers program, and Staff Sergeant Crosby Bennett fit the bill perfectly. We are honored and proud to have him as a BIDMC family member."

Bennett began working for BIDMC as a temporary employee in the hospital's kitchen. Now he is the off-shift supervisor in the Health Management/Information Systems department. During this time, he earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from Anna Maria College and is now nearly finished earning his master's degree.

"Education is instrumental to being promoted in a corporate environment," Bennett said. "My current position allows me the flexibility to



"I think that young adults ... should look into joining the Army National Guard whether they plan on attending college or not."

>> SSG Crosby A. Bennett

achieve my educational goals. I also plan to pursue a doctoral degree, but first I want to dedicate some time to volunteer in the community."

PATH OF MOST POTENTIAL

Bennett moved from the Bahamas to Jamaica and, after high school, came to the U.S. He joined the Massachusetts Army National Guard in 1998 and became a U.S. citizen in 2000.

Bennett served in Iraq in 2004 as a disbursing agent and managed a vault containing \$15 million for the 747 Finance Detachment, Massachusetts Army National Guard.

Bennett is not the only Soldier in his family; his older brother is a major in the Jamaican Army. "As a Soldier and a volunteer, I'm following in the footsteps of my brother," he said.

His combined experience with education and service to the nation has served Bennett well in his military and civilian careers. "The Guard has helped me pay for college, build character through service and taught me team-building skills that help me accomplish the goals and objectives of my employer," Bennett said.

Bennett also volunteers through his church, the Men's Ministry, and has served as its treasurer and as a church board member.

Sharing his experience as a mentor to teens, and young men and women, Bennett said, "I think that young adults coming out of high school should look into joining the Army National Guard whether they plan on attending college or not. It provides them with an opportunity to serve their country and can give them a sense of honor, purpose and loyalty." **GX**

"We are honored and proud to have him as a BIDMC family member."

>> Jacquetta Hester, Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, of SSG Crosby A. Bennett

NCO Wins Audie Murphy Club Award

Story and photo by SSG Rob Strain,
15th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

▶ **CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, IRAQ**—An Arizona National Guard noncommissioned officer competed and outperformed his peers during a Sergeant Audie Murphy Club board here, Feb. 5.

Sergeant Scott Todd, the noncommissioned officer (NCO) in charge of the 541st Combat Sustainment Support Battalion's Pacesetter Retrograde Yard at Camp Taji, Iraq, displayed exemplary bearing and an in-depth knowledge of the required topics, said Command Sergeant Major Nathaniel Bartee Sr., the 15th Sustain-

ment Brigade senior NCO and the president of the board.

"His engaged leadership, knowing each individual Soldier down to their family information," Bartee said, "is what really made Todd stand out."

For Todd, a 16-year Veteran and a Florence, AZ, native, his Soldiers are what it's all about.

"I lead my Soldiers; I train my Soldiers," Todd said. "Cut-and-dried. I take the time and effort to teach them the right thing," he added.

To Bartee, that's the kind of leadership that



SGT Scott Todd answers questions before the Sergeant Audie Murphy Board Feb. 5 at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Iraq.

puts Todd above the rest.

"For a young sergeant to attend the Audie Murphy board, he has demonstrated himself as a senior NCO, way above his pay grade," Bartee said.

"He's the leader we're looking for to lead our Soldiers in today's Army," Bartee added. **GX**

Leadership and Loyalty Earn Mississippi Soldier Award

Story and photo by CPT Murray Shugars,
15th Sustainment Brigade

▶ **CONTINGENCY OPERATING LOCATION Q-WEST, IRAQ**—A Mississippi Army National Guard Soldier received a Command Sergeant Major Award during a ceremony at Contingency Operating Location Q-West, Feb. 1.

Private First Class Quintavis B. Byrd—a sentry for an entry control point (ECP) serving with A Company, 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms, 155th Brigade Combat Team, the Q-West force protection company—was acknowledged for embodying the Army value of loyalty.

To honor outstanding service at the end of the deployment, the senior noncommissioned officers (NCOs) of the battalion recognized seven Soldiers in the battalion who embody one of the

Army values of loyalty, duty, respect, service, honor, integrity and personal courage, said Command Sergeant Major Perry Campbell.

"This is an NCO-driven effort to honor Soldiers who stood out during the deployment," Campbell said. "The NCOs wanted to remind every Soldier in the battalion that outstanding service is not always the result of a single act.



PFC Quintavis B. Byrd, center, an entry control point sentry, holds a Command Sergeant Major Award after a Feb. 1 ceremony that acknowledged him for embodying the Army value of loyalty. With him are 1SG John L. Beasley, left, and SSG Nicholas Hughes.

It is the everyday practice of upholding the Army values."

First Sergeant John L. Beasley, Byrd's senior NCO, said that the Soldier is an indispensable asset to the company.

"The Army National Guard defines loyalty as bearing true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Guard, and other Soldiers and being loyal to the nation and its heritage," said Beasley, a native of Hernando, MS. "[Private First Class] Byrd has lived up to this definition during this deployment. He is truly loyal to the Soldiers he works with, his platoon and his unit. He is dependable and hardworking, and his teamwork instills cohesion and confidence in his fellow Soldiers. They know he will be by their side regardless of the situation. More than any [other] Soldier in the company, [Private First Class] Byrd values the bond of trust between Soldiers, and we want to honor him for that."

A CUT ABOVE

Byrd said he was moved by the recognition.

"This makes me feel good, being singled out for doing my job to the best of my ability," Byrd said. "To me, loyalty means staying true to my country, to the Guard, to my unit and to my fellow Soldiers. Being recognized for loyalty is a great honor to me." **GX**

Fast Track to Success

RESERVE OFFICERS' TRAINING CORPS

By SFC Ken Suratt, Colorado Army National Guard

Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) is an elective course that civilians can take with no obligation to the Army National Guard. Freshman-level courses are listed as MS101, 102 and 121. During the freshman year, which is considered the first year in the basic course, students learn the basics that will help them on the road to becoming an officer.



The following are some of the areas of emphasis during the freshman year: Roles and origins of the Army National Guard; Guard customs and traditions; Branches of the Army, and military operations and tactics.

LEVEL	COURSE	PREREQUISITE OR HOURS CREDIT	COURSE DESCRIPTION
MSCI 101	Introduction to Military Leadership I	Freshman standing or permission of instructor	An introduction to the ROTC program and the Army National Guard. Classes focus on Guard leadership and management principles, basic Soldier skills like first aid and map-reading, and familiarization with the Guard's customs, courtesies, standards and rank structure.
MSCI 102	Introduction to Military Leadership II	Freshman standing and completion of MS101, or permission of instructor	This course builds on the lessons learned in MSCI 101 in basic Soldier skills and leadership. Students learn how to use basic leadership and management techniques, improve their competence, and receive further professional development in leadership skills. Students are introduced to the career field opportunities available to Guard officers.
MS 101	Leadership and Personal Development	Freshman standing or permission of instructor	Cadets learn how the personal development of life skills such as critical thinking, goal-setting, time management, physical fitness and stress management relate to leadership, being an officer and being a Soldier.
MS 102	Introduction to Tactical Leadership	Freshmen standing and completion of MS101, or permission of instructor	Covers leadership fundamentals such as problem-solving, listening, presenting briefs, providing feedback and effective writing skills. Cadets explore dimensions of leadership values, attributes, skills and actions in the context of practical, hands-on and interactive exercises.
MSL 121	Leadership Laboratory	Freshmen standing and completion of MS101, or permission of the instructor	Learn and practice basic leadership and development skills. Build self-confidence and team-building leadership skills that can be applied throughout life.

For more on the ROTC, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/gx/fasttrack



SGT David Martin of the 1/131st Aviation Battalion, Alabama Army National Guard, is an 18-year veteran of the Tuscaloosa Police Department in Tuscaloosa, AL.

The Power of Positive Thinking

ALABAMA SERGEANT OVERCOMES THE OBSTACLES

By Fred D. McGhee II

The ability to face life's challenges with courage has always been one of the defining traits of an Army National Guard Soldier.

But for some Soldiers, service doesn't end when they take off their ACUs. They trade one uniform for another, working in part- or full-time civil service jobs.

One outstanding example of this is Sergeant David Martin, 43, of the Alabama Army National Guard.

Reporting for Duty

An 18-year veteran of the Tuscaloosa police department, Martin, a former Marine, became interested in joining the Guard when a fellow officer—a Guard Soldier—made the suggestion. After meeting a few members of the officer's Guard unit, Martin decided to join.

Then came the toughest part—convincing his wife, Cissy, that it was a good idea.

"I told her that since I was about 10 years away from retiring from the police force, working as a

helicopter mechanic would make a good second career," Martin explained. Cissy agreed.

Martin joined the Guard in March 2001, six months before 9/11. "Cissy tells me I have excellent timing," Martin said.

As a member of Company A, 1/131st Aviation Regiment, his duties include Black Hawk helicopter crew chief and mechanic. He's also tasked with training flight instructors, providing them with annual flight evaluations and ensuring they're training crew chiefs properly. After enlisting, it wasn't long before Martin experienced his first deployments—domestic relief missions in Florida and Louisiana. His first foreign deployment came in 2004, to Kosovo. Shortly after, Martin deployed to Iraq in September, 2006.

A Close Call

While he was en route to perform a routine maintenance check, the base was attacked by insurgents. A 57 mm rocket landed mere feet away from the Humvee Martin was driving. The subsequent blast rendered Martin, the lone

CLINT WOOD

“I TELL THEM NOT TO [SWEAT] THE SMALL STUFF BECAUSE, IN THE GRAND SCHEME OF THINGS, IT’S ALL SMALL STUFF.”

> SGT David Martin

passenger in the vehicle, near deaf for several days and left him with permanent hearing loss.

“It was a close call,” said Major Donald McArthur, a member of Martin’s unit. “It might have been a different outcome if the rocket had landed a few feet closer. It’s truly a blessing that he survived.”

McArthur was among those who administered medical care to Martin in the hospital following the attack.

Despite the close call, Martin has no regrets. In fact, military service is still important to him.

“I consider the guys in my unit family,” he explained. “I can’t see them going into harm’s way without me being there. Plus, if I go, maybe my kids or someone else’s kids won’t have to.”

This positive attitude manifests in many ways, including the sense of humor for which he is well known.

For example, during downtime back in Iraq, he flew radio-controlled mini-helicopters and airplanes for fun. It quickly caught on with the other Soldiers, and soon they were all flying mini-aircraft outside the barracks, fighting mock air battles in shorts and T-shirts.

“It was something to kill time,” explained Martin with a laugh.

It was also a way to relieve tension. Deployments are stressful and minor annoyances can swell into major problems. So Martin, ever the optimist, took it upon himself to counsel younger Soldiers on not worrying about things they can’t control.

“I tell them not to [sweat] the small stuff because, in the grand scheme of things, it’s all small stuff,” he shared. “Talk to somebody. Find an outlet or a hobby, something that will allow you to relax and unwind.” Given what Martin has been through, it’s easy to see how he developed this outlook.

Another Curveball

Then, life took another unexpected turn.

Martin had gained weight after he returned from Iraq, a common occurrence among returning Soldiers. McArthur, a physician’s assistant, began teasing him about it, so Martin dieted. As he lost the weight, he noticed something wrong—there was a lump on the side



SGT David Martin served as a UH-60 Black Hawk crew chief during his deployment to Iraq, where his crew flew all sorts of cargo and passengers, such as this K-9 Military Police dog.

of his neck. A biopsy revealed that it was lymphoma—a form of cancer.

As Martin began chemotherapy, his Guard comrades were there for him. In particular, they brought him a special gift—a hand-drawn, framed print of a Black Hawk helicopter coming in for a landing.

“All the guys signed it and brought it to my home,” said Martin. “That print became a focal point for me, something to keep my spirits up. It reminded me that [they] cared.”

Martin began taking it with him on his hospital visits, hanging it in his room during his stays.

“I needed that inspiration,” he said. “It gave me the strength to pull through on days when I felt like I couldn’t do the chemotherapy anymore.”

It was an arduous journey, but the cancer had been detected early, and the treatments were successful. The condition went into remission, meaning Martin could soon return to his job at the police station and to the Army National Guard.

Through it all, his positive attitude was an inspiration to his fellow Soldiers and police officers.

“His tenacity has been incredible,” McArthur said. “Between the injuries he suffered in Iraq and the cancer, he has kept his spirits up. He’s just a great example of a Soldier.” **GX**

Do you know a Soldier who serves as a firefighter, law enforcement officer or medical professional? If so, email us at editor@GXonline.com today!



* **Research shows that family support is a key factor in the success of a working adult student.**

TIPS FOR THE STUDENT

SET EXPECTATIONS

Before school starts, get together as a family to discuss the coming changes and how they'll impact the family.

One of the biggest changes will be the investment of time. Whether the student is in a traditional classroom or attending online, they'll spend a lot of time studying. Some research estimates 10–20 hours of study per course per week.

Set expectations for your spouse and children. For example, schedule a block of time for “study hall” each evening. Make it clear that during this time, the house will be as quiet as possible and free from distractions. Involve your children by having them chart the study hall hours on the family calendar or encouraging them to make a study hall sign.

CREATE FAMILY TIME

While your family may be 100 percent supportive of your goals, it's human nature to feel neglected at times.

Designate blocks of quality family time. For at least part of one day or evening per week, close the books and hang out with your loved ones. Watch a movie, go out to eat or play a game together.

You can also gain extra family time by studying after the kids are in bed or early in the morning.

INVOLVE YOUR FAMILY

Involving your family in your education helps them see you're accomplishing something meaningful.

Ask for their advice. They may not know the subject matter, but you're sure to gain perspective from their feedback. During dinner or car trips, discuss interesting facts that you've learned. Plan family educational trips around a class subject, like a visit to the zoo or museum.

Finally, study with your children while they're doing their homework. They'll learn the importance of education, and you'll get to spend time with them and get some work done as well.

TIPS FOR THE FAMILY

BE PATIENT AND UNDERSTANDING

If your adult student has to stay after class or spend extra time studying, don't complain. They probably aren't happy about it either. Instead, treasure the quality time you do share, and remember that they're earning a degree not just for its own sake, but to make a difference for you—the family—too.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS

Minimize unnecessary distractions and worries. One rule of thumb is, unless it's an emergency, don't disturb them while they're studying. Keep a notebook handy and jot down things you want to talk to them about. Then chat about those items at the end of the day. You can also act as a personal assistant by screening phone calls.

Family Support Key to Student Success

By Johanna Altland, Grantham University

GOING BACK TO SCHOOL AS AN ADULT IS A MAJOR COMMITMENT, especially for Soldiers and those with a family or a full-time job. However, earning a college degree is an excellent decision because it helps promote increased pay, lower likelihood of unemployment, better job opportunities and higher job satisfaction.

For students with a family, it's important to get them involved. Research shows that family support is a key factor in the success of a working adult student—and that if the family isn't supportive, the student is more likely to drop out.

Here are a few ideas that can help adult students succeed in earning their degree.

TAKE ON EXTRA RESPONSIBILITY

Take on extra duties around the house, so there's one less thing for your student to worry about. This might be a good time for kids to begin taking on the responsibility of household chores.

If extra duties cause you stress or resentment, ask a friend to babysit, or hire a cleaning service occasionally. Every little bit helps.

BE ENCOURAGING AND PROUD

Going back to school can be hard for adult students, and they may get discouraged. You and your children can help by being there to listen and

encourage them. Make a big deal out of their accomplishments. Be proud that your loved one is working toward a degree.

FAILURE NOT ALLOWED

Grantham University graduate Cindy Greenwood's story is inspiring.

As a single mother with a full-time job, she knows the challenges facing adult returning students. To stay focused in school, Cindy put everything on the back burner that wasn't related to her children, work or school.

With careful planning, she remained active in her kids' lives. When traveling to their games, she

rode with another parent and studied during the drive. To save time, she cooked in bulk and froze meals, completed chores between classes and worked on assignments late at night.

"It was all about setting priorities, time management and focus," Cindy explained. "Anything that wasn't necessary for my boys, work or classes didn't get done, and those three priority items had a 'failure not allowed' clause attached to them."

Due to her hard work and determination, Cindy graduated summa cum laude from Grantham in 2009 with a Bachelor of Science in Computer Science. **GX**



Life Insurance for the Citizen-Soldier

Courtesy of USAA

THERE ARE MANY ASPECTS OF financial planning for Guard Soldiers, but none is more important than life insurance, which makes it possible for your survivors to carry on without financial hardship. It's important to understand your life insurance options both during and after military service.

