

GXTM

VOLUME TWO ISSUE FOUR
AUG/SEP 2005

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

THREE
SILVER STARS

ONE AMAZING STORY

DISCOVER
DOWN UNDER

YOU CAN SAVE BIG
ON TRAVEL ABROAD

GUARD
FAMILIES

A TRADITION
OF SERVICE

LEADING FROM THE FRONT

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#16 National Guard Ford Taurus





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A TRADITION OF HONOR



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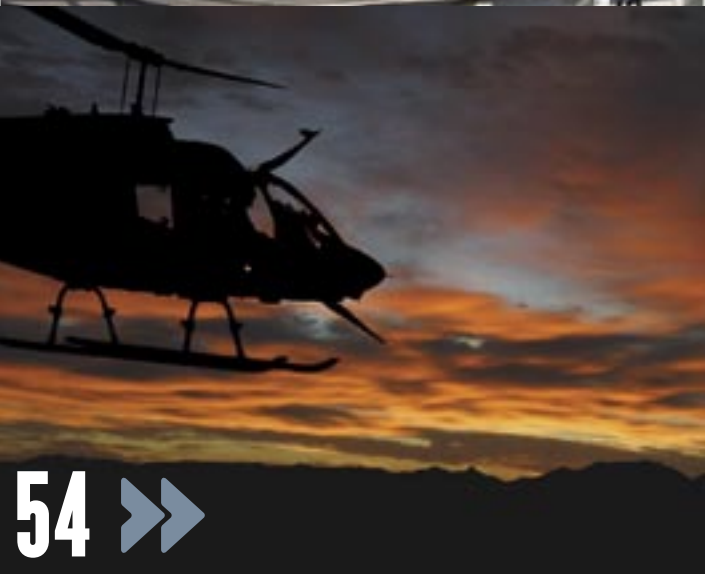
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PGWA01

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B

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C



D



C

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I am now more proud than ever to serve as the Recruiting and Retention Commander for the South Dakota Army National Guard. This last year has been full of many recruiting and retention challenges, to say the least, but the rewards associated with managing a highly motivated group of recruiters and staff have never been more fully realized in any other position I have held in my military career. I am excited about the changes we are experiencing within the Guard and eager to capitalize on initiatives and ideas being generated from the grassroots level as we focus on keeping our ranks full of quality, motivated Soldiers.

The National Guard is a community-based force and has been since 1636. This fact alone sets us apart from the other military services and makes us unique in how we accomplish our missions. Our ranks are filled with Citizen-Soldiers who work, play, raise families, and serve their country in the communities surrounding their homes. In times of need, these Soldiers are the ones who instantly put their other priorities aside and answer the call, wherever and whenever needed. It is now imperative that every Soldier in our ranks understands this significant difference between the Guard and the other military services and tells the Guard story whenever possible.

There are several focal points that I contend need immediate emphasis and leadership as we continue to fill our ranks and maintain a ready, trained ARNG, executing missions at home and abroad:

Every Soldier Is a Recruiter - The best quality leads come from within the ranks. Satisfied, motivated Soldiers at all ranks should provide names of those individuals with whom they want to share their military experiences. Every Soldier has a "mission" to help achieve end-strength: each one of you should do your part and provide one prospective name to a recruiter by 30 September.

Become a Part of Your Community - Wear your uniform with pride and honor, hold a leadership position in a volunteer organization, coach an athletic team, speak at a community celebration, and provide a Guard briefing to a local organization. Tell America about the great things you do in uniform, both at home and abroad. ALL Soldiers, regardless of rank, can make a difference in this area - the Guard is counting on you to tell your story.

Network with Community Leaders - Join the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Optimists Club, and other civic organizations. Volunteering your time shows the public that you care and want to be involved in improving your community.

Assist Recruiters in the High Schools - Recruiters should know all school leaders, coaches, athletic directors and counselors. Accompanying recruiters to presentations has a positive impact on students and makes a difference in educating our young people about why you serve and what your job is in the Guard.

Organize and Train a "Unit Recruiting Team" - Assist unit leadership in identifying motivated and skilled Soldiers as unit recruiters and retention specialists. The proper skill set is critical to success as a recruiter/retainer, so pick these leaders wisely. Work hand-in-hand with full-time recruiters to identify quality leads and prospects for your unit.

Leaders Set the Tone - Encourage and motivate, provide vision and guidance, check attitude and pulse, demand accountability and responsibility of your Soldiers, and do not accept defeat in the recruiting, retention and attrition battles.



Relationship Management - Develop and nurture excellent working relationships between recruiters, unit leadership, community Centers Of Influence, school officials, parent organizations, businesses and government agencies. It takes a cohesive team, engaged in every facet of the community, to be successful.

Attitude - Look for positives in everything that you do. Leaders create a super-charged environment and stay focused on keeping the unit strong and full of quality, enthusiastic Soldiers. Young people want to become Soldiers and are joining our ranks today for all of the right reasons. Stay highly motivated!

Be a Proud Part of an Elite Team - The Guard has an unbelievable alumni. Our history is steeped in tradition. Use our present and past members to tell the Guard story to everyone who will listen. Be vocal about your membership in this elite, one-of-a-kind organization and encourage others to consider becoming members as well.

We are all serving our nation at a time of tremendous need. The National Guard must remain strong and ready for future missions, as it has done proudly for the last 368 years. Let's not settle for "the 80% solution" but instead "go for the gold." Be proud of your service, your affiliation with the Guard, and your vital contribution to this magnificent country. Never forget to thank your families often, as they are the unsung heroes behind us all—without them, we can not execute our missions. Do your part in keeping the National Guard ready and relevant—look at yourself and find another soldier just like you to fill your unit. "You Can" and "are" making a difference. Be proud to serve in the Guard—I am every day that I put on the uniform.

Tracy L. Settle
LTC, SDARNG
Recruiting and Retention Commander



“Where Did You Serve?”

As we talk with Soldiers and their families during the preparation of each issue of *GX*, someone inevitably asks us: “Where did you serve?” The answer usually surprises people. None of the four founders of *GX* ever served in the military.

Obviously, you can look at the masthead to the right and see that there are more than four of us that work on the magazine now. But of the full-time *GX* Team, only one person ever served in the Guard. The rest of us are, and always have been, civilians.

“Well, why do you do this?” is often the next question. It’s a good question, and it deserves a good answer, but frankly, it’s always been a bit difficult to put into words. How did a bunch of civilians end up producing a magazine for the Army National Guard?

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

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Published by Iostudio, LLC.

Snail Mail: GX Magazine
 c/o Iostudio, LLC
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 Nashville, TN 37203

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No responsibility can be accepted for manuscripts or photographs, solicited or unsolicited. All postal submissions should be accompanied by an SASE.

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ON THE COVER

Greg Biffle and the #16 National Guard Ford Taurus have been dominating the NASCAR Nextel Cup series this year. If you haven’t been watching, you’re missing all the action as drivers jockey to get into the Chase for the Cup, starting September 18. (p. 58)

“How did a bunch of civilians end up producing a magazine for the Army National Guard?”

Well, as we were putting together this issue’s feature, “Guard Families: A Proud Tradition of Service,” a funny thing happened. We always learn a lot about our readers every time we assemble an issue of *GX*, but this time, we learned quite a bit about our team.

We knew, of course, that one of our team has a husband deployed in Iraq. We didn’t know, however, that another team member’s father served 18 years in the Guard and retired from the Reserves as a LTC. Still another team member has a grandfather and great uncle who served this country in WWII despite the fact that their families were sent to the internment camps in California.

Even though we never set out to build the team this way, virtually every member of the *GX* team has an immediate family member who served, or is serving, our country. As it turns out, just in our small team of people, we can trace our military lineage back through every conflict at least to the Civil War.

Learning this about our team helped us to realize that even though we never served, we’re all part of the military family. You, our readers, have welcomed us into your families even as your loved ones risk everything to protect us at home. We hope that this magazine begins to repay, at least in some small way, the sacrifices of those that serve America now, and honors our family members who served our country in the past.

So, back to the question, “Why do you do this?”

I guess the simple answer is, “How could we do any less?”

The winner of GX's recent Southwest Airline Promotional drawing was SPC Justin Bullard of the 221st Military Intelligence BN, CO A, GAARNG. When we attempted to contact SPC Bullard with the good news, we learned that Justin had been killed in a tragic accident only a month before his 18th birthday and before shipping out for his training at the Defensive Language Institute in California. The letter we received from Tammy Bullard, Justin's mother, was so wonderful, moving, and thankfully, typical in it's description of how the Guard family takes care of it's own, that with Tammy's permission, we are reprinting part of it here. Tammy Bullard and Justin's sister, Scarlett, will use his airline tickets to visit the school in California from which Justin would have graduated, no doubt, with honors.

On March 24th, a woman going down the wrong side of the road with no headlights on, blew the candle out for my son, PFC Justin Bullard, and took away a soldier whom I feel would have been a true asset to the military.

But believe me, the United States Army takes care of their soldiers. The first person I called was Justin's recruiter. Justin thought so much of him and respected him immensely. And, of course, as soon as we knew Justin was gone, Sgt. Lashley came. I called the phone numbers to his unit that Justin had for emergencies. And of course, typical mom that I am, I didn't really abide by the chain of command rule. So, the first person I got was the Commanding Officer. But that was the right man to get a hold of.

The Commanding Officer put everyone in place and by the next day, I was assigned a Lieutenant to assist me and the Chaplain came as well. I was a single mom with six hundred dollars to my name and no way to bury my only son. But let me tell you, the National Guard stepped in and asked the funeral home to please allow me to go forth with my funeral arrangements. And they assured me that it would be alright.

Justin was buried with full military honors. They awarded Justin The Army Achievement Award. The men in his unit served as the pallbearers.

And every request that I made of the Army National Guard was fulfilled.

So with that story being told, I would like to say "thank you" to GX magazine for the opportunity to tell about Justin and his service. You see, how I came upon this opportunity is by keeping my son's memory alive. Justin subscribed to GX, so the magazine still comes every month with "PFC Justin Bullard" on the cover which means a lot to me. Scarlett (Justin's sister) also enjoys reading the magazine. When the feature article on LTG H. Steven Blum appeared, it reminded me the kind letter he wrote to me after I lost Justin. So when I received the notice to renew with his last issue of GX, I went online to continue the subscription because, to me, that is part of keeping Justin alive, if only in memory.

With Highest Regards,
Tammy and Scarlett Bullard



WHERE CREDIT IS DUE

I, as the former commander of the 1165th MP Co, would like to identify the Guard units that were first outfitted with the CROWS systems, so that they might get the credit they deserve for testing new equipment in a combat environment. Four CROWS vehicles were delivered to the 168th MP BN (TNARNG) in early 2003 and further disseminated down to four MP Companies. Those companies were 1165th MP Co (ALARNG), 269th MP Co (TNARNG), 2175th MP Co (MOARNG), and 210th MP Co (NCARNG). It is a testament to the National Guard to have four National Guard MP Companies, under the supervision of a National Guard MP Battalion, test a new piece of equipment under the conditions that we faced. (Just a note: The CROWS is an exceptional piece of equipment and is definitely a combat multiplier.)

CPT Chris Butler
MP, Force Protection-OIC

UNEXPECTED HERO

My son, Robert, had been talking about going into the Army all throughout high school. I had mentioned this to a friend at work, and he directed me to a great Army recruiter, Sergeant Raymond.

My other son Phillip asked if he could go along for the ride. When we got to Robert's appointment, Phillip, having no intentions of joining, ended up taking the ASVAB test, joining the Guard and going to basic training in June of 1999. SPC Phillip L. Gossett is currently assigned to the 1-184 Infantry Division of the California National Guard, stationed in Iraq.

Our entire family is very proud of him. We always have encouraging words for him when we are fortunate enough to receive a phone call from him. It seems as though the fact that my son is fighting for our country always seems to come up, even in casual conversations, and we are always amazed at the response of support from people we don't even know. This warms our heart and makes us proud. I pray everyday for my son's safety. We are very blessed knowing how much Phillip loves his job. We hope all of his actions help to bring an end to all the chaos in the world.

Sincerely,
Nancy Gossett
A very proud mother



NEXT ISSUE:

HOMELAND SECURITY & AMERICA'S HOMETOWN ARMY

Photo by Landov/EPA/Jim Hollander



SOLDIERS BRING IRAQI FAMILY TO AMERICA

“This isn’t the end of the story. This is the beginning.”

AT LEFT: SPC April Rohrer embraces one of Mrs. M’s children after the family arrives in North Dakota. SPC Rohrer, a medic, cared for the family in Iraq.

Photo by Mark Chamberlain

By SGT Amy Dobler
141 ECB Unit PA Representative

Although the 141st Engineer Combat Battalion returned from its deployment to Iraq in February, the mission wasn’t complete for some Soldiers until May 20. Late that night, the rest of their family came home.

It was approaching midnight as a handful of Soldiers from B Company of the 141st Engineer Combat Battalion waited patiently at the Fargo Jet Center with Congressman Earl Pomeroy, representatives from Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota and some area media. A small Beechjet rolled to the front of the hangar. The group had worked tirelessly for months for this moment.

From the plane emerged “Mrs. M,” as she had come to be called, along with her seven young children. She was accompanied by CPT Grant Wilz, B Company’s third platoon leader, and SFC Shayne Beckert, third platoon sergeant.

The Soldiers left Iraq in February, a mere month after the children’s father, “Mr. M,” was shot more than 30 times by terrorists because he had been providing the 141st Soldiers with intelligence information. The family was scared. Mrs. M was pregnant. There was a \$10,000 bounty on the oldest boy, who had witnessed his father’s murder.

There also was a sincere promise—CPT Wilz told Mrs. M, “We’ll get you to America.”

CPT Wilz and SFC Beckert contacted Congressman Pomeroy on Jan. 18, while the soldiers were still in Iraq, to request his assistance. Pomeroy contacted Defense Deputy Secretary Richard Armitage as well as the Departments of Defense, State and Homeland Security. Department of Defense agreed to sponsor Significant Public Benefit Parole (SPBP) for the family. The status comes with no public assistance but would get the family to America.

Soon after receiving SPBP status, Pomeroy pulled in Lutheran Social Services of North Dakota to assist with the many hurdles the family would face once arriving in the U.S. – housing, health insurance, education, employment.

By April 18, the family had secured passports and was ready to leave Iraq after moving from house to house for weeks, in fear for their lives. The next morning, however, Mrs. M gave birth nearly six weeks earlier than expected. The baby would not be able to leave until a passport, Iraqi identification card and certificate of nationality were obtained.