SERVICE MEMBERS GROUP LIFE INSURANCE (SGLI)

All Guard Soldiers qualify for inexpensive group life insurance through the SGLI program, which provides up to \$400,000 of term life insurance protection while you serve on Active Duty, or are in the National Guard or Reserves. In addition, it provides \$100,000 of coverage for your spouse and \$10,000 for each child. SGLI rates are very affordable and don't increase with age.

While SGLI offers an outstanding value, don't assume that it's enough. Depending

on your family's needs, you may need to supplement it by purchasing your own individual policy.

SGLI coverage stops 120 days after you leave the military. To replace it, you can either:

- **Convert your SGLI to Veterans Group Life Insurance (VGLI).**
- **Purchase your own term or permanent life insurance policy.**

VGLI provides life insurance to Guard Soldiers after separation from duty. While both SGLI and VGLI are administered by the government, they differ in the following ways:

- **VGLI premiums are much higher, and they increase rapidly as you age.**
- **You cannot insure your spouse or children through VGLI.**

If you're in good health, you can probably find your own individual coverage at a much lower rate than what VGLI will charge. VGLI is very valuable, however, to those whose health prevents them from buying their own policy.

PURCHASING YOUR OWN TERM OR PERMANENT LIFE INSURANCE POLICY

Individual life insurance policies can offer many advantages:

Affordability. When you apply for an individual policy, you may qualify for much lower rates if you're in good health. VGLI's relatively high rates reflect the fact that anyone can qualify for it.

Family coverage. While VGLI coverage isn't available for spouses or children, an individual policy can cover your entire family.

Level premiums. VGLI rates rise with age, which could make your coverage unaffordable after several years. By contrast, many individual policies guarantee a level premium for a period of years or even for life.

TERM AND PERMANENT LIFE INSURANCE

Term Life Insurance provides coverage for a specified period of time and offers the highest level of coverage at the lowest initial cost. In addition:

- **Premiums remain level and are guaranteed up to 30 years.**
- **It can be converted to a permanent policy if your needs change.**
- **Rates are affordable, and you can choose your term.**
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Unlike VGLI, you must qualify medically to purchase an individual policy. You should apply before you leave military service. That way, if your health prevents you from qualifying, you'll still have time to convert to VGLI. **GX**



Running for Resiliency... Running for Life



MAJ Jay Brock, left, and COL Jack Mosher train for the OneLife Resiliency Run.

Resiliency Rescue Tips

- Recognize that you are not alone in your obstacles. Most people have problems transitioning when they get home.
- Talk about it. Find a person you trust and talk to them.
- Self-referral beats toughing it out. Stigma exists, but a good Warrior asks for and accepts help—ALL Soldiers should seek out help.
- Seek out your chaplain. Chaplains are Soldiers and a unique resiliency resource. Their spiritual support role is often a Soldier's first line of support.
- Understand the value of trained, professional counselors. There are valid reasons for the way you feel, and understanding them often requires the objectivity and training of a clinical professional.
- Use the buddy system. Sharing experiences builds confidence and encourages buddies to make good choices together instead of feeding into negativity.
- Seek balance in your health. Focus on physical, emotional, social, family and spiritual wellness as your personal balanced objectives in being a healthy Soldier.
- Never, ever give up—fight for your life! There is always another mile and a better day ahead.



ONELIFE RESILIENCE RUN 2010

Learn more about the run and how you can participate or lend support by visiting DecadeOfHealth.com.

Courtesy of Decade of Health

ON MAY 28, 2010, Colonel Jack Mosher and Major Jay Brock will run across the Arlington Memorial Bridge en route to the gates of Arlington National Cemetery to complete their 21st marathon in as many days.

Supported by the Army National Guard's Decade of Health campaign, this final leg will mark the end of the 550-mile Resiliency Run and personal journeys that began when the Maine Army National Guard officers returned from combat nearly six years ago.

The running team plans to draw national attention to the issues of Soldier health and resiliency by demonstrating "Strength From Within" for their fellow Soldiers. The conclusion of this three-week ultra run from Kittery, ME, to Arlington, VA, will be a long way from where the officers began, both geographically and figuratively in their lives.

Many Soldiers return from combat to discover the personal challenges of a new reality. Mosher was no exception and freely admits that he was "a physical, spiritual and emotional wreck" after his redeployment from a very successful tour in Afghanistan in 2004.

"I had a good tour serving with great Soldiers," Mosher said. "I returned on a huge high, and then almost immediately found myself in an unexpected life change that included the end of my marriage, great financial hardship and single parenthood."

He soon realized that the familiar military skills that had brought success in the past were not going to dissipate the darkness that was consuming him.

It was a very humbling experience for Mosher and forced him to seek a new source of strength from within. It was a defining period in Mosher's life, in which he would have to reach deep into his own character for strength,

while reaching out with humility to accept the help of others.

"In the middle of the night, I sat watching my children sleep, and asked myself—what are you going to do now, Ranger?" Like many Veterans, he desperately wanted to return to combat and to what had become his norm.

"It's counterintuitive, but at least I had a sense of control over there, and I had no peace at home," he said.

It was at that moment that Mosher made the decision to embark on a path to health and wellness, and to do so, he needed the help of an old friend.

He turned to a hometown combat Veteran and longtime friend, Major Jay Brock, also a member

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of the Maine Army National Guard. In 2004, Brock had experienced similar setbacks following his return from a 15-month deployment in Iraq. Brock, an athlete with a lifelong passion for fitness, became one of several important rescue ladders in Mosher's life. He urged Mosher to leverage running as a form of therapy and take personal responsibility for his recovery.

"Jay reminded me by example that without physical well-being—good nutrition and exercise—total wellness, including emotional health, is not possible." Brock, a dedicated, longtime runner, said he finds running "cleansing and satisfying."

Brock's ideology about running made sense to Mosher when he explained, "For me, running is my time—a time to clear my head and reflect." Brock advises those offering lack of time as an excuse for not exercising to get moving and claim a personal victory every day.

"If you have time for TV, you have time for a workout."

"My journey began with running, and soon I was aware that a life-altering transformation was taking place," Mosher said. "Running became an almost prayerful activity and yielded a daily victory—every mile of every run toward my goal of total fitness symbolized that victory. I became strong again, more resilient, and wanted to share that path with others."

On May 8, the Soldiers will launch an advocacy mission, not just for combat Veterans, but also for all Soldiers experiencing emotional difficulties, even if not deployed. Mosher and Brock will depart Kittery, ME, on the first leg of a OneLife Resiliency Run, bringing attention to emotional and behavioral health issues, particularly suicide prevention. The main objective of the OneLife Resiliency Run is to let Veterans and all Soldiers know that they can be great Warriors and accept help.

"I know a stigma exists when it comes to seeking help and being a good Warrior," Mosher said. "Resiliency is a skill that has to be built up and sustained like any learned behavior."

Mosher would like to see resiliency training and help-seeking behaviors incorporated into Basic Training.

Warriors are national treasures that might be lost if the stigma persists and attitudes about seeking help do not change.

"Our generation of Soldiers will be the next greatest generation, and they need to be healthy—they must be fit to fulfill their destinies," Mosher said.

He and Brock will run to encourage others to ask for help, find a buddy and support system, and get the care they need to preserve the quality of their lives. **GX**

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GUNNERS OF BATTERY A, 380th Antiaircraft Artillery (AAA) Battalion, scramble toward their 120 mm gun during an alert in 1957. The unit, organized in 1953, helped man defensive positions around the nation's capital to guard against Soviet air attack.

CAPITAL GUARDIANS



THE DC ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

By Jason Hall

WHEN IT COMES TO NAMING THE U.S. STATES AND TERRITORIES THAT HAVE NATIONAL GUARDS, MOST PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT THE 50 STATES, GUAM, PUERTO RICO AND THE VIRGIN ISLANDS. BUT, THEY TEND TO FORGET ABOUT A NATIONAL GUARD WITH A LONG AND PROUD HISTORY: THAT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (DC).

DC'S NATIONAL GUARD is different from other states, in that it has a commanding general instead of an adjutant general, and it reports directly to the U.S. president rather than to a governor.

Authorized by Congress on July 16, 1790, DC was originally called the City of Washington, and located inside the Territory of Columbia—land that had once belonged to Maryland. In 1871, Congress merged the city and the territory into a single entity and named it the District of Columbia, though it is still widely known as Washington, DC.

The lineage of the DC Guard can be traced back to the Revolutionary War. In January 1776, in the area of Maryland known today as the District of Columbia, militia units were formed and saw combat in the war. In March 1802, Congress authorized the creation of the District of Columbia Militia, utilizing the earlier Maryland Militia units to form its nucleus.

FIRST COLUMBIAN BRIGADE

In June 1802, President Thomas Jefferson called for the formation of the First Columbian Brigade and directed that, instead of the customary regimental system of other state militias, the DC Militia would be organized into two separate legions. These legions contained equal proportions of infantry, artillery and cavalry, with one stationed in DC and the other across the Potomac River in Virginia.

President Jefferson appointed John Mason as its first commanding general. Mason would serve in this capacity for over a decade, and as such, was the commissioner general of prisoners during the War of 1812. The DC Militia saw its first combat in the war on Aug. 24, 1814, during the American force's debacle at the Battle of Bladensburg, MD. During this unsuccessful attempt to prevent the British from entering the district, the DC Militia, combined with Regular Army Soldiers, fought gallantly but were forced to retreat, which

quickly turned into a route that became known as the “Bladensburg Races.” Following the battle, the British entered DC, and sacked and burned many federal buildings, including the White House and the U.S. Capitol.

KEY FACTOR

Francis Scott Key was a 33-year-old lieutenant of the Georgetown Field Artillery, DC Militia, and an unknown lawyer. Although he was, in his own words, “not very good as an artilleryman,” he was assigned to field positions during the Battle of Bladensburg—a duty in which he had no prior experience.

Following the defeat at Bladensburg, Key returned home to Georgetown and watched the city burn at the hands of the British.

Empowered by their raid on Washington, the British forces planned on seizing Baltimore, MD, in a two-pronged attack combining an amphibious landing at North Point, MD, and a naval bombardment of Fort McHenry. Unlike at Bladensburg, the combined force of militia and Regular Army Soldiers was prepared, met the British invaders at North Point and prevented them from entering Baltimore.

Around the same time, the British Navy was launching the attack on Fort McHenry. A strange twist of fate had placed a certain young American militia lieutenant right in the middle of the British fleet—Francis Scott Key.

Key had learned that his good friend Dr. William Beanes of Upper Marlboro, MD, had been arrested by the British, brought onboard the HMS *Tonnant* in Baltimore Harbor and placed in irons. Key requested permission from President James Madison to go and negotiate for the doctor's release. The president agreed and gave the official orders, insisting that Key take Colonel John Skinner, a government officer who worked to help free prisoners of war.

On Sept. 13, 1814, Key and Skinner boarded a truce ship and sailed toward the British fleet. The two were allowed to board the British flagship and appealed to Rear Admiral Sir George Cockburn for the doctor's release. After much debate, Adm. Cockburn finally acquiesced. However, believing the American visitors had seen too much of their invasion force, Cockburn wouldn't let them leave until the battle had been decided.

Key, Skinner and Dr. Beanes left the ship and returned to their own, eight miles from Fort McHenry, just as the British opened fire. The three were powerless to do anything but stand by and watch the bombardment of the fort for more than 24 hours.

Key feared the small fort would not hold out against such a powerful onslaught. During the night, he could see the American flag flying over the fort by the light of the exploding shells and rockets. Still, he went to sleep assuming the fort would fall before morning.

"THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER"

As dawn rose on the morning of Sept. 14, Key looked toward the fort to see if the flag was still flying. He couldn't make out which flag was flying over the fort, so he asked a sailor on board if he could tell which flag it was. The sailor exclaimed that it was the American flag. The small American force, which included National Guard Soldiers, had repelled the British fleet.

Key quickly wrote a poem to celebrate this historic event. The poem opens with the question he asked the sailor that morning: "Oh, say can you see, by the dawn's early light, what so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?"

And, as on that morning, his poem contains the jubilant realization: "'Tis the star-spangled banner!" Originally titled "The Defense of Fort McHenry," Key's poem would later be set to the music of the popular English drinking song "To Anacreon in Heaven."

DC WAS BELOW THE MASON-DIXON LINE, AND MANY OF ITS RESIDENTS SYMPATHIZED WITH THE SOUTH.

By October, Americans across the country were singing the tune, but it had been renamed "The Star-Spangled Banner."

In 1916, President Woodrow Wilson dubbed "The Star-Spangled Banner" the official song of the U.S. Armed Forces. On March 3, 1931, through an Act of Congress, the song officially became the national anthem of the United States. Thus, a DC National Guard Soldier—Francis Scott

Key—authored one of the most beloved songs of our country.

During the 1830s, the DC militia participated in several conflicts with Native American tribes, including the Second Seminole Campaign and the Creek Indian Wars, but saw no combat. They would see plenty of combat soon, though, when their fellow countrymen to the north and south embarked on the Civil War.



SGM CHRISTIAN FLEETWOOD, the National Guard's only African-American Medal of Honor recipient, earned the award while serving in the DC National Guard during the Civil War.

The election of Abraham Lincoln in 1860 caused several southern states to secede from the Union. As Lincoln traveled from Illinois to DC for his inauguration, the possibility of war loomed across the nation. Amid rumors that Lincoln would be assassinated, Lieutenant General Winfield Scott, General-in-Chief of the Army, ordered DC militia inspector general Colonel Charles P. Stone to "protect the President-elect from possible assassination."

On March 4, Lincoln's inauguration occurred under the following conditions:

"Loyal infantry and riflemen of the DC Militia are stationed on rooftops overlooking Pennsylvania Avenue, a company of sappers and miners [engineers] are ordered to march immediately in front of and behind the presidential carriage, and double files of DC Militia cavalry ride on either side of the carriage to and from the Capitol, spurring their horses so they will rear up, in order to prevent an assassin from getting aim. Another battalion of DC Militia is placed near the Capitol steps while riflemen in the windows guard all approaches."

Lincoln was inaugurated without incident. As he entered the White House for the first time, he received his first salute as Commander-in-Chief from the Soldiers of the DC Militia.

FIRST MAN, FIRST COMPANY, FIRST REGIMENT

On April 10, 1861, two days before the Confederate attack on Fort Sumter—the official start of the American Civil War—President Lincoln mobilized 10 companies of the DC Militia to protect the Capitol City.

The DC Militia provided "the first man, the first company, and the first regiment" to be mobilized for the war. Assembling at their respective armories, each Soldier was required to take an oath to serve and protect the United States of America. Technically, DC was below the Mason-Dixon Line, and many people who lived in and around DC sympathized with the South. Some DC units refused to take the oath, and resigned to join the Confederacy. However, the majority of the DC Militia remained loyal to the Union and served proudly.

Once mobilized, DC Militia units crossed what today is the 14th Street Bridge to occupy Arlington and Alexandria, VA, providing a Union presence in what was now a Confederate state.

One DC Militia Soldier holds the unfortunate title as first prisoner of war in the Civil War. On May 31, 1861, Private Manuel C. Causten, a cavalryman, was captured by Confederate Soldiers. Since he was the first Union Soldier captured, he was put on display in the Confederate capital of Richmond, VA.

Almost a year later, in April 1862, he was commissioned as a lieutenant in the 19th U.S. Infantry so he could be exchanged for a Confederate officer of the same rank. At this stage of the war, the practice of exchanging prisoners was still in effect. Causten was released, only to be recaptured on Sept. 20, 1863, during the Battle of Chickamauga in Georgia.

DC Militiamen fought in almost every major battle of the Civil War, including one that saved their own city from invasion.

At the outbreak of the war, a series of earthwork forts was erected surrounding DC, stretching through portions of the District, Maryland and Virginia. These forts were untested until July 1864. Confederate General Jubal A. Early had fought a small Union force at the Battle of Monocacy in Maryland, just north of DC, on July 9. Though the Confederates won, the Union forces had fought tenaciously and provided desperately needed time for the garrison of the forts to reinforce for the coming attack. Two days later, on July 11, Early's forces arrived within view of the Union defenders inside Fort Stevens.