The family was told they would need to travel back to their village to have the mayor sign the papers. This would have put their lives in extreme danger. Some phone calls and a clandestine arrangement for money transfer later, and Mrs. M was in line to get the baby’s papers.

As she stood in line April 30 with one of her young children, another tragedy struck. A bomb exploded nearby, sending shrapnel into the eye of her daughter. Ninety-five percent of the vision was lost in her eye, and there were worries about the risk of an infection. These worries prompted requests from Pomeroy’s office for assistance in bypassing all the paperwork requirements given the urgency of the situation.

By May 5, the family was escorted into the Green Zone, and the girl was treated the next day at an Army hospital there. By May 17, the family was able to fly from Iraq to Amman, Jordan, where they spent the night and completed an embassy interview. By May 20, they were on their way to the U.S.

SFC Beckert said the reality of the situation was starting to sink in. Pomeroy described himself as being emotionally “wrung out.” “This isn’t the end of the story,” he said. “This is the beginning of the story.”

Mrs. M referred to the day she entered the United States as her birthday—the beginning of a new life. **GX**

**HELP MRS. M’S FAMILY.
MAKE A DONATION AT:**

www.lssnd.org/htmls/donate.html

OUTSTANDING SOLDIERS HONORED

Photo courtesy of the National Guard Bureau



2005 ARNG OUTSTANDING SOLDIERS OF THE YEAR

● 1ST ARMY NORTH

Soldier: SPC Anthony Lechanski, Company B, 152nd Engineer Battalion, New York

NCO: SSG Adam Berg, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry, Massachusetts

● 1ST ARMY SOUTH

Soldier: SPC Stephon Flynn, 1163rd Medical Company, Kentucky

NCO: SFC Donald Harrod, 154th Regional Training Institute's Noncommissioned Officers Academy, Mississippi

● 1ST ARMY EAST

Soldier: SPC Mathew Woyansky, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 116th Field Artillery, Virginia

NCO: SSG Brian Morrow, Headquarters and Headquarter Company, 121st Engineer Battalion, Maryland

● 1ST ARMY WEST

Soldier: PFC Kyle Marti, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry, Minnesota

NCO: SGT Kohl Skalin, Detachment 1, Company C, 2nd Battalion, 136th Infantry, Minnesota

● 5TH ARMY EAST

Soldier: SPC Patrick Hart, Company A, 875th Engineer Battalion, Arkansas

NCO: SSG Kevin Taylor, 449th Personnel Service Detachment, Texas

● 5TH ARMY NORTHWEST

Soldier: SGT Daniel Iverson, 147th Army Band, South Dakota

NCO: SSG Eric Borah, 235th Military Police Company, South Dakota

● 5TH ARMY SOUTHWEST

Soldier: SPC Eugene Patton, Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, Colorado

NCO: SSG Keith Howard, 158th Service and Support Battalion, Arizona

By MSG Bob Haskell, NGB

SPC Stephon Flynn, a medic in the Kentucky Army Guard's 1163rd Medical Company in Greenville, and SSG Kevin Taylor, a squad leader in the 449th Personnel Service Detachment in Austin, Texas, were among 12 outstanding Soldiers and NCOs who were honored in early June near the nation's capital. Two other honorees could not attend.

Eight of them, including SPC Flynn, made the grade as the best Soldiers and NCOs in the 1st U.S. Army's four regions.

Six, including SSG Taylor, are the top Soldiers and NCOs in the

5th Army's three regions.

Some of the Soldiers have served in Korea, Bosnia, Kuwait or Iraq. All of them have proven themselves as quality Soldiers, said CSM John Gipe who is taking on the duties of Command Sergeant Major for the Army National Guard, the senior enlisted advisor for the Army Guard director.

"I don't think people realize what a significant accomplishment it is to be selected as one of the top Soldiers and NCOs of the year from the ARNG's 305,000 enlisted Soldiers. That is huge," said CSM Gipe.

"This really does reflect the best Soldiers that we have because of the way the competition is held. These guys work their tails off to get here," CSM Gipe added.

The Soldiers visited with LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, and the chief of staff and sergeant major of the Army. They were presented many awards and gifts during ceremonies hosted by Army Guard officials and the National Guard's enlisted association. They were toasted again during a formal banquet on June 9.

"Coming here is a great honor for me, but what I've done is nothing compared to what our Soldiers are doing in Iraq and Afghanistan," SPC Flynn said. "They're the ones who deserve the honors."

SPC Flynn, 29, a military medic, is studying journalism at the University of Kentucky. He joined the KYARNG in 2002 after

his psychology professor, a captain in the Kentucky Guard, "put me in touch with a recruiter," SPC Flynn said.

"I was looking for a little bit of discipline, some direction, a way to help me focus," said SPC Flynn. "Joining the Guard has put things into perspective," he explained.

SSG Taylor, 36, served in the active Army for 10 years, including a tour in Korea, before joining the TXARNG in 1998. He was mobilized in March 2003 for Operation Iraqi Freedom and served in Kuwait.

He has been an educator for nine years, and he has been the coordinator of the Disciplinary Alternative Education Program in Belton, Texas, for the past year. **GX**

"This really does reflect the best Soldiers that we have ..."

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A LASTING LEGACY

THE ARNG HONORS LTG ROGER SCHULTZ AT HIS RETIREMENT



The American Military said farewell to one of its most respected and successful leaders on May 24, when LTG Roger Schultz stepped down as Director of the Army National Guard (DARNG), after seven years. His retirement ends not only the longest run for an DARNG but one of the most tumultuous ones, as well. The Guard, along with the rest of the military, has faced one of the most challenging periods in its history over the last seven years. With the 9-11 attacks and the ensuing war in Iraq, LTG Schultz rose to the occasion by providing decisive, skillful leadership to the men and women of the Guard. "Roger Schultz is the best buddy that anybody in this organization could ever share a foxhole with in times of trouble," LTG H Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, told a room packed with hundreds of well-wishers at the Army Guard's

Readiness Center on May 24. "He is perhaps the best Director of the Army National Guard we've ever had. He has been steadfast during some very tough times."

LTG Blum's sentiments echo the feelings of many who have served under this valiant leader. SGT Chad Barnhart, a wounded Guard Soldier whom Schultz met during one of his many visits to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, summed it up this way, "He's a great guy and a great leader who really cares about the Soldiers. It shows the Soldiers at my level that people care at his level." Barnhart was among several wounded Guard Soldiers who were given VIP treatment at the send-off ceremony for LTG Schultz.

As is the case with most great men, beside him is a great woman. Barbara Schultz has not only been a source of strength and support for her husband, but for many Guard families, as well. As a driving force behind the Guard's many family support programs, she has touched the lives of hundreds of men, women and children that have dealt with the deployment of their loved ones. "We are saying goodbye to an extraordinary couple who have led our organization through extraordinary times. There's not one person in this room whose life has not been made better for having known these two people," LTG Blum gratefully acknowledged.

Roger Schultz's military career began in

"He is perhaps the best director of the Army National Guard we've ever had."