MEMBERS OF THE 372ND INFANTRY, 93rd Division, march toward the frontline trenches in France in 1917 during WWI. The 372nd was composed of pre-war African-American Guard units from DC and other states.

Defending Fort Stevens were units from Maine, Vermont, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, Ohio and DC. The DC Soldiers included African-American Quartermaster clerks who were originally not allowed to join combat regiments, but were now issued rifles to defend their city.

With the exception of one U.S. Army artillery unit, all units defending Fort Stevens— and attacking it—were National Guard.

In stopping Early's force, the Guard Soldiers were able to thwart the only direct attack by Confederates on DC. The DC Militia was now truly "Capital Guardians."

In an interesting side note, President Lincoln was present at the fort during the battle, making him the only sitting president ever to come under enemy fire during an actual battle.

THE CIVIL WAR SOLDIERS

On July 9, 2005, the National Guard Association of the United States and its subordinate organization, the National Guard Educational Foundation, held a ceremony to honor all who had fought and died in the only battle ever to occur within DC.

States that had Guard units defending Fort Stevens sent their Soldiers to honor their predecessors. In his opening remarks, Major General Ronald G. Young said, "As we stand here today to honor the National Guard Soldiers who fought and died here, the men and women of today's National Guard ... are protecting the United States at home and abroad."

Major General David F. Wherley Jr., then-commanding general of the DC Guard, was

also present, as was Colonel Barry Searle of Pennsylvania, Colonel Richard R. Guzzetta and Chief Warrant Officer Four Dennis Loy from Ohio, and Sergeant Daniel J. Carter and Colonel Michael Harris of Virginia.

Following the brief ceremony, which was held inside the reconstructed walls of the fort, the participants were led down Georgia Avenue by members of the DC Guard, carrying the flags of the nine states that had Soldiers in the battle.

The procession walked the mile from the fort to the Battleground National Cemetery, the final resting place of the 41 Union Soldiers who were killed in the battle of Fort Stevens. The cemetery was originally dedicated by President Lincoln. Wreaths honoring all nine states were placed in memory of the Soldiers who had fought upon that very ground.

In one poignant moment, Guard Soldiers from Virginia shook hands with the Guard Soldiers from Ohio. These states had fought against each other on this site, but were now serving together to protect our unified country.

DC MEDALS OF HONOR

Many DC residents served honorably during the Civil War. Several African-American DC Militia units fought with distinction. In addition, three DC Soldiers would be awarded the nation's highest honor—the Medal of Honor—for

protecting the National Colors with their own lives.

Private M. Emmet Urell received the Medal of Honor for his actions of Oct. 14, 1863, at Bristol Station, VA, for "gallantry in action while detailed as color bearer; was severely wounded."

On Sept. 29, 1864, Captain Cecil Clay "led his Regiment in the charge, carrying the colors of another regiment, and when severely wounded in the right arm, incurring loss of same, he shifted the colors to the left hand, which also became disabled by a gunshot wound." For this action Clay received the Medal of Honor.

The third Civil War Medal of Honor recipient from DC was Sergeant Major Christian Fleetwood, who "seized the colors after two color bearers had been shot down, and bore them nobly through the fight" on Sept. 29, at Chaffins Farm, VA.

In the years after the Civil War, the DC Militia was utilized for the continuing conflict in the West between U.S. military forces and Native American tribes.

Three more DC militiamen would receive the Medal of Honor for their exploits during that period.

One was Second Lieutenant Charles H. Heyl, who received the medal for his actions on April 28, 1876, near Fort Hartsuff, NE, where he "voluntarily, and with most conspicuous gallantry, charged with three men upon six Native Americans who were entrenched on a hillside."

On Sept. 30, 1877, at Bear Paw Mountain, MT, Second Lieutenant Oscar F. Long's actions were described thus: "having been directed to order a troop of cavalry to advance, and finding both its officers killed, he voluntarily assumed command, and under a heavy fire from the Native Americans advanced the troop to its proper position" ... which earned him the Medal of Honor.

Second Lieutenant Lloyd M. Brett earned DC's sixth Medal of Honor when, on April 1, 1880, at O'Fallon's Creek, MT, he acted with "fearless exposure and dashing bravery in cutting off the Native Americans' pony herd, thereby greatly crippling the hostiles."

During its early years, the DC Militia was known as the "President's Own." By the mid-1880s, it had become known as the DC National Guard.

JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

Around this time, John Philip Sousa, leader of the U.S. Marine Corps Band, was becoming very popular for the marches he was writing. He would become known as "The March King."

Sousa composed several marches for DC National Guard cadet corps units, including one in 1888 titled "The March Past of the National Fencibles." This piece was written for the National Fencibles, a cadet corps formed before 1887 whose

Guard Legacy

lineage is carried on today by the 372nd Military Police Battalion.

One of the most popular marches Sousa ever wrote was the “The Washington Post March,” composed in 1889 at the request of the owner of *The Washington Post* newspaper. It is believed that the first performance ever of the “The Washington Post March” was on June 15, 1889, by the DC National Guard Band.

With the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, members of the DC Guard formed several companies and regiments that served, and saw action, in the major campaigns of the war.

That year also saw the beginning of a unique chapter in DC Guard history. From 1898 to 1917, the Citizen-Soldiers of the DC National Guard included the Citizen-Sailors of the DC Naval Battalion. The Naval Battalion utilized vessels on

loan from the U.S. Navy, including the steam yacht USS *Sylvia*. The use of the *Sylvia* had been authorized in January 1915 by Acting Secretary of the Navy Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

The largest ship employed by the battalion was the 290-foot-long, 6,060-ton monitor USS *Puritan*. Built in 1882, mounting four 12-inch guns, it saw active service with the U.S. Navy during the Spanish-American War and was operated with the DC Naval Battalion 1904–1909.

From 1915 to 1916, the Naval Battalion saw sea service along the East Coast of the U.S., and in the Gulf of Mexico during the Punitive Expedition against Pancho Villa and his raiders. With the entry of the United States into WWI, the DC Naval Battalion was absorbed into the Active Duty U.S. Navy. Current laws still allow for a Naval Battalion in the DC National Guard.

Later, the War Department would note that the men of the 1st Separate were “well led and have demonstrated excellent fire discipline.” The action at Naco was the only combat DC Guard Soldiers saw during the Mexican Border Mobilization.

1ST SEPARATE FIGHTS TOGETHER

The 1st Separate Infantry returned to DC in the fall of 1916, but was soon recalled to Active Duty. On March 25, 1917, just 12 days before the U.S. entered WWI, the Secretary of War directed the commanding general of the DC Guard to mobilize his forces to protect vital facilities in the district from enemy sabotage.

The 1st Separate was immediately deployed to power stations and the six reservoirs that served the city. Officials felt that this was the only unit they could trust for this duty, due to the feeling that the other units had too many men of foreign descent.

In 1918, the U.S. began to deploy troops to France, with most of the DC units—approximately 2,300 Soldiers—serving there with the 29th Infantry Division. The all-African-American 1st Separate Infantry would be redesignated as the 372nd Infantry and, due to prejudice among American military leaders, transferred to the French Army.

The 372nd fought alongside the French 157th Infantry. Wearing French uniforms, the 372nd Infantry saw extensive combat—the only DC Guard unit to see combat in WWI. The legacy of the 372nd is carried on today by the members of the 372nd Military Police Battalion, DC Army National Guard.

BLASTING THROUGH OBSTACLES

In 1940, as war raged in Europe again, the entire National Guard was mobilized for a year of Active Duty training, including approximately 2,300 DC members. Following the attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941, war was declared, and the DC Guard once again prepared for deployment.

One of the first units to go was the 260th Anti-Aircraft Artillery. First stationed at defenses around ports on the West Coast, the unit was broken up, with one battery sent to Dutch Harbor, AK. The unit arrived just in time to help repel the Japanese air attack of June 3–4, 1942. Still loaded onboard their transport ship, a former passenger liner, the battery's fire was so intense that a Japanese pilot reported attacking a “new kind of heavily armed warship.”

As in WWI, most of the Soldiers of the DC Guard, along with those from Maryland and Virginia, were part of the 29th “Blue and Gray” Infantry Division.

When the 29th landed in Normandy on Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, it was DC's 121st



A SOLDIER WITH THE 372ND MILITARY POLICE BATTALION works with DC Police on Capitol Hill, September 2001, in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. DC Guard Soldiers manned roadblocks and checkpoints throughout the city.

In June 1916, the entire National Guard was federally mobilized in response to the incursion of Mexican bandits onto American soil under Pancho Villa. While most DC units performed garrison duties and training exercises in Texas and Arizona, one did see combat.

In late summer 1916, the 1st Separate Infantry, an all-African-American unit, was stationed in Naco, AZ. The unit came under fire by bandits probing the town's defenses, to which the men of the 1st Separate returned fire. Though the firefight was brief, it was intense, and the DC men successfully drove the bandits from the town.

JULY 29, 1971: District of Columbia National Guard BG Cunningham Bryant became the first African-American in the nation's history to receive federal recognition as a general officer.



SOLDIERS OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD march down Pennsylvania Avenue during the 2009 presidential inaugural parade in Washington, DC, Jan. 20, 2009. More than 5,000 men and women in uniform provided military ceremonial support to the presidential inauguration, a tradition dating back to President George Washington's 1789 inauguration.

Engineer Combat Battalion that, while under heavy enemy fire, “blasted through obstacles” to make way for their comrades to go ashore.

The lineage and honors of the 121st were later carried on by the 163rd Military Police Battalion and today by the 372nd Military Police Battalion, DC National Guard. Though there is a 121st Engineer Battalion in today's 29th Division, it's a Maryland unit, formed after WWII, with no relationship to DC's 121st Engineer Battalion.

In the Pacific, the 117th Engineer Combat Battalion served as part of Ohio's 37th “Buckeye” Division. In the Philippines, on New Georgia, Bougainville and Luzon, the DC Guard Soldiers earned great praise for their “consummate skill and courage” under unrelenting enemy fire while building and repairing 64 bridges, destroying enemy tank obstacles and participating in river crossings.

The 117th was disbanded after the war and, unfortunately, no modern DC Guard unit carries on its legacy and honors. In the 1980s, efforts were made to assign the 117th's lineage to the 163rd Military Police Battalion, but this was rejected by the Department of the Army.

During the Korean War, several DC Guard units were mobilized for federal service. The all-African-American 715th Truck Company was one of the few DC units to see combat on the Korean peninsula.

The 1960s would see the DC Guard mobilized in response to riots exploding across the country in the wake of the April 4, 1968, assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. Approximately 20,000 rioters overwhelmed the district's 3,000-plus-member police force.

For this event, President Lyndon B. Johnson mobilized 1,750 members of the DC Guard, along

with more than 13,000 other federal Soldiers. For four days, rioters left a path of death and destruction, rendering a major portion of the city a burned-out shell.

The Soldiers had the situation under control by Sunday, April 8, but 12 people had been killed, 1,097 injured and more than 6,000 arrested. The final cost of the damage was more than \$27 million, approximately \$156 million in today's dollars.

The first Persian Gulf War was the next time the DC Guard would see combat overseas. During Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, one of the most important parts of the

“THE MEN OF THE 1ST SEPARATE INFANTRY WERE ‘WELL LED AND HAVE DEMONSTRATED EXCELLENT FIRE.’”

National Guard on the ground were military police units. Controlling both civilian and military traffic, searching vehicles, and processing the tens of thousands of Iraqi prisoners was a lengthy and, at times, daunting task.

THE LEGEND OF THE 372ND

Though 30 states, the territory of Guam and the commonwealth of Puerto Rico provided military police units during the war, the 372nd Military Police Battalion is one of the most noteworthy.

The 372nd was attached to the 14th Military Police Brigade and commanded both active Army and Army National Guard Soldiers.

Carrying battle streamers from the War of 1812, Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish-American War, and both world wars, the 372nd traces its history back to 1802, when the DC Guard was first formed. In addition to the 372nd, DC deployed its medical hospital and 547th Transportation Company, resulting in approximately 60 percent of the DC Army National Guard being deployed.

The DC Guard was one of the first American military units to respond to the terrorist attacks of 9/11. Those living in DC at the time may recall the sense of security the men and women of the DC Guard provided as they stood sentry at downtown intersections and patrolled DC's National Airport. Though fully armed and on a serious mission, they always smiled and waved when passersby waved or shouted “Thank you!”

In 2003, the 547th Transportation Company, whose motto is “You Call, We Haul,” experienced its second deployment to the Middle East in little over a decade.

During a convoy patrol the 547th was conducting near Baghdad that August, Specialist Darryl T. Dent, 21, lost his life when an improvised explosive device detonated in their path.

Dent's funeral at Arlington National Cemetery demonstrated how tight-knit the DC Guard community is. Former high school classmates, Guard personnel and city officials all came to join his family there.

The commanding general of the DC Guard, Brigadier General David F. Wherley Jr., knelt and placed a folded American flag into the hands of Dent's father, Vernon. The mayor of DC, Anthony A. Williams, said that Dent's death was a tragic loss and stated how proud he was of the 547th, the only DC Army National Guard unit serving in Iraq at the time.

“They're important ... they're our folks, and we love them,” said Mayor Williams of the District of Columbia Army National Guard. **GX**

What do you think? Email feedback to editor@GXonline.com.

On the Road

▶ DISPATCHES FROM THE FIELD



High Speed High



Left: SSG Carroll Nance, right, gives some tips to PVT Brandon Deal on what to notice about an "enemy's" stronghold during a reconnaissance mission.

Right: Soldiers rush to their lockers after class to prepare for a field training exercise.

School

Patriot Academy gives Soldiers a second chance

Story and photos by Clint Wood

The Patriot Academy helps young adults to realize their potential in life by providing them with a high school degree and allowing them to be Soldiers.

The temperature was barely in the teens at Muscatatuck Urban Training Facility (MUTC) in Butlerville, IN, where I lay in the snow photographing Private Ricardo Aristizabal for the cover of *GX*.

It was cold. My hands were starting to sting, in spite of my heavy winter gloves.

But I had no right to complain. Standing in front of me was a Soldier who was facing something a little tougher: turning his troubled life around. The young man was a member of Patriot Academy.

Welcome to Patriot Academy

The academy, located at MUTC, is a nine-month program where 17- to 20-year-olds who have dropped out of high school get a second chance to earn their diploma, by enlisting in the Army National Guard and successfully graduating. Community service is a requirement, and college courses are offered but not required.

After students graduate, they head for AIT (Advanced Individual Training), where they'll learn their Guard job skill.

Colonel Perry Sarver, the school's commander, projected that 89 percent of the 47 students would succeed in getting their diploma.

Command Sergeant Major Judy Macy, the school's senior enlisted leader, added that 37 of the students would probably leave the school with at least three college credit hours, and that a majority will have taken the ACT (American College Testing), a college entrance exam.

Most of the students here didn't want to quit high school. Their reasons for leaving include financial troubles, needing to care for a sick relative and needing to support a new baby. Private Brandon Deal, 18, dropped out of high school because of financial concerns, for example. "They basically have no place to go," Macy said. "We turn that situation around. By the time they leave here, they've had multiple successes."

"This program is all about second chances," Deal said.

The school—the brainchild of Lieutenant General Clyde Vaughn, former director of the Army National Guard—opened in May 2009. The first class includes students from 16 different states. Recruiters across the U.S. select the candidates.

To qualify, students must have 10 or fewer high school credit hours to complete.

The school's main building, a remodeled former schoolhouse, features 25 classrooms, a library and a small gymnasium. The four dormitory buildings contain spacious living areas and accommodate two students per room.

On the second floor of the schoolhouse, the nation's 54 State and Territory flags are lined up down the hall. First Lieutenant Kyle Key, the



FAST FACTS

Patriot Academy's partial list of enrollment requirements:

- * Score at least 31 on the Armed Forces Qualification Test
- * Score at least 50 on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test
- * Have been out of school for at least six months
- * Be between the ages of 17 and 20
- * Be in good health and good physical condition

school's public affairs officer, named this passage "Hall of States and Territories" to remind the students of what they serve and represent.

A Change Will Do Them Good

For the most part, the students get that message loud and clear.

"I take pride in this," said Private Wesley Beck about being a Guard Soldier.

Developing a sense of pride in themselves and changing their lives for the better were common themes among the students here.

"I know I'm bettering myself for the future and making my life back home a lot easier when I get there," said Private William Glover, a light wheeled mechanic from Arkansas.

Aristizabal announced that he's done "a complete 180" since enrolling. His choices have inspired his older siblings to enroll in college.