— LTG H Steven Blum

1963 when he joined the Iowa Army National Guard, spending four years as an enlisted Soldier before receiving a commission as a Lieutenant in 1967. His first true test followed soon after, when he volunteered for combat in Vietnam. Schultz served as a platoon leader with the 22nd Infantry Battalion, 25th Infantry Division, earning both a Silver and Bronze Star, a Combat Infantry Badge plus two Purple Hearts during his tour. Upon returning from duty in Vietnam, Schultz served as a Company Commander, a Battalion Commander, a Brigade Commander, Deputy Chief of Staff Operations, Chief of Staff, and finally Deputy Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard. LTG Schultz served as the

Deputy Director for Military Support (DOMS) on the Department of the Army Staff and later was selected to serve as the Director of the Army National Guard. Upon his final promotion on June 13, 2001, Schultz became the only Guardsman mobilized for the Vietnam War, as well as the first DARNG, to obtain the three-star rank of Lieutenant General.

LTG Roger Schultz has spent his career tirelessly laboring for the betterment of his country and his Guard. At a time when the role of the National Guard is of critical importance to the success of the United States military as a whole, he leaves a legacy that helps to ensure continued cooperation and progress. "He's helped bring us to the point in our Army's history where the relationship between the States and the National Guard Bureau and the active Army is the best it's ever been," says GEN Peter

Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff.

In his parting words, Schultz maintained his trademark level of humility, focusing on the dedication and sacrifice of the Soldiers whom he has led for so long, rather than himself, "I thank the Soldiers who responded to the 9/11 attacks who didn't have any orders. They just responded. I thank the 213,220 Soldiers who have responded to the nation's call—through mobilization. I thank the 76,780 Soldiers who are serving today. I think about the 241 Soldiers who have given their lives; the last full measure." **GX**

SCOUT PLATOON COMBATS INSURGENTS IN BABIL PROVINCE

Photos by PFC Matthew Clifton



AT LEFT: Members of 155th BCT, MSARNG provide forward security while fellow soldiers prepare to enter a village in Iskandariya, Iraq.

Brigade Combat Team, Mississippi Army National Guard.

"We assess the morale of the people and discuss any of their needs or grievances, then try to correct the problem as best as we can," SPC Rich added.

The platoon conducts these patrols on an average of once a day and sometimes more. Most of the time, the patrols are a combination of the two, said 2LT Kenneth Anthony, platoon leader.

He recalled his first mission with Scout Platoon when they had to travel to a Babil Province city to help secure an Iraqi police station before and during the Jan. 30 Iraqi elections.

"The police at the station had never patrolled the area, so we worked with them, and now they have check points set up and are actively policing their area," 2LT Anthony said. "We have been able to decrease our presence in that city because the police are doing the majority of the security there,"

The platoon learns a lot about tolerance towards other people through the missions it conducts. They also know what can happen when certain people refuse to be tolerant, 2LT Anthony continued.

"The only difference between many of these locals is a small religious one," 2LT Anthony said. "However, that miniscule difference can be the cause of a lot of problems when certain people or groups refuse to be tolerant."

He remembers seeing a child who was shot in the arm by an insurgent and realizing just how unfortunate some of the people in Iraq are. The child was put in unnecessary danger just because of where he lived and what he believed, SPC Rich added.

Most towns are very friendly to the platoon, but there are a few towns that are extremely unwelcoming. When he goes into one of those towns, every part of his body is on alert, SPC Rich said.

"In situations like those you have to be overly suspicious of everything and everyone,

even the kids," SPC Rich said. "In our training, we were taught how to recognize and handle situations like those." In those circumstances, SPC Rich added, "everybody knows what to do and does his or her job proficiently."

"When you see the misfortune of the people here, it makes your own problems seem insignificant," SPC Rich said. "And that makes you want to help them even more."

Most of the people the platoon visits are happy to see them in their towns and help the platoon by giving them information about insurgent activity, SPC Rich said.

The information the platoon receives from locals is crucial in leading to the detainment

"In our training, we were taught how to recognize and handle situations..."

- SPC Roger Rich, driver, 1st Battalion, 155th BCT, MSARNG

and arrests of insurgents who are trying to do harm to soldiers and civilians, SPC Rich said. "We see a lot of insurgents put away as a result of what we are doing and the information given to us by citizens."

"Our biggest threat while on the road is improvised explosive devices," 2LT Anthony said. "My soldiers aren't out here trying to be heroes, but they have a job to do and that is exactly what they are doing. They know their training and maintain the standard every day, making sure they stay safe and do their part to ensure the security of this area." **GX**

**By U.S. Army PFC Matthew Clifton
Multinational Corps-Iraq**

The U.S. soldiers of Scout Platoon are routinely given the task of hunting down and capturing insurgents while providing escorts for civil affairs and psychological operations teams at the same time.

The platoon has hands-on experience when it comes to combating insurgents as well as building a positive rapport between themselves and local civilians, said SPC Roger Rich, driver, Scout Platoon, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 155th



SGLI INCREASES TO \$400,000

Courtesy of the National Guard Bureau

How Much Will SGLI Increase?

The maximum level of Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance coverage will be increased from \$250,000 to \$400,000 on September 1, 2005.

Who Will Be Affected?

Anyone in service on September 1, 2005, will have his or her coverage increased to \$400,000, even if he or she previously declined or elected lesser coverage. If servicemembers still desire no coverage or less than the maximum, he or she will have to go to their Personnel Office and re-elect no coverage or less than the maximum.

What Coverage Amounts Will Be Available?

Servicemembers can only elect coverage in increments of \$50,000. Previously, members could elect coverage in increments of \$10,000. Therefore, the only SGLI coverage amounts available will be:

\$50,000	\$250,000
\$100,000	\$300,000
\$150,000	\$350,000
\$200,000	\$400,000

How Will The Increase Affect VGLI members?

Members in the VGLI Program before September 1, 2005, will not be affected. However, all separating servicemembers covered under SGLI on or after September 1, 2005, in an amount greater than \$250,000 will be able to convert to VGLI at the new higher level.

How Much Will The Additional Coverage Cost?

The premium rates for SGLI coverage will remain the same. Currently, the rate is 6.5 cents per \$1,000 per month, or \$16.25 per month for \$250,000. Therefore, if a member elects the new maximum coverage of \$400,000, they will pay \$26.00 per month.

Will Certain Servicemembers Receive Free Coverage?

SGLI members serving in areas or operations designated by the Secretary of Defense as combat operations or zones of combat will have the premiums for \$150,000 of coverage paid for by the Department of Defense. This is only while they are serving in designated areas or operations. Once they are no longer serving in such an area, they will once again have to pay the premiums themselves.

Will The Increase Be Retroactive To A Specific Date?

Yes. The Department of Defense will be paying a death gratuity of \$150,000 for deaths that occurred in specified combat conditions on or after October 7, 2001, but before September 1, 2005, or were incurred in the theater of operations of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. This gratuity is in addition to the existing Department of Defense death gratuity that is increasing from \$12,420 to \$100,000 for the same group of servicemembers. **GX**

SSG LESLEE MARK ARAUJO

209TH REGIMENT FWD 2(RTI)
CAMP ASHLAND NE
TAG-ANA S-4/53RD INFANTRY BRIGADE



AGE: 50
SERVICE: 12 years,
NEARNG
EDUCATION:
Undergraduate and
Master's Degree in
Education
DEPLOYMENTS:
April 2005, currently
at Camp Shelby, MS.
Headed to Afghanistan.

“These are exceptional times that require exceptional sacrifices. I am proud and thankful to be able to give something back to my country.”

How did you feel about your service after returning home?