Looking into the future, Private Jacob Anderson already says he'll re-enlist after his first term of service is over, so that he can choose a different MOS—one that will transfer to a civilian occupation. His current MOS is 11B, which is Infantryman.

Private Gregg Harris, a heavy construction equipment operator from Texas, intends to make the Guard a career and possibly become Airborne-qualified.

"I see life in a different manner now," he confided.

One immediate sign of change is that they take responsibility for their success at the school.

And, Sarver said, it's important that they do. Because here, there's no hand-holding. Students are accountable for their actions. They have to learn self-discipline.

Teacher-Student Connection

"If they get into a tight spot, we'll help them," Sarver maintained. "We'll lead them through it. But we're not going to do their work [for them]."

“... REGARDLESS OF THE SITUATION THAT LED THEM TO OUR ACADEMY, EACH [STUDENT] HAS SOMETHING UNIQUE AND VALUABLE TO OFFER OTHERS, EVEN AT THE AGE OF 18.” >> CSM Judy Macy, senior enlisted leader, Patriot Academy

In the classroom, although an instructor is present, the students mainly learn online, on laptops. Along with their high school requirement courses, they take military correspondence courses.

In the first few months of the program, the staff is very strict with the students, to ensure that they learn and obey the school's protocol. They wear their Army Combat Uniforms (ACUs) to class and must adhere to military courtesy—the formal code of military conduct.

It's a little like Basic Combat Training, but the instructors don't behave like drill sergeants.

"They're leaders," explained Sarver of the cadre. "They're here to mentor the Soldiers through this journey. Not to break them down or belittle them."



The students at the Patriot Academy complete their course work online using laptops.

The first step in this process is eliminating any low self-esteem they may feel over having dropped out, Macy said. As the school year progresses, the relationship between cadre and students relaxes somewhat, she added.

Strong camaraderie develops among the classmates, too. Private Glover thinks of his fellow students as family.

"They're amazing guys, and I wouldn't be afraid to go into combat with any of them," he commented.

Along with their classroom setting, the students participate in military field training exercises (FTX) as part of their military training.

In one FTX at Camp Atterbury, IN, in October 2009, it was students against cadre, with cadre in the role of "the enemy." All participants were



Judy Macy: Second Time Around

WHEN COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR JUDY MACY RETIRED from the Indiana Army National Guard in 2004, she had no plans to ever look back.

But one day, at a military ceremony, she overheard someone discussing a new program called Patriot Academy.

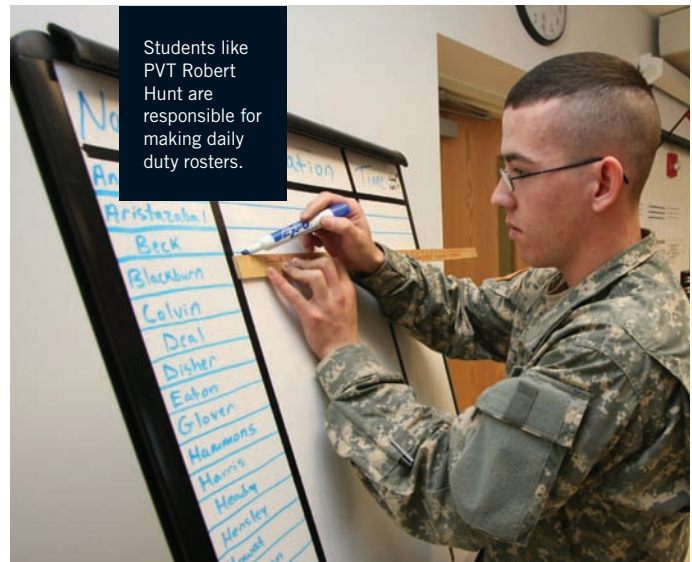
"What a phenomenal program," she thought to herself.

By this time, she had started a real estate business. But because education was very important to her, she called the school's commander to ask how she could be involved—without having to work there full-time.

The academy hired her on a temporary basis. Her task was to work with the National Guard Bureau on the school's military training agenda.

Soon, they offered her a full-time position.

It was an offer she couldn't refuse. "This was very dear and passionate to me," she shared. "I said yes."



Students like PVT Robert Hunt are responsible for making daily duty rosters.

armed with paintball rifles. Missions included assaulting a building, traffic control operations, interacting with "host nationals," searching vehicles and night patrols.

This type of exercise is designed to take Soldiers to the next level, Sarver explained.

"When one of our Soldiers goes to [Advanced Individual Training], I want that drill instructor to wonder why they are so much more advanced in military skills and disciplined than the non-Patriot Academy Soldier," he commented.

Low-Crawling 101

The FTX began with each platoon choosing two of its Soldiers to gather intelligence on an "enemy" stronghold.

Deal and his partner snuck through the soggy floor of the dense woods. Most of the time, they were low-crawling—lying on their stomachs and pushing themselves along using just their elbows. Later, Deal explained just how exhausting low-crawling could be.



Graduates of the Patriot Academy salute one of their cadre for the last time before reporting to their Advanced Individual Training.

“You have to be very careful with it,” he explained. “If the terrain doesn’t permit, you have to roll over and do all sorts of sneaky maneuvers to try and stay out of sight.”

Later, a platoon assaulted and occupied a multi-story brick building near the grassy field. The assault included searching or clearing every room to ensure there was no “enemy” present. They would stay overnight and patrol around the building, providing security.

The students are assigned leadership roles early in the school year, and the FTX tests them. They’re responsible for security plans and for ensuring each team member is well-fed and taken care of.

Private First Class Ryan Grieger of Colorado was the platoon leader, which meant he was in charge of more than 10 Soldiers.

“It’s a lot of work,” he said. “It can be stressful. But I like it. You’ve got to be able to follow as well as lead. So I’ve learned how to do both.”

Anderson said his team leadership position made him stronger mentally. And he felt good being responsible for his fellow Soldiers.

Catwalk

When it came to the FTX, I had the best “seat” in the house—the catwalk between the two staged buildings. In each room, I could see where the “enemy” was hiding. With me on the catwalk were Sergeant First Class Adam Housewright, Captain Steven Conway and the school’s first sergeant.

We peered into the dense woods next to the building to see if we could observe the students sneaking up on it before an assault. Minutes later, we saw a black paintball mask in the tall underbrush.

History in the Making

THIRTY-EIGHT STUDENTS MADE HISTORY on March 19, 2010, becoming the first graduates of the Army National Guard’s Patriot Academy. The students that graduated proved the Patriot Academy was indeed worth its weight in gold as it will allow future Soldiers to pursue their career in the Army National Guard and earn a high school diploma at the same time.

Lieutenant General (Ret.) Clyde Vaughn, the former director of the Army National Guard, was the guest speaker. Vaughn was extremely proud of the graduates.

“These folks are going to be our best diplomats, they are going to spread this and this will catch on like wildfire,” he said. “I have absolutely no doubt that they are going to make great citizens and great Soldiers.”

Soon after, we observed several Soldiers crouching in the woods in the same area. Moments later, they assaulted the building from the other side.

A battle broke out.

The Aftermath

Afterward, it was necessary to evacuate “wounded” Soldiers from the site. For example, one Soldier grabbed a “wounded” Soldier by the hand and literally dragged him out of the building.

Once the “wounded” were carried to a “safe” area, a report was sent to a mock medevac (medical evacuation) crew, which would transport them to a hospital. The report included the number of patients, the severity of injuries and whether or not the “enemy” was near the landing zone.

“THEY’RE HERE TO MENTOR THE SOLDIERS THROUGH THIS JOURNEY. NOT TO BREAK THEM DOWN OR BELITTLE THEM.”

>> COL Perry Sarver, commander, Patriot Academy, referring to the school’s instructors

Harris said this exercise taught him self-discipline. Cases in point: staying overnight in freezing temperatures and lying on the wet ground for hours.

“At the end of the day,” Conway said, “if they go home having learned one or two things here that help them down the road, it was worth it.”

The Spirit of Giving

Community service is a key aspect of the academy’s program. Projects have included delivering groceries to needy families, reading to Head Start students, visiting senior citizens’ centers and going on ride-alongs with local emergency personnel.

“We want teach the students to give back to the community that has given so much to them,” Sarver said.



PVT Corey Colvin was among the students providing security during the field training exercise.

“Community service shows them that regardless of the situation that led them to our academy, each one has something unique and valuable to offer others, even at the age of 18,” Macy added.

In one such task, several students helped deliver food from a delivery truck to a pantry. The students spent about three hours assisting the staff in organizing and stocking food items and helping residents bag their items. Grieger was there. This was his second time assisting with the food delivery. He said he never realized what this type of service meant to someone until he did it.

“It really does mean a lot to me to help people, to actually interact with them, and to know that they appreciate your help,” he said.

Grieger and a fellow student felt that appreciation during another community service activity—handing out candy to children of low-income parents. One mother hugged them and told them how grateful she was.

“That’s probably the thing I will remember the most,” Grieger said.

Meet the Teachers

When Housewright was assigned to this school, he hadn’t heard of it.

“If I’d known about it, I would have applied,” he commented. Housewright is an Iraq Veteran who served in the early years of Overseas Contingency Operations.

“I’m really glad I’m part of this,” he continued. “It gives me a great feeling of pride, to mentor these Soldiers and pass on what I’ve learned.”

“They motivate you to go above and beyond,” said Private David Eaton, a light wheeled mechanic from Indiana. Eaton’s 13-year-old brother is now considering joining the Guard when he’s old enough.

For Conway of Kentucky, being an instructor at this school accomplishes more than one goal.

“It lets me make a direct impact on the first line of Soldiers coming into the Army National Guard, and also to get out and get into the field,” he commented. “Get my hands dirty a little bit and still study tactics.”

Sarver, who has a master’s degree in education, said, “I wouldn’t trade this for the world.”

Housewright agreed, especially when it comes to having a positive impact on the students. “It’s a great feeling,” he declared.

Deal noted that all cadre are extremely qualified for their positions. “I’ve learned something from each and every one of them,” he said.

Beck noted that his school experience was phenomenal. “I [owe] everything I have to the cadre here,” he said. “They’ve changed my life dramatically. I respect all of them. They’ve been like father figures.”

Most of the cadre are Veterans of Iraq or Afghanistan, and their experiences help tremendously in training the Soldiers.

For example, one instructor explained to the students how a lit cigarette during a night patrol could be seen several hundred yards away—in other words, by the enemy.

The Future Starts Here

The current class—the school’s first—has 47 students. The second is projected to be 250, and the third could have as many as 500. Macy receives calls daily from both civilian and military parents asking about the school.

Sarver noted that growth depends on each state’s support.

“I’d like to see this program expand,” he commented. “There’s a need out there for it. I’d like to see facilities of this type on the East and West coasts, too.”

But the experience has already been rewarding for him.

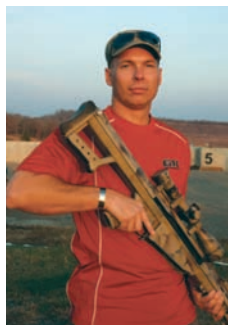
“I’m very fortunate I got picked. This is one of the best jobs I’ve ever had, in 24 years of military service,” he said. “I wouldn’t give this up for anything.”

Macy is impressed with the quality of students.

“We have some of the best, smartest, brightest Soldiers,” she commented. “I’ve been in the military 27 years, and I would put these Soldiers up against any I’ve ever served with.”

She said she hopes they return to their communities, pursue their college education and “grab everything that is available to them in life.” **GX**

Meet GX’s Field Editor: Clint Wood



THE FIRST TIME CLINT WOOD stepped into our office, we knew he was the real thing: a bona fide Warrior. Clint spent 22 months deployed with the 1/34th Red Bulls of the Minnesota National Guard. He has 18 years of service under his belt. Since he came on board in 2008, Clint has traveled around the country, capturing the story of the National Guard. For more on Clint’s travels or to invite him to cover your event, send him an email at editor@GXonline.com.

For more on the Patriot Academy, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/gx/highspeedhighschool

SSG Charles Elder III practices Muay Thai with a Thai Soldier during Operation Cobra Gold 2010.

South Carolina Soldiers Head to the

Far East



LTC Ken Rosado prepares to catch a cobra during jungle survival training, during Operation Cobra Gold 2010.

IN EARLY 2010, elements of the 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Carolina Army National Guard, participated in two multinational exercises. The 1/118th Combined Arms Battalion participated in Operation North Wind in Japan, while the 4/118th Infantry Regiment trained in Operation Cobra Gold in Thailand. These exercises gave the Soldiers opportunities to train in extreme and completely opposite environmental conditions.

OPERATION COBRA GOLD

By 218th Brigade Public Affairs and 108th Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment (4/118th), participated in the 29th iteration of the annual joint and multinational theater campaign exercise, Cobra Gold. This was the first year the Republic of Korea Soldiers joined Thai, U.S., Singaporean, Indonesian and Japanese armies to comprise the Coalition Task Force.

Their eyes were heavy from traveling for two days straight. Waiting in a hangar for 12 hours, combined with a 20-hour flight, two layovers and a six-hour bus ride, had taken a toll on the Soldiers. Yet, they eagerly grabbed their personal belongings and shuffled off the bus, relieved to arrive at their “home” for the next three weeks in February: Fort Surasee, Kanchanarabi, Thailand.

For most of the 340 Soldiers, the experience of stepping foot on unfamiliar foreign land isn’t new. Their uniforms bear the symbols of Warriors—most proudly wear Combat Infantry and Combat Action Badges on their chests, and patches of a myriad of combat-proven units cover their right shoulders.

But these Warriors have not come to Thailand to wage war. They have come to train and be trained.

The program is designed to enhance the ability of the Royal Thai Armed Forces to defend Thailand or to respond to regional conflicts or emergencies.

“Soldiers are Soldiers. When they start working together, they realize they have a lot in common,” said Captain Dave King, operations officer, 4/118th Infantry Battalion.

“This is an outstanding opportunity for the Soldiers to be in Thailand, training with the Thai army,” said Command Sergeant Major Michael Kirkland, 218th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

The two forces come from very different backgrounds in battle, including disparate surroundings, maneuvers and enemies. “The

thick vegetation strengthens the infantry training, and develops teams and trust,” said Lieutenant Colonel Ken Rosado, commander, 4/118th.

The 4/118th Soldiers used their experiences in Afghanistan and Iraq to train the Thai forces on improvised explosive device (IED) defeat, first aid and combat in an urban environment. Thai forces trained the American troops in Thai boxing and—the most anticipated event—jungle survival training.

“You have to think you will survive,” said Master Sergeant Samraeung Kachanton, the Thai Army lead instructor for jungle survival training.

Kachanton and his instructors taught the American Soldiers everything from which plants were edible, to how to use the astronomy and plants as a compass.

“I like getting out with the Thai and working with them. They’re very friendly people,” said Private First Class Matthew Baumgartner, B Company, 4/118th, of North Charleston, SC.

The Thai instructors also demonstrated numerous trapping techniques for fish, shrimp, frog and eel. The highlight was when the South Carolina Soldiers were shown how to catch, skin and cook snakes. They got to see a variety of live snakes—some poisonous.

Another major event for the 4/118th was one they taught—the Close Quarters Battle (CQB) class. The training was designed to teach the Thai Soldiers how to quickly clear and secure a room or building.

“CQB is going inside a building that you either know or suspect is a hostile environment, and eliminating any threat in each room,” said Specialist Dean Algood, an infantryman with C Company, 4/118th.

First, the 4/118th demonstrated how to assault and clear a two-room building with a nine-man team. Then, they familiarized the Thai with reflexive fire techniques. Next, they moved to the “glass house” area.

“We train in a ‘glass house,’ or half of a house,” said Sergeant Ryan Vanhoy, project leader from C Company, 1/118th. “Everyone standing on the outside can see the training.”

The Soldiers also trained on several less-than-lethal weapons, including a Taser gun, a compressed air gun, a 12-gauge shotgun and a 40 mm grenade launcher.

The South Carolina Soldiers were excited about the range of training in Thailand. But one event was in the forefront of everyone’s mind: the regimental live fire exercise.

This was the first regimental live fire in the history of the 4th Battalion. The leadership would have to synchronize four 120 mm, three 81 mm and three 60 mm mortars, two 106 mm recoilless rifles, two 40 mm grenade launchers, and more than 250 Soldiers all firing live ammunition.

“This size operation is something we wouldn’t be able to do in the States,” said King.

OPERATION NORTH WIND

By SPC Brad Minsey and SGT Roberto Di Giovine

Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment (1/118th), received essential cold-weather training from the Japanese Army. Additionally, the Soldiers received training in movement, patrolling techniques, assaulting objectives and handling prisoners of war. With tired feet and sore backs,

»SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT

MY FIRST IMPRESSION of Thailand was the normal military introduction to

any country. The blurry-eyed shuffle off a plane into a hangar, the hustle to fill out paperwork, and the sitting around waiting for a ride are the same all over for Service Members.

However, when my journey was over and I had finally gotten some sleep, I was ready to begin my mission. I was assigned to be the interpreter manager. I was to coordinate and supervise the Thai interpreters, making sure that the language barrier did not interfere with our mission of training with the Thai army.

I was quite pleased with my assignment because it allowed me to learn more than the average Soldier about our host country. The first obstacle I ran into was, surprisingly enough, a language barrier.

English is taught in Thai schools starting around the fifth grade, but what is taught is a formalized version that does not take into account colloquialisms of different regions. When I introduced myself to the interpreters, I made sure that I talked slowly and did not use sayings that would not translate.

I quickly noticed a puzzled look on their face when I would address them all at once. I realized that I was using a word that is prevalent in the U.S. Southern states: “y’all.” When I used it, they didn’t know what I was saying. After a brief explanation, they understood and had a quick laugh. To my amusement, I actually overheard them use the word “y’all” during my last week in Thailand.

First Lieutenant Fred McDaniel

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th Battalion, 118th Infantry Regiment



South Carolina Soldiers conduct patrol-movement training in Japan, February 2010.



SSG Jonathan Anderson (right) explains how the M4 Assault Rifle functions to a Japanese Soldier in Japan, February 2010.

I HAD THE DISTINCT PRIVILEGE of serving as company-level executive officer for Operation North Wind, 1/118th Combined Arms Battalion (CAB), South Carolina Army National Guard, during Operation North Wind.

It is by no coincidence that our Soldiers were able to participate in the joint training exercise with 2nd Co., 44th Infantry Regiment, Japanese Ground Self Defense Forces (JGSDF), on the 50th anniversary of a bilateral agreement between the U.S. and Japan. The end-state of the agreement was to improve interoperability of the two nations' military forces, and to solidify an already strong friendship between the two countries.

The Japanese military is one aspect of the country's goal to be the premier example of professionalism and perfection. Our counterparts demonstrated an eagerness to learn our infantry tactics, and had pride in their abilities to adapt to and fight within the contemporary operating environment.

Partnered with their eagerness was an unending desire to be the most hospitable hosts for our Soldiers. There were ample opportunities for our Soldiers to interact consistently with their Japanese counterparts. A nightly "Friendship Hall," a tour of a local temple, and a farewell banquet all served as instances wherein the Japanese revealed their tremendous appreciation for our willingness to participate in Operation North Wind. The JGSDF made it abundantly clear that they were proud to operate jointly with our Soldiers, as well as be our hosts.

One lesson that struck home with me as I observed and participated in the exercise is that the Japanese Soldiers desire to conduct every task well. There is an implied need for perfection and achievement within the Japanese culture, and that need rang clearly in every aspect of the mission. The overarching principle is that regardless of the flag under which Soldiers around the world serve, there are standards that must be met, and once those standards are met, there should be a desire to exceed the standard. Whether we witnessed the Japanese doing a rehearsal of concept (ROC) drill, an operations briefing or a ceremonial event, they showed that they believe in and stringently abide by standards. Hence, our military is not alone in hammering home the same lesson for all Soldiers.

The numerous lessons I learned from participating in Operation North Wind are not lost upon me. It provided me with an excellent opportunity to apply everything I learned about planning, prioritizing and execution. More importantly, the exercise was a terrific opportunity for Soldiers of the 1/118th CAB to participate in a historically significant training environment. This fact will certainly not be lost upon them.

First Lieutenant Bryan M. Suhr

B Co., 1st Combined Arms Battalion,
118th Infantry Regiment

Soldiers from the South Carolina Army National Guard prepared to wrap up Operation North Wind and leave the Ojojibara Maneuver Area in Japan to head home.

"I wish we had more than two weeks to train with the Japanese Army," said Sergeant First Class Sammie Robertson. His sentiments were echoed by many of the others.

The purpose of the unit's deployment was twofold: to train the Soldiers and the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF), and to build camaraderie and confidence between the two forces.

"Japan is our ally," said Lieutenant Colonel Michael Krell, commander, 1/118th Combined Arms Battalion (CAB). "They're on our side and on our team. This deployment allows me to get my Soldiers out of the same routine and provides some adventure for them."

In addition to receiving training from the Japanese, U.S. Soldiers shared their knowledge of nuclear, biological and chemical warfare survival training, and combat life-saving. Many also exchanged patches and rank insignia with Japanese Soldiers.

"By building these relationships, if we are ever on the battlefield together, we will know each other's capabilities. We've trained with these guys and know what they can do," said Krell.

"I believe the biggest thing we are doing here is building trust," said Command Sergeant Major Roger Watson. "This will help build trust with our militaries because you never know when we are going to be on the battlefield together."

Watson said the cold-weather training was one of the biggest benefits of the mission. On past deployments, they saw strong variances in temperature. Another important aspect of the training consisted of a company movement to contact. The Soldiers moved in a coordinated attack with the Japanese Army and took out an enemy. Each element had its own type of formation. The U.S. used a "wedge" where the Japanese used a "hishigata" (diamond). The basic idea was the same—move from one point to the next while keeping a secure perimeter.

"I loved the training," said Private Marcus Debord, a Bradley fighting vehicle driver. "This is a great place to train and a once-in-a-lifetime experience."

Krell said the movements gave them an opportunity to work through the language barrier, and although their techniques may be a little different, the goals are the same.

He added that many Soldiers felt the effects of the foot movements on their knees, using bandages and pain medication, but overall they loved the experience.

"It is a totally different animal than doing regular woodland-type training in the spring or summer," said Specialist Billy Hanby, rifleman and Bradley fighting vehicle driver with the 1/118th CAB.

"You have to make sure you are drinking a lot of water because even though you don't sweat as much, you have to keep hydrated," Hanby continued.

Soldiers also had to make sure they didn't overheat and sweat because of the risk of hypothermia. Changing socks to keep their feet from getting cold became a regular routine.

Some friendly competition was also held between the two forces. On one day, there was a marksmanship competition where Soldiers shot 10 rounds at 300-meter targets in less than 25 seconds. In the evening, they threw colorful origami shuriken (paper ninja stars) at targets for prizes.

"Our Soldiers and their Soldiers had the opportunity to get together to build bonds and relationships," said Krell. "I think these guys are surprised by what they learned about their counterparts and the culture here."

Troop morale was high during the mission, in large part because of the hard work of the 505th Logistics Task Force (LTF), whose motto, "Proud to Pump," says it all. Their typical mission is to provide fuel and service pipelines, so the deployment to Japan was a little out of their normal job description.

On this mission, the 505th LTF not only provided food and fuel, but set up a Morale Welfare and Recreation (MWR) Room.

"The 505th has done an incredible job of making sure we had what we needed and making us comfortable," Hanby said.

Although many Soldiers were ready to go back home and see their families after being away for two weeks, others wanted to stay longer.

"I'm a little disappointed about leaving," said Hanby. "I would really love to see more of the culture, and hope we can continue to build friendships and relationships in the future. This has been a very positive experience."

"Operation North Wind was one of the best short exercises I have ever participated in," said Watson. **GX**

Camp Atterbury

MAKING SOLDIERS BATTLE-READY SINCE 1942

*Story and photos by SPC John Crosby,
Camp Atterbury Public Affairs*

“Where the heck is Camp Atterbury?”

That’s probably the first thought that comes to a Soldier’s mind after laying eyes on their mobilization orders for the first time.

Troops won’t forget it after they leave. Bone-chilling winters, hot, humid summers, killer insects, rough terrain and MREs will be just part of their experience. They’ll also become physically and mentally more capable to complete the task to come: deployment.

Discomfort aside, the Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center staff and trainers will be right there with them, giving them the tools necessary to succeed on today’s battlefield.

The installation has been mass-producing quality Service Members and civilians for deployment since 1942.

The buildings and barbed wire of the WWII mobilization/prisoner-of-war camp grew from the farmland of four Indiana counties. The camp died down after the war and remained quiet until the Korean War, when citizens again began walking through the

front gates and leaving as Soldiers. Again, after the combat subsided, so did the post, transforming into Indiana’s Reserve Forces training center.

The gates have opened again as an Active Duty site, and the mobilization station is now operated by Camp Atterbury personnel, along with the combat experience and

“WE AIM AT PRODUCING THE MOST REALISTIC TRAINING AT THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE DELIVERY, GETTING THE BIGGEST BANG FOR YOUR BUCK.”

» COL Barry Richmond, Deputy Commander, Camp Atterbury-Muscatatuck Center for Complex Operations

expertise of First Army. The post prepares National Guard and Reserve Soldiers for overseas deployment and is an exclusive training platform for units of all branches of service and civilian government entities.

This means that while training for deployment at Camp Atterbury, in addition to Guard and Reserve troops, you may run into Air Force, Marines, Navy, Special

Forces, SEALs, local, state and federal law enforcement, and personnel from federal agencies, such as Homeland Security, during your stay.

In fact, the second search-and-rescue dog to arrive at the scene of the 9/11 attacks was trained at Camp Atterbury by the Indiana Department of Homeland Security.

As the battlefield changes overseas, the mission changes here. “Whole of government” is the new vision at Camp Atterbury, meaning that as recognition of the need for civilian expertise becomes apparent, the military is combining forces with other civilian departments of the government and civilian

agencies to become better prepared for the mission at hand. Civilians with specific backgrounds and experience can lend expert knowledge in fields such as engineering, intelligence, logistics, strategic planning and advisory positions.

“The value of Camp Atterbury’s development has grown drastically,” said Camp Atterbury-Muscatatuck Center for Complex Operations Deputy Commander Colonel Barry Richmond, formerly the Camp Atterbury Commander. “We aim at producing the most realistic training at the most cost-effective delivery, getting the biggest bang for your buck.”

He said they’re training the “whole-of-government,” “whole-of-nation” mission to protect the homeland stateside and to defend peace, whether here or overseas. “We need to posture ourselves forward, worldwide,” Richmond said.

Since spinning up to answer the nation’s call in 2003, Camp Atterbury has trained and processed more than 105,000 mobilizing and demobilizing Army National Guard, Air Force and Navy Service Members and civilians supporting operations across the globe, including Iraq, Afghanistan and the Balkans. The site has also become the only post that trains the Kosovo Forces rotations, training the last five rotations in four years.



Soldiers of the 443rd Transportation Company send 40 mm training projectile grenades downrange from an MK19 automatic grenade launcher at Camp Atterbury, IN, March 2, 2009.

SPC Robert Leu puts on a gas mask during a chemical weapons drill, part of the Soldier of the Year competition held at Camp Atterbury, IN, April 16, 2009.



FAST FACTS

- * 33,484 acres
- * 12 miles north-to-south and seven miles east-to-west
- * Camp Atterbury was named after Hoosier William Wallace Atterbury
- * During WWI, Atterbury was commissioned as a Brigadier General
- * Used as a prisoner of war camp during WWII, housing German and Italian soldiers captured in Europe

TRAINING

First Army achieves a total submersion into a realistic version of what it's like to be in a combat zone. Troops live at any one of the installation's three mock contingency operating bases (COBs), which are fit with controlled access points, watch towers and blast barriers. From the COB, operations are conducted, with enemy combatants waiting to ambush with improvised explosive devices and small-arms fire.

Units run reconnaissance and build relations with authentic Iraqi and Afghan men and women in 13 mock villages, essentially living, working and learning together in the combat zone environment created for them.

Using the latest tactics, techniques and procedures developed through the firsthand

experience and by studying operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, First Army and installation staff are training Service Members to stay one step ahead of the enemy.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton recently announced that the Camp Atterbury-Muscatatuck Center for Complex Operations will play a pivotal role in President Barack Obama's new strategy, which includes a surge of military and civilian personnel deployed to Afghanistan.

In the spirit of shifting focus to win the fight, Camp Atterbury has taken on a new list of cutting-edge units such as Provincial Reconstruction Teams, Agribusiness Development Teams and civilian expeditionary forces, to name just a few of the many new programs that the post supports and trains.

"Camp Atterbury has proved itself over the years not only in its resources and abilities, but mostly in its overall commitment to deliver the best service, professionalism and dedication it can to all of its customers, regardless of branch of service," Richmond said. **GX**



Overcoming and Adapting



Camp Atterbury has been referred to as "the camp that died twice." For the third time in nearly 70 years, the camp is born again, conducting the same job in a new century.

The post mobilized three divisions in WWII and another two during the Korean War. It wound down after combat operations ended and became Indiana's Reserve Forces training center.

The symbolic Camp Atterbury Rock, a large boulder with the words "Camp Atterbury 1942" hand-carved by a WWII Italian prisoner of war, sits in front of the camp's gate representing its deeply rooted history.

Today, the camp has become one of two main mobilization centers for Guard Soldiers deploying overseas. **GX**

Running Off the Front

Dale Jr. races Jimmie Johnson down the straightaway of the Las Vegas Motor Speedway during the Shelby American NASCAR Sprint Cup race on Feb. 28, 2010.



SPORTS

GX talks open-wheeled racing with Dale Jr., checks in with Dan Wheldon after a crazy bobsled ride and learns some new Combatives moves with SFC Donnie Moseley at CATC.

84

FITNESS

SGT Ken gives you tips on how to run twice as fast in just 14 days, plus a special feature in which SGT Ken trains RSP Warriors.

90

GEAR

On target with the M24 sniper rifle.

98

What's So Great About V8?

DALE JR. ON AUSTRALIAN RACING, DANICA AND MARTIN TRUEX JR. *By Julie Zeitlin and Clint Wood*

You would think Dale Earnhardt Jr., driver of the No. 88 National Guard/Amp Energy Chevrolet, would keep track of the IZOD IndyCar Series. After all, Danica Patrick, the newest JR Motorsports racer, races in it, and fellow Guard-sponsored racer Dan Wheldon is a veteran IndyCar racer.

But he doesn't. Instead, he follows the V8 Supercars Championship Series—the Australian racing series that has drawn crowds of more than 250,000.

In a recent interview with Dale Jr., *GX* asked him about this—and more.

GX: What type of inaugural season do you think Danica will have to have to be deemed successful?

DE: I'm hoping she will run pretty good. Get a couple top fives or maybe even challenge for a win or two. I would be real pleased if she were able to run that well in some of these races. I don't expect her to be able to go out there and post numbers every week. But if she can do it a few times, just to show a few flashes of potential, that's enough—given the limited amount of time that she will have in the car, and how limited her time and experience already is with it.

GX: What pieces of advice have you given her?

DE: I haven't had a chance to sit down and throw any good pieces of advice at her yet. The only couple of things I might have said was that her schedule is going to put a lot of stress on her.

The hardest part about it, from my vantage point—being on the outside looking in—is trying to maintain your cool outside the car. Because you deal with a lot of different people. Moving back and forth between sponsors, from team to team, from organization to organization. Dealing with various public relations people and press corps—it can be quite brutal trying to maintain your cool.

All outside-the-car stuff is probably going to be the hardest for her. I think inside the car is where she'll feel most comfortable.

GX: Who is the one racer not currently with Hendrick Motorsports that you would like to have as a teammate?

DE: Martin Truex Jr. I always liked Martin. He and I have always enjoyed being around each other. He's a heck of a racecar driver. I've been around him since he got into the Nationwide Series and now into the Cup Series. We have just been good friends for the last six or seven years. We used to be teammates, and it would be cool to be teammates again. **GX**

For more on Dale Jr., go to
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/gx/dalev8



BANKING Dale Earnhardt Jr. leads a pack of cars as he enters the 20-degree banked turn at Las Vegas Motor Speedway on Feb. 28, 2010.

HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS

GARAGE GURU

Steve Letarte

JEFF GORDON'S CREW CHIEF
CHATS WITH GX

By Clint Wood

THE 2010 NASCAR SPRINT CUP SERIES SEASON marks Steve Letarte's 16th anniversary with Hendrick Motorsports and nearly five years as crew chief for Jeff Gordon's No. 24 Dupont/National Guard Chevrolet.