I already feel proud of what we have done thus far and look forward to completing our mission with honor.

Why did you join the Guard?

I was in the U.S. Naval Reserve and not satisfied with what I was doing. I met a 1SG from an ARNG unit at my civilian job who said he knew of a better opportunity. He was right!

If you could tell someone who is considering joining the Guard one thing, what would it be?

This is a great sacrifice! But these are exceptional times that require exceptional sacrifices. Therefore, I am proud and thankful to be able to give something back to my country for all the blessings and privileges I have enjoyed all my life. **GX**

HOMETOWN: OMAHA, NE
FAMILY MILITARY HISTORY:
Father awarded the CIB, bronze star with V device, and the Purple Heart, during WWII.

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



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



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www.VirtualArmory.com

UTARNG HOSTS JUNIOR PATRIOT DAY



By 2LT Tresa Morris,
128th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Local high school and college students had the opportunity on May 14 to have a little taste of life in the Utah Army National Guard at Junior Patriot Day, held at Camp Williams, UT.

The event, sponsored by the 115th Engineers, was intended to let the community know a little more about what the Guard does, provide resources for those wanting to learn more and to have fun.

The day's activities ranged from a ride in a humvee to weapons simulators to a Leadership Reaction Course (LRC).

Those who turned out were treated to a beautiful, sunny spring day and a delicious lunch by the Camp Williams swimming pool.

Recruiters stood by to answer questions that any of the visitors had about the National Guard and the career opportunities it offers.

The LRC was a highlight for many. The obstacle course was designed to test

Kids learn how to work as a team on the obstacle course. Photos courtesy UTARNG PAO

leadership skills and to help build teamwork. Participants quickly realized that without a plan and everyone's involvement, their team's mission would quickly fail.

This year's Junior Patriot Day drew 75 visitors, quite an increase from last year's total of 20. SPC Day, who helped organize the event, felt that the event went very well and was pleased with the positive feedback given by the public. "It was a great opportunity to make the public familiar with the Guard and what we do," SPC Day said. **GX**

"It was a great opportunity to make the public familiar with the Guard and what we do."



LTG VAUGHN NEW ARNG DIRECTOR



ABOVE: LTG Clyde A. Vaughn receives his third star. Carolyn, LTG Vaughn's wife, and GEN Richard A. Cody, vice chief of Staff, pin on the new rank. Photo by SFC Tom Roberts

Courtesy of the National Guard Bureau

A veteran of more than 30 years of military service, LTG Clyde A. Vaughn assumed the duties as the 18th Director of the Army National Guard (DARNG) at the Pentagon June 15. President George W. Bush nominated him for the post April 27. The U.S. Senate approved the choice on May 26.

The new assignment earns LTG Vaughn a promotion to lieutenant general and leadership of the nation's more than 331,000 Army National Guard soldiers based in nearly 3,400 communities across the country.

LTG Vaughn has served as assistant for National Guard Matters to GEN Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, since Nov. 10, 2003. Previously, he had been deputy director of the Army Guard since September 2002. He was the U.S. Army's

deputy director for operations, readiness and mobilization for 31 months before that.

"Clyde Vaughn is the right man at the right time to lead the Army Guard in the Global War on Terror," said LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

LTG Vaughn was commissioned through the Missouri Army National Guard Officer Candidate School Program in 1974. He is a graduate of the United States Army War College. LTG Vaughn holds a bachelor's degree in education and a master's in public administration. His decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, four awards of the Legion of Merit and five Meritorious Service Medals.

LTG Vaughn replaces LTG Roger C. Schultz who became the Army National Guard Director in June 1998. LTG Schultz ended his seven-year tour of duty on May 24. **GX**



HELPING STUDENTS IN KOSOVO:

A GUARD DAUGHTER REFLECTS

By Erin Dickerson

It was the end of the first day of my four years as a high school student. I was barely 14, and my high school of just under 2,000 students felt to me like the hectic streets of New York. Everything had changed, except my Dad. I felt a bit silly, but I clung to his hand for reassurance as we wandered the aisle of an OfficeMax looking for school supplies. Little did I know that just a few months later, I would be back in OfficeMax, alone this time, and buying things for kids my father was helping thousands of miles away in the war-torn country of Kosovo.

Three weeks into high school, things were finally starting to feel normal again when my father threw off any notion I had of stability. We were standing in the living room when Daddy told me his Guard unit was being deployed to Kosovo. I remember staring at him while my mind tried to make sense of the words he had just said.

That October, I hugged my father goodbye the day of his birthday. I wouldn't see him again until the end of May. My mother and I stood proud when we watched him go.

Calls were few and far between. There was a delay between when one person said something and the other person heard it. Phone conversations were awkward, and letters took weeks to get to their destination. We relied on email to communicate. Every night, I sat down at the computer and tried to put down everything I would have shared with him had he been home. He would write back as often as he could, encouraging me to do well in school, telling me about the strange new world he had been placed into, and reminding me that he loved me.

One day, I got a letter from Dad. In it he wrote of a school he had visited in Kosovo.

It was an integrated school with both ethnic-Albanian and Serbian children. These were the same two groups that had been at war just a few years ago. The school was run down and had been damaged during the fighting. The students had to share pencils worn down to nubs. Their books were missing pages.

At the end of the letter, my father reminded me how lucky I was. He told me never to take my American way of life for granted. Lastly, he asked me to use all that I had been given to help others.

I decided I would raise money from friends, family, and anyone else sympathetic, and use that money to purchase the school supplies

beautiful to study. It took four large boxes to package everything. Shipping was donated by the New Mexico National Guard.

Within a couple of weeks, Dad had received the boxes. The medevac unit's mission and weather delayed the delivery several weeks. Finally, on a blustery day in April, the supplies from New Mexico were delivered to about 100 grateful children in Kosovo—8,000 miles away.

When my father returned in May, I was able to watch a home video of the delivery. It was very moving watching children of every age listen to my father tell our story. I even cried when he held up a picture of me.

A tour of the school showed just how bad conditions were. The plaster was falling off the walls and doors hung off the hinges. The children, however, looked so hopeful and full of life.

“...my father reminded me how lucky I was. He told me never to take my way of life for granted, and to use all that I had been given to help others.”

for the students in Kosovo. I was at the computer, feverishly writing my father an email outlining my plan and asking if he could help on the receiving end.

I checked my email every 20 minutes until I got his reply. He loved the idea. He told me to start on my end, and he would take care of everything else.

For the next few weeks, I explained my project to anyone who would listen and gathered a few dollars here and there. Eventually, I had collected more than \$200 with which to buy school supplies. While I had been busy taking donations, my father had been working just as hard to figure out the logistics on his end.

I bought pens, pencils, paper, crayons, scissors, glue, chalk, a couple of calculators, and even some simple English books. I also included a few soccer balls, baseballs, and footballs for days when it was just too

This experience allowed us both to do something helpful and it brought us closer together than we were when we were living in the same house. **GX**



ABOVE LEFT: SSG Richard “Dick” Dickerson, a crew chief with the 717th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), in Kosovo with local students. BOTTOM RIGHT: SSG Dickerson with daughter, Erin. Photos courtesy of Erin Dickerson



IRAQI CITIZEN EXPOSES TERRORISTS AND SEVEN MUNITIONS CACHES

Ready-to-use ammunition for bomb making was confiscated near Hawijah, Iraq.
Photo courtesy of 116th BCT PAO

Courtesy of the 116th BCT PAO

An Iraqi citizen informed soldiers from 116th Brigade Combat Team about the location of terrorists and a cache site near Hawijah, Iraq.

The informant led members of Task Force 1-163rd Infantry to an area of multiple caches on the same day that several car bombs exploded simultaneously at several checkpoints in Hawijah. The soldiers arrived at the site and detained seven individuals and discovered seven cache sites.

"Iraqis are stepping forward to expose terrorists and their weapons of destruction," said BG Alan Gayhart, 116th BCT commander. "It is clear that Iraqis are not tolerating those who seek to destroy all that is good and decent."

The cache had approximately two 122mm rockets, one hundred 57mm rounds, one hundred 80mm rounds, 300 mortar rounds, 100 cans of small arms ammunition, ten 100-pound Russian bombs, a 55-gallon drum full of rocket propelled grenades (RPGs) and a

"It is clear that Iraqis are not tolerating those who seek to destroy all that is good and decent."

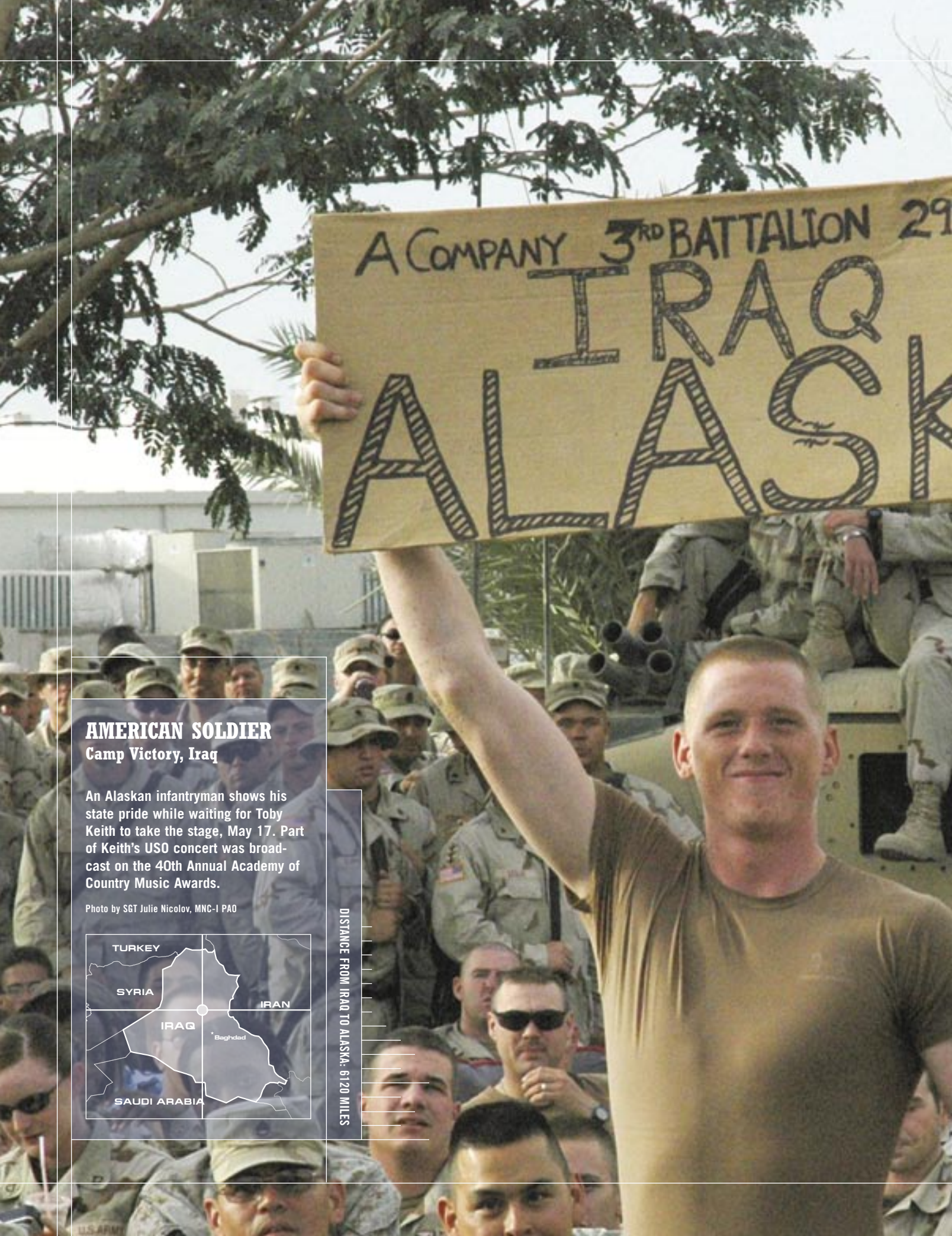
box of sights. According to TF 1-163 Infantry, these caches may have been the source material for recent car bombs that have killed innocent citizens in the Hawijah area.

The 116th BCT is playing an important role in helping make Iraq more secure. The unit's mission also includes assisting Iraq's new

government, supporting economic development and improving communications.

The 116th BCT includes headquarters and staff sections, two armor battalions, a mechanized infantry battalion, a support battalion, a field artillery battalion, an engineer battalion and various intelligence, signal, and specialized units. With component units from the states of Idaho, Oregon, Montana, Utah, North Dakota,

New Jersey and Maryland, the 116th BCT is one of several Army National Guard units that is deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. **GX**



AMERICAN SOLDIER Camp Victory, Iraq

An Alaskan infantryman shows his state pride while waiting for Toby Keith to take the stage, May 17. Part of Keith's USO concert was broadcast on the 40th Annual Academy of Country Music Awards.

Photo by SGT Julie Nicolov, MNC-I PAO



DISTANCE FROM IRAQ TO ALASKA: 6120 MILES



RECON

GREAT BALLS OF FIRE

Jisr Naft, Iraq

Howitzer BTY, 1/278th RCT of East TN unleashes an M-109A6 155 self-propelled howitzer on a fire mission near the village of Jisr Naft, Iraq on May 7. IEDS have decreased in the area since this mission.

Photo by SSG Russell Lee Klika, 278th RCT, TNARNG



DISTANCE FROM IRAQ TO TENNESSEE: 6900 MILES





RECON

MOVIN' OUT

Baghdad, Iraq

U.S. Army Task Force 1/156th (M), 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division, LAARNG moves out from Camp Liberty in Baghdad, Iraq, to confront anti-Iraqi forces, on June 15.

DoD photo by SSG Jorge A. Rodriguez, U.S. Air Force.
(Released)



DISTANCE FROM BATON ROUGE, LA TO BAGHDAD, IRAQ: 7177 MILES





RECON



HOUSTON, WE HAVE LANDED

Bagram, Afghanistan

Soldiers from Alpha Company, 3rd Battalion, 141st Infantry Regiment, TXARNG, pull security during a Quick Reaction Force exercise at East River Range near Bagram, Afghanistan on June 10.

Photo by SPC Harold Fields



DISTANCE FROM TEXAS TO AFGHANISTAN: 7888 MILES



DEPLOYMENT BUDGET CONCERNS?

The Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act in Plain English

By Amanda M. Baines

Before a foreign or domestic deployment, everyone serving in the Armed Forces worries about keeping his or her finances straight. Like most people, you probably have credit card payments, a car payment, insurance payments, and a home or apartment. You know that you have to make arrangements and keep them all in line, even from abroad, or pay the penalties.