Letarte guided Gordon to an awesome season last year, including Gordon's first win at Texas Motor Speedway and 16 top-five finishes. He also wrenched Gordon to a third-place finish in the 2009 final points standings.

In an exclusive interview with GX, Letarte chatted about many things, from his views on National Guard Soldiers to how he spends his personal time.

GX: What has impressed you most about National Guard Soldiers?

SL: I don't know very many people in the Armed Forces, so I was kind of eager to learn more about the National Guard.

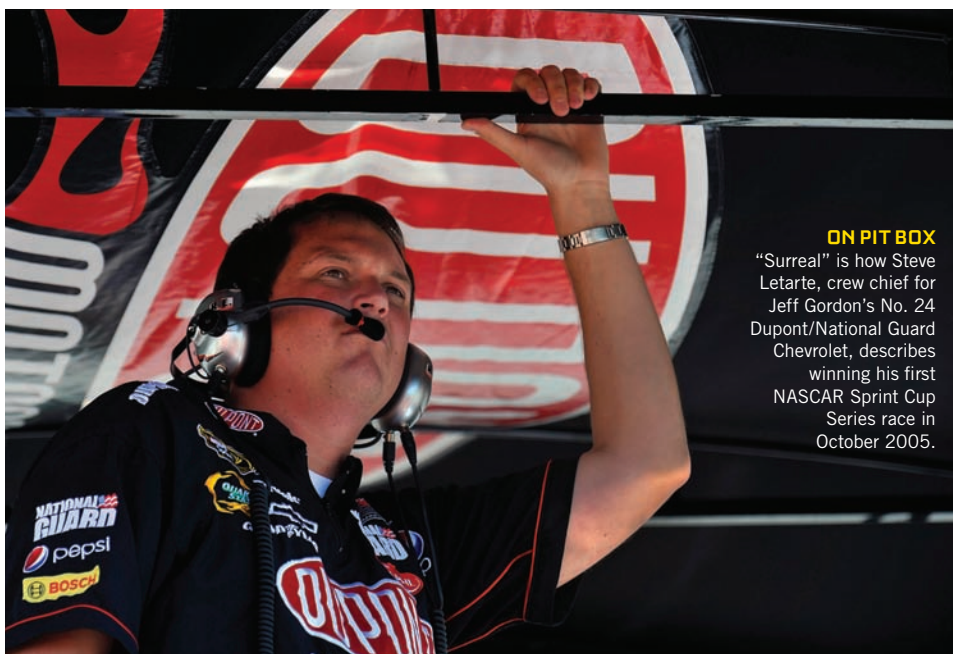
The level of professionalism, respect and commitment is truly remarkable. It really makes you appreciate what you have in this country.

It's been a big educational process for me, especially with all the National Guard programs that go with the No. 24 car. It's been a great learning experience.

GX: What was it like winning your first NASCAR Sprint Cup race as a crew chief?

SL: I remember the day very well. We won the 2005 fall Martinsville [Virginia] race. I was the crew chief. It was surreal. It was all I ever dreamed of.

To be named Jeff Gordon's crew chief in the first place gave me goose bumps, and then to



ON PIT BOX

"Surreal" is how Steve Letarte, crew chief for Jeff Gordon's No. 24 Dupont/National Guard Chevrolet, describes winning his first NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race in October 2005.

be part of winning a race at the highest level of all motorsports in the country—it was surreal. I look back on that day and wish I could have frozen time and enjoyed it all a little bit more.

My dad was in racing, and I followed in his footsteps. All you want to do is race. All you want to do is win.

GX: How has your relationship with Jeff Gordon grown over the years?

SL: Jeff and I have known each other for a very long time. It was a very casual start. I was just a Hendrick Motorsports employee working on the car. But he has a great deal of respect for the guys who work on the car. Even when I was just the tire guy, we were friends.

To go through battle the way we do week in and week out, it's a lot like a marriage. You have to put a lot of effort into it. It's very easy to point fingers and place blame, to look across at your partner or someone on the team and say they're not doing their part. I feel like that's why our relationship is so strong and has grown so

much. Because neither one of us places blame on the other. We talk about what we could have done better, and from there, we improve and grow together.

More than anything, when we go out there and we don't perform as well as we'd like, we know he gave me all he had and I gave him all I had. And it wasn't enough. So we re-evaluate, reload and go again the next weekend.

GX: What do you like to do on your days off?

SL: I've got a 4-year-old and a 6-year-old, and the one job I have where what matters most is how much effort you put in, is being a dad. It's the one thing you don't get judged on. As long as I put the effort in and love them the way I do, that's usually enough for them. That's what I like to do in my off time—spend as much time with them as possible.

GX: What is your personal car?

SL: I drive a Chevrolet Tahoe. It's a hybrid. It's a great car, and I really enjoy it. **GX**

For more on Jeff Gordon, go to
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/gx/24crewchief

“To be named Jeff Gordon's crew chief in the first place gave me goose bumps, and then to be part of winning a race at the highest level of all motorsports in the country—it was surreal.” >> Steve Letarte



Jake Zemke, pilot of the No. 54 National Guard 2010 Suzuki GSX-R 1000, brought the National Guard its first Superbike victory this season at the Daytona 200 Superbike race on March 5, 2010.

Set Up for Success

GUARD WELCOMES RACING CHAMPION JAKE ZEMKE

By Clint Wood

Army National Guard Soldiers know very well how to adapt to any situation and overcome adversity. Terms like “Drive on,” “Give it your 100 percent” and “Take one for the team” come to mind.

Californian Jake Zemke learned to do this last season while racing in the American Motorcyclist Association (AMA) Road Racing Series, where racers negotiate their motorcycles on twisting, turning road courses at more than 180 mph.

Zemke’s adversity was that he failed to win a race last season.

But losing is far from his mind this season. Not only will he be racing in the 2010 AMA Pro Racing National Guard Superbike Championship series for the prestigious Michael Jordan Motorsports, he’s also the new pilot for the No. 54 National Guard 2010 Suzuki GSX-R 1000.

The 34-year-old Zemke, who won his first motorcycle race at age 9, is a proven champion. His accomplishments include winning the 2008 Formula Extreme Series, winning the 2006 Daytona 200 Formula Extreme final, and capturing four victories on the notoriously challenging 3.1-mile Brainerd International Raceway in Brainerd, MN—in Superbike, Supersport and twice in Formula Extreme.

“The tough times are really what make you who you are,” commented Zemke, in an exclusive interview with *GX*. “Everything is always rosy when things are going well for you. When things are tough, that’s when you’ve got to buckle down and work your hardest to get back to the top.

“That’s what we’re doing,” he continued. “I think signing up with the Guard, and Michael [Jordan] and their team, was a great step in the right direction. I want to be the rider to bring them the first Superbike win and also their first Superbike championship.”

GX: What’s it like racing for Michael Jordan?

JZ: Really good. I met Michael when he first came onto the scene back in 2004, when he first started getting into motorcycle racing.

Michael is a great guy. He brings a lot to the table. His successes and achievements and hard work speak for themselves. He’s a true leader. He sets an example through his hard work and dedication, and I think that trickles down throughout the whole team.

FAST FACTS

- * Height: 5’6”
- * Weight: 150 lbs.
- * DOB: 12/15/75
- * Turned Pro: 1992 Dirt Track, 1997 Road Race
- * Team: Michael Jordan Motorsports

Season Highlights:

1st place - 2010 Daytona 200 Superbike race at Daytona Beach, FL, on March 5, 2010



Jake Zemke pins a corner during a practice run on his Suzuki GSX-R 1000.

When you know you’ve got a guy on your side who’s supporting you, and who always gives 120 percent, that’s what you need to be doing day in and day out as well.

GX: What is the one thing that has impressed you about Guard Soldiers?

JZ: It’s funny, because a lot of the things I just spoke about—dedication and hard work—that go along with being with Michael, are the same things that go along with being with the Guard. They put it out there on the line, whether it’s being at the forefront, fighting wars, or taking care of things at home. That speaks a lot about their character. It shows where their heart is. And it allows millions and millions of Americans to enjoy our freedoms. That’s incredible. That’s really cool.

GX: How do you feel about representing the Guard?

JZ: I think it’s going to be really good. My goal is to bring as much exposure to them as possible. For me, the best way to do that is go out and win some races. **GX**

For more on Jake Zemke, go to
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/gx/setupforsuccess



Dan Wheldon, driver of the IZOD IndyCar Series No. 4 National Guard Panther Racing entry, right, receives last-minute advice before his bobsled ride at the Olympic Sports Center in Lake Placid, NY, on Jan. 31, 2010.

Fall Out!

DAN WHELDON TAKES A RUN IN A DIFFERENT KIND OF RIDE *By Clint Wood*

DAN WHELDON, pilot of the No. 4 National Guard IZOD IndyCar Series Panther Racing entry, has exceeded speeds of 240 mph during an Indianapolis 500 and hit speedway walls at about that speed.

But none of it compares to the pain of falling out of the two-man bobsled he rode in with National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) Funny Car pilot Phil Burkhardt Jr.

It happened during the fifth annual Lucas Oil Geoff Bodine Bobsled Challenge Jan. 30 at the Mount Hoenberg Olympic Sports Center in Lake Placid, NY.

SLIDING INTO THE FINISH

But he didn't merely fall out of the sled—he fell out while it was traveling at 80 mph, and slid on ice for several hundred feet at an estimated 65 mph. Along the way, the ice burned a hole through his T-shirt.

“That’s a lot of friction,” he noted. “You can just feel the burning sensation, and it gets gradually worse, to the point where you can literally smell the burning.”

Wheldon said he tried to turn over during his slide in an attempt to stop the burning. Besides this injury, Wheldon suffered minor bruises to his back, left knee and elbows.

“I definitely will say it was one of the most painful experiences I’ve had, but by the same token, it was pretty fun right up until that point.”

Wheldon’s “fun” began when he assumed the role as a brakeman. He thought he would have a nice seat to sit in. Surprise. All that supports the brakeman’s back is a short curved pad that forms to his lower spine.

WAKE-UP CALL

And when it came time for the “what-if” brief, he admitted he didn’t pay that much attention. “Because you don’t think it is really going to happen,” he explained. “They are not going to go that fast.”

He also pointed out that being as small and lightweight as he was, he bounced around in the sled during the ride. A brakeman wraps his legs around the driver and has two small handles to hold onto.

“It’s almost like a hunched-over position if you try and grab them,” Wheldon said. “But by the same token, I was trying to enjoy the ride. It was very uncomfortable. It’s very harsh, too. I was actually amazed at how harsh it was.”

At the end of his slide, he stood up and took a bow for the bystanders. A woman screamed at him to get off the track.

But the impact had dazed him, and he didn’t hear her. Plus, voices were coming through his earpiece. Seconds later, the bobsled he’d fallen out of came sliding toward him.

“I have the utmost respect for the drivers of those bobsleds now,” he said. “They go phenomenally fast.” **GX**

For more on Dan Wheldon, go to
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/gx/indygoesbobsledding



Position Before Submission

By SFC Donnie Moseley, Combat Arms Training Center

THIS MONTH'S FOCUS: Close the distance, gain dominant body position and finish the fight!

Some of you may have heard this before. Another one you may have heard is, "position before submission." So with those two simple fundamentals of fighting, we go for the setup.

Let's think for a second about the "position before submission" concept—close the distance, gain dominant position and maintain it. Then, if I have failed submission attempts, as long as I maintain position, I can keep attempting my submissions (staying on the offense). By gaining dominant position and attacking, my opponent has to defend. If I am constantly attacking, with good attacks and forward thinking, then my attacks for the meantime are my defense.

Along that mindset, what about bad positions? This is a crucial part. It's very easy to fall into the trap during training of being the dominant fighter. Where this hurts us is when we find ourselves in that "bad position" and don't know what to do. Why? Because we didn't train for it.

That's why we start with our opponent in the mount position, or side control, and work techniques that are going to keep us in the fight from there. I'm sure you all have had takedown attempts that didn't end up in your favor. I know I'm not alone in that department.

We always run into the "what-if?" scenario. I think it's fair to say that every technique in Combatives has its place and time. Learning the nuances against a resistant opponent is what makes them work. Up to the "finish" of, let's say, a straight-arm bar, there is a chance that the technique may fail, depending on my execution, timing and technique, and depending on what my opponent does as far as a "counter" goes. In fighting, counters and infinity are synonymous, until someone gets knocked out or submits.

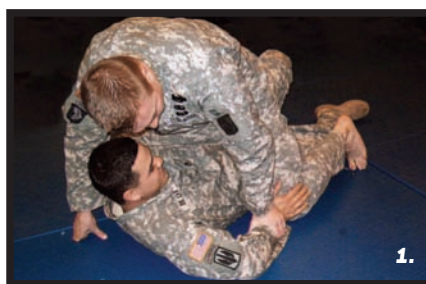
Our Guard and our Army are the best in the world, hands down. We're the best for a multitude of reasons. One is that we're fighters. That's how

we built this great country, by fighting for it. Another reason is because we're smart. Our Combatives program was not made to beat each other. It was made for us to defeat our enemies in close-quarters battle when we have to. What better training partners can you ask for than the best Soldiers in the world?

We also get to reap the benefits of developing the competitive spirit through competition. It's hard to think of anything better than two of our Soldiers fighting in competition, who would be willing to give their lives for one another on the battlefield. **GX**

LET'S TRAIN!

THIS TIME I WANT TO COVER A SIMPLE MOUNT ATTACK. MOUNT TO TRIANGLE CHOKE.



Step 1. When I have achieved the mount and my opponent pushes on my knee to escape ...



Step 2. I'm going kick my leg back and place my knee next to my opponent's ear.

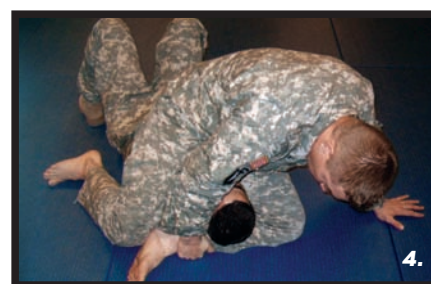


3a.



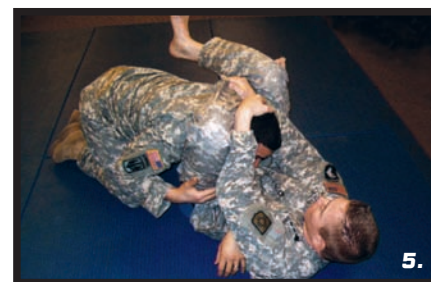
3b.

Step 3. Now I'm going to cradle his head and rotate my leg behind his head.



4.

Step 4. Once I've accomplished this I'm going to secure my shin.



5.

Step 5. At this time, I'm going to roll onto my shoulder and secure the triangle choke.

Get in touch with SFC Donnie Moseley at Combatives@GXonline.com

**RUN
TWICE AS
FAST IN 14
DAYS!**



OPERATION RESILIENT RUNNER

Top Training Tips for Improving Speed and Distance

By Ken and Stephanie Weichert

SGT KEN,

RECEIVED

I have experienced great results following your Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) improvement program called Operation Pushing for Points. Prior to following your workout, I would only lift weights three days a week and jog every other day. I soon realized that my personal fitness routine was not helping me improve my PT scores at all.

I began Pushing for Points two months prior to my APFT and the program kicked my tail! I committed myself to everything in the workout calendar, and two months later I improved my score from a 235 to a 294.

Thanks for all you do!

SFC Harry Meek, Tennessee Army National Guard
Path to Honor Operations NCO

SFC MEEK,

SENT

Thanks for reaching out! I am thrilled that our APFT improvement program helped you increase your score by 59 points in two months of training. It appears that you now qualify for the Physical Fitness Excellence Badge. Great effort, SFC!

Looking at your raw scores on your DA Form 705, I noticed that you improved your 2-mile run time from 15:28 to 13:54. Now, I would like to challenge you to strive for longer distances and faster speeds. Whether you are training for the 2-mile run as part of the APFT or training for a full marathon, I challenge you to become the most resilient runner that you can!

In this issue, we will cover the following:

1. The Resilient Runner's Guide: The Workout, Day One
2. Top 5 Tips for Proper Running Form
3. Top 5 Tips for Running Safely

I suggest that you keep up with your strength training and follow Operation Resilient Runner for the next several weeks. Stay the course and let us know how it's working for you.

HOOAH!
SGT Ken



Army Physical Fitness Test Scorecard
21-20, the proponent agency is TRADOC

SFC Meek's APFT Form

TEST ONE			TEST TWO		
DATE	GRADE	AGE	DATE	GRADE	AGE
9 Oct 2009	E-7	31			
HEIGHT (IN INCHES)		BODY COMPOSITION		HEIGHT (IN INCHES)	
WEIGHT: 171		WEIGHT: 202 lbs		WEIGHT: 192	
GO/NO-GO: <input type="checkbox"/> GO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO-GO		BODY FAT: 19.0 %		GO/NO-GO: <input type="checkbox"/> GO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO-GO	
PU RAW SCORE	INITIALS	POINTS	PU RAW SCORE	INITIALS	POINTS
77	CRK	100			
SU RAW SCORE	INITIALS	POINTS	SU RAW SCORE	INITIALS	POINTS
83	CRK	100			
2MR RAW SCORE	INITIALS	POINTS	2MR RAW SCORE	INITIALS	POINTS
13:54	CRK	94			
ALTERNATE AEROBIC EVENT		TOTAL POINTS		ALTERNATE AEROBIC EVENT	
EVENT		294		EVENT	
TIME				TIME	
GO <input type="checkbox"/> NO-GO <input type="checkbox"/>				GO <input type="checkbox"/> NO-GO <input type="checkbox"/>	
NCOIC/OIC SIGNATURE				NCOIC/OIC SIGNATURE	
[Signature]				[Signature]	
COMMENTS				COMMENTS	
GO					

The average 200-pound male who runs at 10 miles per hour burns approximately 816 calories in 30 minutes. In order to lose one pound of weight, you must burn 3,500 more calories than you consume.

THE RESILIENT RUNNER'S GUIDE

WARM-UP PHASE

1. Foam Rolling: Perform 3–6 minutes of foam rolling, or self-myofascial release techniques, in order to improve flexibility and sports performance, and to reduce potential injuries.

2. Calisthenics: Perform 6–8 minutes of aerobics exercises, such as Running in Place, Side-Straddle-Hops ("Jumping Jacks") or High Steps/Knees.

3. Stretching: Perform 4–6 minutes of flexibility exercises.

CORE TARGETING PHASE

Note: Effective core strength training is vital to the success of a running fitness program. Your core muscles will support you as you run, hike, march or perform any other athletic event. Core strength training focuses on the muscles in your hips, back and abdominals. Maintaining strong core muscles will help you sustain your stride and overall endurance.



4. Quadruped Extension ("Bird Dog")

Equipment: None

Primary Muscles Targeted: Erector Spinae, Gluteals and Rhomboids

START: Balance your body on your hands and knees with your back forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, knees together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart and arms straight.

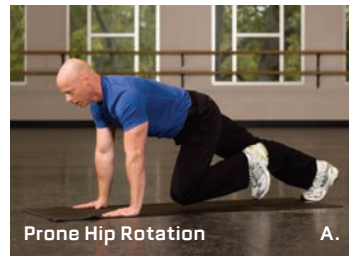
ACTIONS: Contract the abdominal muscles, lift and extend the left arm and the right leg simultaneously until level with the back. Pause for a few seconds

and slowly return to the start position. Repeat with the opposite arm and leg, pausing for a few seconds while extended. Continue switching until goal is reached, performing the actions on both sides. Once is one repetition. Exhale through your mouth as you extend, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions (each side)

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions (each side)

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions (each side)



Prone Hip Rotation A.



B.



C.



D.

5. Prone Hip Rotation

Equipment: None

Primary Muscles Targeted: Transverse Abdominus, Gluteus Medius/Minimus (Abductors), Adductors, Obliques

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: A. While keeping your abdominal muscles tight and your arms straight, bend your left knee and move it toward your chest until you slightly exceed 90 degrees of knee flexion.

B. Slowly twist your hips clockwise and point your left knee to the right for a few seconds.

C. Slowly twist your hips counterclockwise and point your left knee to the left for a few seconds.

D. Slowly bring your knee back to the center and return to the start position. Switch legs and repeat. Continue until you reach your goal. Breathe naturally.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions (each side)

Intermediate: 11–30 repetitions (each side)

Advanced: 31–50 repetitions (each side)

TRANSITION PHASE



Wood Chop

A.

6. Wood Chop

Equipment: Tubing or a medicine ball

Primary Muscles Targeted:
Abdominals, Shoulders and Arms

START (WITH TUBING): Place your left foot on the center of a standard exercise tube. Grasp both handles with your left hand and place your right hand over your left. Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart, knees slightly bent, toes pointing forward. Position your arms in front of your left hip, elbows slightly bent and palms facing toward each other. Note: If using a medicine ball or dumbbell, start with the weight slightly in front of your left hip.



B.

ACTIONS: Raise your arms up and across your body, twisting your torso until the left shoulder is aligned with your chin. Keep wrists firm and elbows slightly bent. Return to the start position and continue until goal is reached. Switch leg and arm positions and repeat. Exhale through your mouth as you raise your arms, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

Basic: 1–10 repetitions (each side)

Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions (each side)

Advanced: 21–30 repetitions (each side)

AEROBIC CONDITIONING PHASE

7. Interval Running Drill

Equipment needed: None

START: Assume a "standing start position" by placing your toes behind the start line with one leg 12–18 inches behind you. Shift your weight on the front leg and bend your lead knee 90 degrees. Bend your trunk forward with opposite arm in front and slightly elevated.

ACTIONS: Run at a moderate pace for several feet and run at your best pace for several feet. Repeat until you reach your goal. Breathe naturally.

Basic: 4–5 minutes

Intermediate: 6–8 minutes

Advanced: 9–12 minutes

Repetition Rule: Perform three full sets of the Core Targeting, Transition, and Aerobic Conditioning Phases at your level.

“ “ SGT Ken,
Your push-up training videos are amazing!

In four weeks, I improved my push-ups from 42 to 71. Keep up the great work! Hooah!”

> PFC James Tobin, Florida Army National Guard

COOL-DOWN PHASE

Perform the foam rolling and flexibility exercises from the Warm-up Phase.

Time to Finish

Basic: approximately 30 minutes

Intermediate: approximately 45 minutes

Advanced: approximately 60 minutes

Note: The Warm-up and Cool-down Phases are performed only once.

Nutrition Advice:

Follow the Savory Survival Guide from

www.NATIONALGUARD.com/life/fitness/diet-and-health



I used your APFT improvement program called ‘Operation Pushing for Points’! Before I started your program, I could only do 48 push-ups, 41 sit-ups, and I ran my 2-mile in 17:34. After only two weeks of training, I took my APFT again and achieved 60 push-ups, 53 sit-ups, and ran my 2-mile in 14:32. This is a great program!” > **SPC Robert Sovine**, West Virginia Army National Guard

TOP 5 TIPS FOR PROPER RUNNING FORM

- 1. Look where you are going**—A common mistake made during running fatigue is dropping your head into your chest. Maintain focus on the ground 20 feet in front of you and strive for running in a straight line. Your head and neck should remain relaxed at all times. Note: Especially when running in cold climates, it’s best to inhale through your nose and to exhale through your mouth. This warms and cleans the air that you supply to your lungs.
- 2. Lean into it**—Another common example of poor running form is when people lean back while running. This creates a pulling action in the hips that is counterproductive. Use gravity to your advantage. Lean slightly forward, but maintain proper alignment with your head, shoulders and hips.
- 3. Strike in the center**—Use your center of gravity to your advantage. Strike the ground with your foot directly under your hips.
- 4. Run at a modified double-time cadence**—In order to improve your running scores, you must achieve a modified double-time cadence. Average runners are known to perform approximately 70–80 strides per minute, while professional runners maintain as much as 100 strides per minute. Spend more time in the air than on the ground.
- 5. Maintain grace in your stride**—Even when world-class runners are performing their best speeds, they make it seem like it requires little or no effort. Remain relaxed while you run and allow your muscles to do the work. Perform an unforced and compact stride to a modified double-time cadence. Large strides can impede your momentum. Use the forward movement that you produce to your advantage.

TOP 5 TIPS FOR RUNNING SAFELY

- 1. Carry identification and a cell phone (urban), and sometimes carry a first aid kit (wilderness)**—One time I was trail running in Muir Woods, just north of San Francisco, while training for an outdoor adventure race. On the 10th mile of my run, far away from any road or ranger station, I came across a hiker who had broken his ankle from a fall. I always kept emergency numbers recorded on my phone, including the number for the nearest ranger station. I was able to call for help. By the time the ranger arrived, I had already splinted the hiker’s ankle and carried him to the nearest fire escape road. Always be prepared. It’s better to have a first aid kit and not need it, than to need it and not have it.
- 2. Dress for the occasion**—Always check the weather report prior to your training. Don’t be the runner or hiker who overheats in hot climates as a result of wearing too much clothing, or the person who gets frostbite or hypothermia from not wearing enough clothing in cold climates. Don’t forget some sort of reflective belt or flashing light. It’s always best to wear clothes that can easily be seen by others. When the weather is poor, it may be best to run indoors on a treadmill.
- 3. Face the traffic**—Running against the traffic provides you the opportunity of seeing potential dangers coming at you.
- 4. Stay hydrated**—The night before I perform a long run or hike, I consume a great deal of water (without overdoing it). I drink an electrolyte replacement drink during my long runs or hikes in order to maintain proper blood sodium levels. Always consume enough water and salt to replace what you lose.
- 5. Be alert**—When I’m running outside, I never use a music-playing device of any kind. Listening to music while running outside will make you less aware of traffic and other potential dangers.



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.

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 short of breath.



Serving as Tennessee's RSP fitness coordinator, SSG Ken Weichert leads Warriors in exercise during drill in February 2010.

Fit for Duty

Tennessee Guard's Fit Camp gets RSP Soldiers ready for service

By Clint Wood

The Fit to Fight Program

Staff Sergeant Ken Weichert, GX's fitness guru, has dedicated his entire 20-year military career to ensuring that Guard Soldiers are "fit to fight." His fitness and health programs are designed to dramatically increase muscle strength and aerobic endurance, and decrease body fat.

As a Tennessee National Guard RSP fitness coordinator, Weichert initiated the Warrior Fit Camp. It has brought great success to 24 Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) Warriors. These new recruits had not been to Basic Combat Training (BCT). The program is designed to ready Warriors for the physical demands of combat and to reduce BCT pipeline losses caused by Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) or Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) failures and health-related injuries.

In one month, every Warrior lost weight and improved their Army APFT score by 52 or more points.

"Best of all, every Warrior seemed thrilled about the program and could not wait to endure more," said Weichert, whose latest APFT was 411.

Case in point: Private First Class Joshua Kelley on Day No. 31.

"Between the meal plans and the workout calendar, I scored 110 points more in the APFT this month and lost 12 pounds," he noted. "It's working. I cannot wait to see how much I improve in another 30 days."

The next day, Day No. 32, Private First Class Jeremy Adams had similar results.

"Changing my diet last month was not easy, but I did it and it worked," he exclaimed. "I followed [Staff Sergeant Weichert's] nutrition and fitness plan, and lost 14 pounds."

Adams shipped to BCT the following week. "I feel that I would not have made it, had it not been for Warrior Fit Camp," he stated. "Hooah!"

Hit the Ground Running

Weichert, who stands 6-foot-3 and weighs a solid 215 pounds, stood in front of the 24 motionless Warriors at the Armed Forces Reserve Training Center's drill hall in Smyrna, TN. He opened the session by stating, "Welcome to

"Physical drill has a fourfold function; to build men up physically, to wake them up mentally, to fill them with enthusiasm, and to discipline them."

> Colonel Herman Koehler,
West Point, 1918

Warrior Fit Camp! This weekend, you will be participating in one Army Physical Fitness Test, several fitness sessions and nutrition lectures. You'll consume restricted meals, learn how to perform physical fitness activities safely and effectively, track your workouts online or on a daily exercise log, and receive a 30-day workout calendar, to be completed once you leave here. When you return a month from now, we will do it all again. However, next month you will notice

Warrior Fit Camp

objectives are to ready Warriors for the physical demands of combat and to reduce Basic Combat Training (BCT) pipeline losses caused by Physical Fitness Assessment (PFA) or Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) failures and health-related injuries.

EVAN BAINES



JUMP AS HIGH AS YOU CAN
The RSP group performs
50 repetitions of the high jump drill.

that you gained a great deal of strength and stamina and lost weight. Refer to your training schedule for tasks and executing times. Let's get started!"

The group responded, "HOOAH!"

About six hours later, Kelley described the intense workout.

"Every time I looked at the other Warriors during the tactical fitness session, all I saw was pain-filled faces and pools of sweat on the ground," he lamented. "I found new energy, and I was reminded of why I asked to be in Warrior Fit Camp.

"My father told me many times growing up, 'You are going to gain weight,'" he continued. "And I did. It was inevitable. Obesity is in our genes.

"Every time I completed a lunge, push-up or squat, I realized that I was another step closer to my personal fitness goals, and that I would not become the large person that my father said I would become," Kelley added. "When Weichert yelled 'At ease!' to indicate that the

Warrior Fit Camp Qualifications

To be selected for Warrior Fit Camp, Soldiers must meet the following criteria:

1. Be within 30–90 days of shipping to BCT/AIT.
2. Be over/under allowed body-fat percentage according to AR 600-9.
3. Have difficulty passing PFA or APFT.
4. Have approval from commander.

workout was over, I realized I was going to lose weight."

Physical workouts weren't the only activity at the event. On the first two afternoons, the Soldiers took a nutrition class. For Adams, the class brought back memories of how bad cola is for you. He had told the Warriors that it takes 27 glasses of normal tap water to wash out the acidity of one cola.

"I am never drinking a cola again," Adams exclaimed.

Weichert also taught the students what to eat and what not to eat, at home or on the road.

"My diet was all wrong before," Adams admitted. "He told us to reduce the consumption of breads, dairy products and sugar, and to increase water [90–120 ounces per day]. He also said to break our meals down into five meals instead of three.

"He even gave us a guide on how to make the meals," Adams added. "I am going to give this meal plan a shot. I need to lose 10 pounds before I ship to Basic Training."



KEEP YOUR SHOULDERS BACK
The RSP group performs 50 repetitions
of the lunge.

- The average U.S. Soldier today weighs 37 pounds more than his counterpart during WWI—approximately 25% heavier.

- 18% of men and 43% of women of recruiting age are too overweight to be eligible for military service of any type, in any branch.

- 3,000 troops were discharged in 2003 alone because of excess weight.

> Source:
Department of Defense



When these Warriors prove their mettle at BCT, they can thank the Tennessee Army National Guard.

And Weichert, in turn, is grateful to his commander, Lieutenant Colonel Eric Goslowsky, the Tennessee Army National Guard's recruiting and retention commander, under whose guidance the program came to fruition.

Under This Condition

Like every Guard Soldier who is a leader, Weichert had to provide an After Action Review (AAR) for his commander. This AAR included notes from the operations order, the student feedback forms, results from the PFA/APFT sessions, and comments from the training and support staff.

If there was one statement in the AAR that best explained what must be done to make Soldiers fit to fight, it was the following: to effectively accomplish the Mission Essential Task List (METL). "We must physically condition Guard Soldiers as tactical athletes all year round, not just on drill weekends or at Annual Training," Weichert said. **GX**



DON'T DROP YOUR LEGS
SSG Ken Weichert leads RSP
Warriors through a series of
flutter kicks.

On Target

THE M24 SNIPER RIFLE

By SSG Brandon House, Arkansas National Guard

Photos by Clint Wood

A sniper's best friend is his rifle. It allows him to complete his mission successfully. If his rifle unreliable, the mission is jeopardized—and more importantly, so is the sniper's safety.

The need for an accurate, powerful and reliable weapon has led many snipers in the Guard to choose the M24 sniper rifle.

The M24 sniper weapon system fires a 7.62 x 51 mm bullet, which is much larger and more powerful than the 5.56 x 45 mm that the M16 and M4 fire. It's a bolt-action rifle that holds up to six rounds: five in the internal magazine well and one in the chamber.



A Soldier can easily hold an M24 sniper rifle, despite its combat weight of 14.2 lbs., which consists of the weapon, the scope, the 1907 sling, bipods and five rounds.

The rifle is made by Remington Arms Company and was introduced to the military in 1988. The combat weight of the weapon is 14.2 lbs., which consists of the weapon, the scope, the 1907 sling, bipods and five rounds.