What you may not have known is that The Servicemembers' Civil Relief Act (SCRA) has been expanded in the last several years to help Guard members and their families. Immediately before a deployment, the SCRA may offer some convenient solutions for solving some daunting logistical problems.

Remember: none of these benefits are a license to spend or default on any of your obligations, but these safeguards will help protect you and your family from financial trouble while you are deployed. Remember to check with your respective lenders to be sure that you are adhering to all the rules; loopholes may exist. Also remember that, to be allowed, many of these benefits must be requested in writing.

The complete SCRA and a simplified explanation of all the legal terminology is available online at <http://usmilitary.about.com/od/sscra>

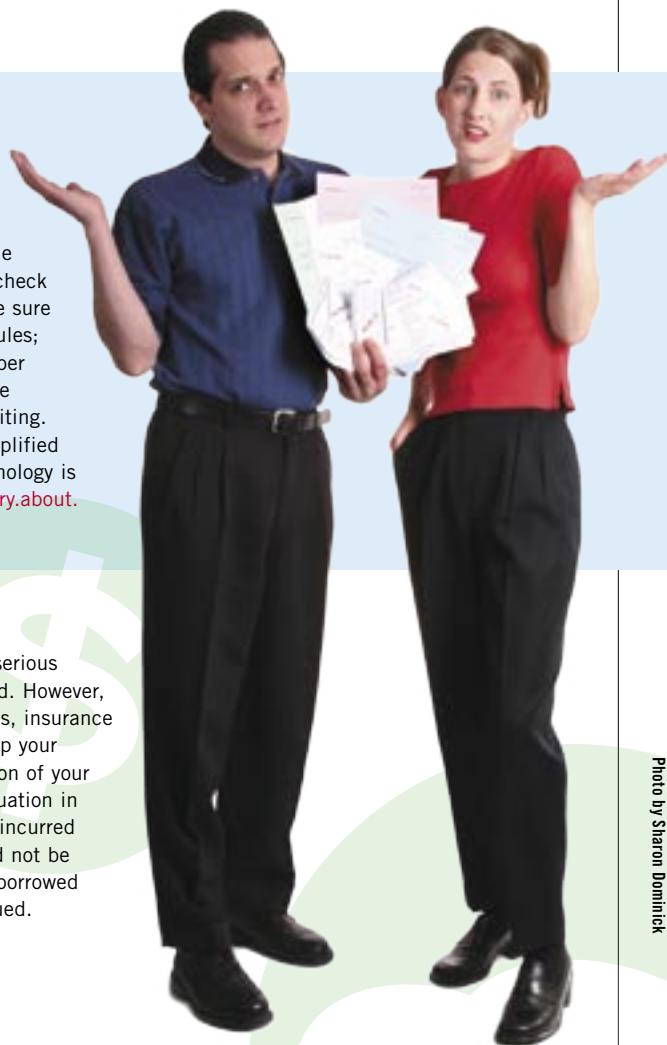


Photo by Sharon Dominick

Home Leases

When you are activated and leave the state or the country, your family and your home stay behind. Most states have required military clauses on all leases of property, allowing a servicemember a "get out of lease free" card when he or she is called up or has to make a move to another duty station. These clauses guarantee that if you give your landlord 30-days' notice, you can be released from your lease obligations.

Because not all states had these permissions required of lease agreements, the SCRA was expanded to include all soldiers who must make a move or go on a deployment that lasts more than 90 days. This clause may be especially useful if you are a single Guard soldier and you decide it might be more economical to get out of your apartment and put your stuff in storage until you return home.

The SCRA does not excuse soldiers from paying rent during their deployments, but allows for the fact that military service can sometimes make the coordination of rent payments difficult. So long as your monthly lease payments on your home do not exceed \$2400, you and your family are protected until you take care of the matter in person. Landlords must obtain a court order to attempt eviction, and the court may suspend the eviction until you return home.

Interest Rates

Home loans and car loans are a serious obligation that cannot be deferred. However, while you are in active duty status, insurance companies and creditors must cap your interest rate at 6% for the duration of your service once informed of your situation in writing. This applies to all debts incurred prior to your activation and would not be applied to purchases made with borrowed money after your orders were issued.

Delay of Court Hearings

If you are involved in litigation and are unable to appear in court because of military service or deployment, proceedings can be postponed 90 days or more upon request. Because of paper-trail requirements, this request must be made in writing. Your request should also provide a date when you would be able to attend court and include an additional letter from your commanding officer explaining the reasons your duties do not allow you to leave and attend court.

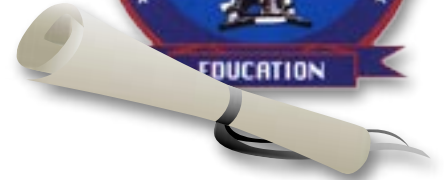
Car Leases

When planning a budget before a deployment, lease agreements on automobiles can be especially burdensome. You're going to a place where you can't drive your car, and it might feel like you're just flushing your money down the drain!

Under the SCRA, pre-service automobile leases (meaning a car leased before your orders were issued) may be cancelled if your active duty orders are issued for 180 days or more. All details should be ironed out with your lease company, in writing, at least 30 days prior to your deployment. **GX**

EDUCATION SUPPORT CENTER

EARN YOUR DEGREE



The Army National Guard offers excellent educational benefits, but sometimes navigating through all of the paperwork can be a bit daunting. Never fear, the Guard is here to help.

The Education Support Center, a service of the Professional Education Center (PEC), is just what you need. At the center, educational counselors will help you assess your current status and put together a college degree plan that is tailored to meet your educational goals. In addition, they will answer your questions about financial aid, tuition assistance and college degree requirements.

The Education Support Center offers over 700 college degree programs from over 30 different colleges.

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WHO QUALIFIES?

ARNG Soldiers and their spouses as well as Guard civilian employees.



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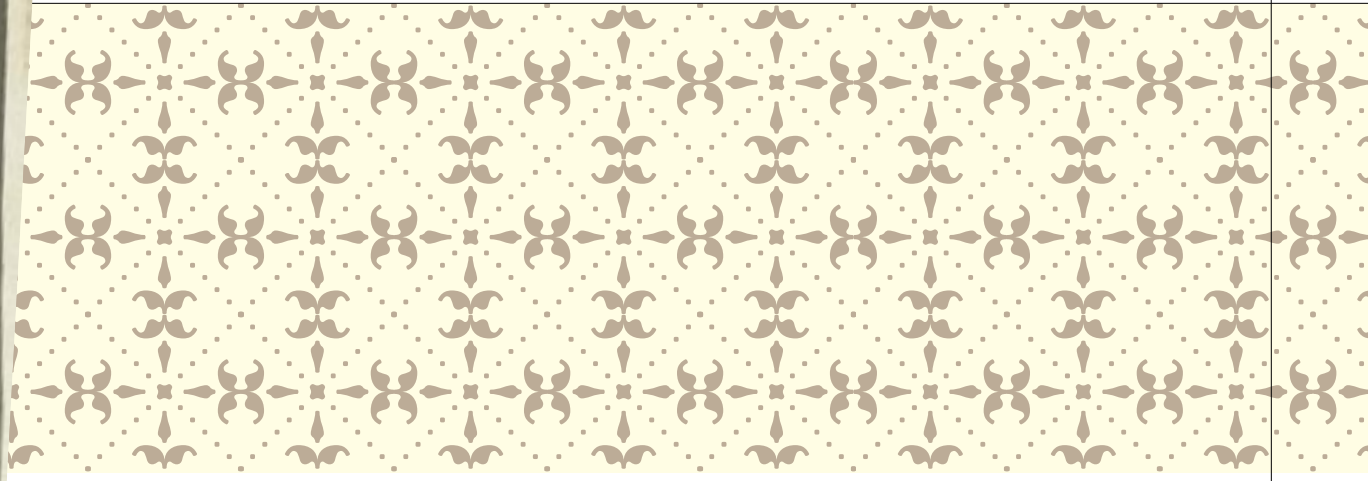


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1943





Guard FAMILIES

A PROUD TRADITION OF SERVICE

By Jason West

Photos courtesy the families except where indicated.