Most snipers prefer the M24 because it's hard to beat a bolt-action

rifle compared to a semi-automatic. Too many things can go wrong when using gas-operated weapons. The trigger is a Type 40x; it can be adjusted from 2 lbs. to 8 lbs. of trigger pull. The scope is an M3A, Leopold Mark 4, fixed 10 power. The scope mounts are from Badger Ordnance. The stock is made by H and S Precision and has an adjustable butt plate. The barrel is 24 inches and has a twist ratio of 1:11.2 inches. It also has five radials.

The reason this weapon is so effective is that it's simple and has few moving parts. With a little training on the rifle and the scope, one can be a deadly shot from more than 1,000 yards away. Most of the rifles come out of the factory shooting a one-minute angle at 100 yards or less.

Some of the accessories that snipers add onto their M24 are the AN/PVS 10 and a suppressor can. The AN/PVS 10 is a great night device, and although there are better products on the market, it is very reliable, not to mention battlefield-tested. A suppressor can not only help conceal the sniper's position by muffling the sound of a bullet being fired, but also help save the shooter's ears. **GX**



The need for an accurate, powerful and reliable weapon has led many snipers in the Guard to choose the M24 sniper rifle.



SGT James Vanveldhuizen, left, uses the buddy system with his spotter, SPC Jeremy Heinrich, as he fires his M24 sniper rifle during a competition at Fort Chaffee, AR, in November 2009.

“IT JUST FEELS RIGHT, BEING AROUND SOLDIERS ALL DAY.”

>> SSG (Ret.) John Kriesel

SSG (Ret.) John Kriesel, who was permanently disabled when his Humvee hit a roadside bomb in Iraq, continues to serve our country as a civilian recruiter.

SSG (Ret.) John Kriesel takes a moment to capture a photo with Iraqi children during his deployment in 2006.

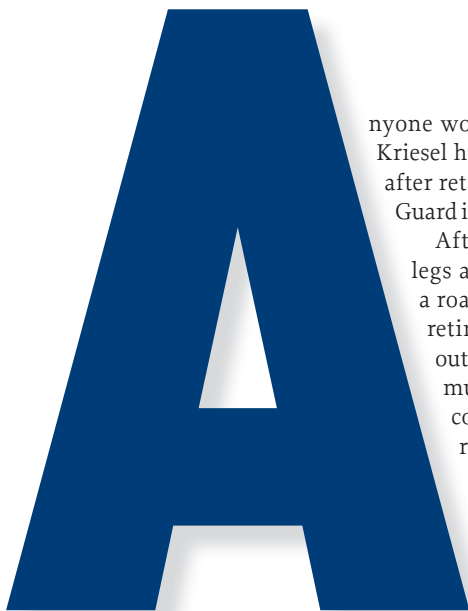


UNBROKEN CIRCLE

VETERAN KEEPS
SERVING AS
CIVILIAN

BY CLINT WOOD





nyone would have understood if John Kriesel had completely left military life after retiring from the Army National Guard in 2008.

After all, he had lost both of his legs and two of his best friends to a roadside bomb in Iraq. But, after retiring, instead of taking himself out of the world that had taken so much from him, he re-upped his commitment to it: He joined the recruiting team.

“It just feels right, being around Soldiers all day,” commented Kriesel, whose job is marketing liaison for the Minnesota Army National Guard Retention and

Recruiting Battalion. “This way, I don’t feel like I’m out of the military.” Far from feeling bitter or having regrets, Kriesel called joining the Guard “the best choice I ever made. If I could do it all over again, I absolutely would.”

The idea came to him via an interesting twist of fate. During his high school years in White Bear Lake, MN, he was a self-described “knucklehead” who got in fights and got suspended.

On one of his trips to the principal’s office, he noticed the school’s career center and picked up a few military recruiting pamphlets he saw there. They piqued his interest. Soon after, he went to Camp Ripley, MN, to watch a military infantry training exercise. “They were hardworking, salt-of-the-earth guys,” he said.

The experience clinched his decision to join. In October 1998, on his 17th birthday, Kriesel went to a Military Entrance Processing Station and enlisted. He found his leaders to be positive influences, and he respected them—so much so, that he felt “crushed” when he did something to upset them.

“I stayed out of trouble [after that],” he admitted. “The Guard provided the guidance and focus I never got at home. It was a turning point in my life.”

Kriesel chose 11B—Infantry—as his MOS (military occupational specialty). He remembered watching Gulf War footage as a young child and thought, “If I can get paid to do that, count me in.”

His first exposure to hostility was in 2004, in Kosovo, with the Minnesota Guard’s Company A, 2nd Battalion, 136th Infantry Regiment of the 34th Infantry “Red Bulls” Division. Riots had broken out—the most violence the region had seen in five years.

The experience instilled in Kriesel a new appreciation for America.

ABOUT-FACE

Upon his return from Kosovo, Kriesel’s term of service was nearly up, and he considered leaving the Guard.

“I just wanted to focus on my family at that point,” he explained. “I thought it was time to settle down. I figured I’d find something else to do.”

But giving it up wasn’t that easy. Fellow Soldiers told Kriesel of a rumored deployment of his unit to Iraq in the fall of 2005, and Kriesel had always wanted to go to war. Back in Kosovo, he would watch Service Members on TV in Iraq and Afghanistan, and it had an impact on him. “You feel kind of guilty,” he said. “I thought, ‘That’s our Super Bowl. That’s what we train for.’”

Kriesel asked his wife for her opinion on his re-enlisting, given the distinct possibility of deployment. It was a difficult decision for her, she told him, because if she said yes and something bad happened, she would feel guilty. But if she said no, he might resent her later.

Finally, she asked him, “If you don’t go, will you look back on it when you’re 30 and regret it?”

He knew he might. He enlisted for three more years.

A few months later, after being home just over a year, he deployed to Iraq with Company B, 2nd Combined Arms Battalion,

136th Infantry Regiment. The unit arrived at Camp Fallujah in April. Company B, which was attached

to a Marine unit, had three missions: Quick Reaction Forces; regular patrols; and guarding two pump houses—Flanders and Barney—that provided water from the Euphrates River to Fallujah.

Kriesel realized how dangerous the mission was when he was outside Pump House Flanders clearing brush, and mortar rounds landed nearby. In fact, Company B was finding as many as 15 roadside bombs a day.

“DON’T TAKE YOUR JOB LIGHTLY. SOLDIERS NEED TO BE ABLE TO SAVE SOMEONE’S LIFE AND STAY CALM UNDER PRESSURE.”

>> SSG (Ret.) John Kriesel to recruiters-in-training

RADICAL CHANGE OF MISSION

So the commander changed the mission—they would take the fight to the insurgents.

An increased show of force included a barracks built at Flanders and bunks added at Barney. Patrols went

out from both locations. December 2, 2006, began with a foot patrol by Kriesel’s team, which included Specialist Bryan McDonough, Specialist Corey Rystad and two Marines. Afterward, they returned to Flanders for chow and a nap.

Several Soldiers, including Kriesel, were awakened with a new mission: to investigate an Iraqi man who had been observed digging in a road. The commander sent out a two-vehicle team. In front was a Bradley, and behind was Kriesel’s team in a Humvee.

As the Bradley turned a corner near a checkpoint, its tracks just missed a bomb-triggering device—but the Humvee hit it. A 200-pound bomb exploded.

Kriesel remembers hearing the blast.





SSG Adam Gallant, left, and SSG (Ret.) Todd Everson, center, were recognized as the U.S. Bank Hometown Heroes at the Dec. 13, 2009, Minnesota Vikings game. They're credited with saving the life of SSG (Ret.) John Kriesel, right.

The bomb, meant to dismantle the massive Bradley, ripped out the Humvee's bottom and blew its doors off—they landed about a football field away. The vehicle landed on its side. McDonough and Rystad were killed instantly.

The Bradley shook so violently, its crew initially thought they were the ones who had been hit.

REALITY SETS IN

"I don't remember flying through the air," Kriesel began, "but I remember [the first moments] after I hit the ground. I remember the feeling. I remember hearing the rocks landing like it was a hailstorm. I knew then what had happened. I heard people yelling. I was thinking, 'Oh man, this isn't good.'"

"Then I saw the [Humvee] on its side, facing the opposite direction of where we were heading," he continued. "There were parts of it everywhere. It was demolished."

His right leg below the knee was "just gone."

To determine Kriesel's level of coherence, his gunner began asking him questions, such as the names of his wife and children.

"I was like, 'Quit asking me questions. I'm fine and leave me alone,'" Kriesel recalled. "It aggravated me. But he kept asking."

Kriesel attempted to remove his body armor, but couldn't. His arm was broken.

He didn't yet know that shrapnel had ripped the armor open and entered his midsection.

Two of his fellow Soldiers—Staff Sergeants Adam Gallant and Todd Everson—began tending to his injuries. Gallant told him that his legs were severely injured, but he was going to be fine. He elevated Kriesel's legs using an MRE box.

Kriesel attempted to close his eyes, not wanting to watch, but they instructed him to stay awake and talk to them as they applied tourniquets to his legs, covered his wounds with dressings and moved him to the medevac landing zone.

"I tried to close my eyes," Kriesel recalled. "I didn't want to see anything. It was almost like a dream. I dreamt that I was playing little league baseball."

A few minutes later, a feeling of coldness came over him. He grabbed Gallant and told him to tell his wife that he loved her.

**"WE HIRED
KRIESEL NOT
BECAUSE HE WAS A
DISABLED VETERAN,
BUT BECAUSE HE
WAS A REALLY
TALENTED GUY."**

>> LTC Jake Kulzer

NICK OF TIME

Seconds later, a medevac helicopter arrived, and Kriesel knew he had a chance.

He vaguely remembers being carried into the surgical center at Camp Taqaddum, Iraq, where the nurses also tried to get him to talk. They sat him down, and that's the last thing he remembers until more than a week later.

After eight days, Kriesel awoke at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, DC.



LTC Jake Kulzer, left, commander of the Minnesota Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion, considers SSG (Ret.) John Kriesel an asset to the recruiting field.

CLINT WOOD

Almost immediately, the doctors asked about the incident.

"They wanted to figure out how much of a brain trauma I had," Kriesel explained.

He was told his other injuries included his back and pelvis. He would have to lie in a non-weight-bearing position for 12 weeks.

The first month was rough. He was terrified of darkness and silence. So much so, that he slept with the lights and television on.

INSPIRATION

But once physical therapy began, knowing that his fellow Soldiers were still in harm's way in Iraq inspired Kriesel to work hard.

"I was worried about them," he said. "So, when I was so tired that I wanted to give up, I thought about them. They didn't have the option to quit. They had to wake up every day and give 110 percent, or someone could get killed."

He also credits his two physical therapists—an Army officer and a civilian—for his recovery, because they pushed him past his limits.

"They motivated the heck out of me," he said. "I was originally told that I would be at Walter Reed around 18 months, but I made it home in nine months."

HOMECOMING

Kriesel could not relax about his unit in Iraq until they came home—which they did in July 2007, at a ceremony at Volk Field near Fort McCoy. He was there and hugged every Soldier. During the awards formation, a fellow Soldier moved over to let Kriesel stand in his regular spot. He got tired, he admitted, being newly out of the hospital.

"But there was no way I was falling out," he said. "I was so proud of being there again."

Kriesel received a Bronze Star and a Combat Infantryman Badge that day.

Soon, Kriesel came to the attention of Lieutenant Colonel Jake Kulzer, the commanding officer of the Minnesota Guard's Recruiting and Retention Battalion. The two met at a Minnesota Governor's Fishing Opener even, where Kriesel was a guest of Gov. Tim Pawlenty. Kulzer was impressed at how Kriesel had overcome his adversity, and how he was inspirational to so many. "We have to [hire] this guy," Kulzer told his team.

"We hired him not because he was a disabled Veteran, but because he was a really talented guy who had great messages and had overcome a lot of obstacles," Kulzer

★★★★ A DAY TO REMEMBER ★★★★★

One of Staff Sergeant (Ret.) John Kriesel's favorite memories is the day former President George W. Bush pinned his Purple Heart on him, Dec. 22, 2006.

Kriesel had always liked President Bush. "I just love how he supported the military," Kriesel explained. "He was so proud of us. You could tell it was real. All politics aside."

It all started when the staff at Walter Reed Army Medical Center asked Kriesel if he needed anything. At first, he thought they meant food or medication. Then he realized they meant anything.

"I remember thinking, 'Wow—anything? What should I ask for?'" Kriesel said. "It was almost like the genie came out of the bottle and gave me three wishes.

"I said, 'I want to meet the president.'"

Around Christmastime, his wish came true—the president and first lady came for a visit, and pinned on his medal.

Kriesel will never forget how President Bush knelt down to explain the meaning of the Purple Heart to Kriesel's young sons.

"Aren't you proud of your dad?" he asked them.

"Yes," said the boys.

"Well, good," the president replied. "He's a hero."



explained. "His being an inspirational person was just an added benefit. It has been a straight-up win-win for everybody."

The timing was excellent, because Kriesel had decided to leave the Guard.

"I wasn't going to stay in when I couldn't do the job I wanted to do," he said.

BY DESIGN

As a marketing liaison for the Minnesota Army National Guard, Kriesel's job is designing ads, print banners and website elements that help spread awareness. His four-member marketing team assists more than 130 recruiters statewide.

His love for the Guard makes his job feel easy. "It's fun coming up with new ways of doing it," he offered. "I feel good about it."

Brand partnerships are also an effective marketing tool, and Kriesel helped facilitate an important one—an association between

the Minnesota Guard and the Vikings football team. Through this partnership, Vikings team members have visited Soldiers training at Camp Ripley, and the stadium's JumboTron has broadcast live satellite feeds of Guard activities.

CREAM OF THE CROP

Kriesel knows that potential applicants can see his disability when they visit in person, but he's not worried about it.

"They might not want to join because of it," he admitted, "but that's fine. We need the best of the best. We need people who are committed to the fullest."

And by finding these people, Kriesel hopes to facilitate a higher caliber of Soldier.

"Although, I don't think we can do much in Minnesota to create better Soldiers," he explained, "because we have a pretty top-notch National Guard already." **GX**

HERO AT CAMDEN

CAMDEN, SC, AUG. 16, 1780 - MILITIAMAN PETER FRANCISCO AND HIS FELLOW SOLDIERS OF THE CONTINENTAL ARMY WERE UP AGAINST THE BRITISH IN THE BATTLE OF CAMDEN. PROVING NO MATCH FOR THE REDCOATS, MANY UNITS RETREATED IN A STATE OF PANIC. THE 6-FOOT-6-INCH, 260-POUND FRANCISCO, HOWEVER, WOULD NOT GIVE UP SO EASILY.



FIGHTING TO HOLD GROUND, FRANCISCO WAS OVERTAKEN BY BRITISH CAVALRY. HE FAKED SURRENDER, THEN SPEARED A BRITISH CAVALRYMAN WITH A BAYONET. HE TOOK THE ENEMY OFF HIS HORSE, CLIMBED UP, AND HEADED FOR FRIENDLY LINES.



HE CAME UPON HIS COMMANDING OFFICER, COLONEL WILLIAM MAYO. MAYO WAS NOW A PRISONER, BEING LED BY TWO REDCOATS. FRANCISCO CHARGED AND DESTROYED THE CAPTORS. MAYO MOUNTED FRANCISCO'S HORSE AND THE TWO RODE OFF.



FRANCISCO'S ACTS AT CAMDEN BROUGHT RESPECT FROM HIS SOLDIERS, A FOLKLOREIC STATUS TO THIS DAY, AND, IN 1975, A U.S. POST OFFICE STAMP BEARING HIS IMAGE. HE KEPT FIGHTING IN THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION RIGHT UP UNTIL THE BRITISH SURRENDERED IN 1781.



NEARING FRIENDLY LINES, FRANCISCO SAW AN AMERICAN CANNON THAT HAD BEEN LEFT BEHIND. THE CONTINENTALS COULD NOT AFFORD FOR THIS TO HAPPEN, BECAUSE THERE WERE SO FEW CANNONS. FRANCISCO DISMOUNTED, AND LIFTED THE 1,100-POUND GUN OUT OF ITS CARRIAGE AND ONTO HIS SHOULDER. HE CARRIED IT OFF THE FIELD TO PREVENT ITS FALLING INTO ENEMY HANDS.



END

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.





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INPUT!**

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