Service is a family value, at least for Guard Families. This virtue appears to be most closely tied to gratitude, but there is something else required for gratitude to become service. After all, many Americans are grateful for the freedoms they have, but there are still challenges to getting enough feet into boots. The letters written by Guard Soldiers to tell about their old and new family traditions of service spoke of the drive to join coming from a combination of gratitude for the freedoms our nation offers and an awareness that these freedoms did not come without a price and cannot be maintained without continued effort.

Not one of the hundreds of letters told of a pressure to serve. Parents raising their children spoke of teaching respect and appreciation, but ultimately trusting and supporting whatever direction their child chose. Interestingly, this was the case for both military and non-military families whose children joined. The parents of service members who wrote expressed understandable concern for their child's safety but ultimately expressed pride.

Pride, in both the current generation of Soldiers and all those who have come before, runs deep in Guard Families. Whereas most Soldiers are hesitant to speak out about their own service, no such modesty impairs their ability to share the glory of their relatives or children. Apart from a few genealogy buffs, most Soldiers who wrote couldn't give details on the service of more than one or two generations, but they spoke with pride of family tales extending at least as far back as the Civil War and often to the Revolution.

Every Guard Soldier and every Guard Family, whether starting a new tradition or maintaining a centuries-old heritage, is heir to the great legacy of the Army National Guard. By joining the Guard, by vowing to protect and serve your nation and your state, you have become a part of a much larger lineage. Everyone who makes the Guard their family can look back at their forebears who, since December 13, 1636, have risen to overcome every threat that has confronted our nation. ►►



the BACON family

Bronze Star recipient, SFC Charles Bacon was followed into the service by all three of his children. All four Bacons joined the enlisted ranks of the SDARNG. Although one son has moved into active duty and another is now in the WAARNG, at one point last year, they were all simultaneously deployed to the Middle East. SFC Bacon's three children are SSG Charles Bacon II (10th Group Special Forces), SGT Kaye Bacon (727th Transportation Company), and SPC William Bacon II (181st Support Co./81st Armored Brigade out of Seattle, WA).

Kim Disbro was in a bad marriage and looking for a way out. She wanted to be able to provide for her two children without state assistance and knew she would have to get tough to handle life as a single parent. Despite the fact that she came from a non-military family, the Guard offered her the perfect opportunity to accomplish all her goals. Despite her family's initial skepticism, she became a Soldier. After 16 years in the Guard, 15 of them ADSW, SFC Disbro feels that joining the Guard, "was the best thing I could have done for my future."

Her example was so strong that her daughter Nikki has followed her into the service, completing Air Force basic training on April 28 of this year. SFC Disbro knows the risks of service but says, "I believe in what I do, I believe in my daughter, and that is how military families do what they have to do."

the DISBRO family



the OGREN family

Three generations of Ogrens have served their nation and their state in the NDARNG. CPL Merritt Ogren began the tradition in 1937, later entering active service from 1941 to 1945, serving in the Pacific theater. His son, Corbley Ogren, continued the tradition by joining the NDARNG in 1966. He retired after 39 years with the rank of SFC, most recently having been mobilized for a year in support of the OAF mission to the Minot Air Force Base. PVT Julianna Ogren, Corbley's daughter, continues the tradition today, having completed basic training in March.

Family Trees, Roots of the Nation

THE PEQUOT INDIAN WAR

The Army National Guard marks its birth from the first regimental-level organization of militia troops on Dec. 13, 1636 in the Massachusetts Bay Colony to defend against the Pequot Indians. While there is no proof that SGT Edward Riggs was present on that day, his 9 times great-grandson 1LT Dan Jutson, NCARNG, provided ample evidence of his ancestor's heroic actions in the war against the Pequot. Drake's *History of Boston*, describes that on 13 July 1637, SGT Riggs saved the life of his "sorely wounded" lieutenant and several other men who had become separated from a larger force and come under attack from the Pequot. The text tells that Riggs and two other men "at great peril...slew diverse of Indians with their swords" and saved the besieged militiamen. Riggs was later cited for this "notable act of bravery."

REVOLUTIONARY WAR



PFC Christopher Lowe, GAARNG, traces his roots back at least to the revolutionary war and Brigadier General Hugh Mercer. Mercer, a Scotsman, immigrated to the colonies in the late 1740's, fleeing English persecution. Trained as a physician, he served as an officer in many conflicts, including one campaign as a Captain under the command of a young George

Washington. In 1775, he was a successful and well respected physician when he returned to military life as the Commander of the 3rd Virginia Regiment. In June 1776, at the request of George Washington, he was made a Brigadier General and appointed Surgeon-General of the Continental Army. He died on January 12, 1777, from wounds received at the Battle of Princeton where, despite being surrounded, he had refused to surrender and fell to British soldiers while defending himself with his sword.



the LATAILLE family

17-year-old Paul Lataille answered the call to duty on April 14, 2005, by joining the SCARNG—hardly surprising since his father and grandfather have over 50 years of combined service in the Guard. What was unusual was that Paul was sworn in by his grandfather, COL Ralph Lataille, Sr. (ret.). But this was not the first time Lataille, Sr. had the honor of swearing in one of his own. In 1981, Lataille swore in his son, now SFC Ralph Lataille, Jr. who looked on proudly as his son Paul took the oath.



the O'HARE family

LTC Brian O'Hare, Sr. is the third generation of O'Hare men to serve their nation and their state in the MAARNG. His grandfather, Joseph O'Hare, reached the rank of SGM, while his father retired as the Assistant Adjutant General in Massachusetts. Between them, the O'Hare's have over 100 years of service.

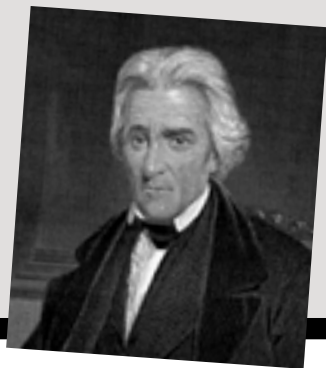


the BECKLER family

SSG Paula Beckler, SDARNG, may not have military roots that run as deep as some, but they have a remarkable breadth over the past few generations. SSG Beckler was immediately preceded in the service by her father, SSG Sidney J. Beckler USAR, SDARNG (ret.) and his sister, SSG Darlene M. Jangula USN, USNR, USAR (ret.). In addition, she counts 18 cousins, aunts and uncles who have served in virtually every branch of the U.S. military.

1812

SPC Jonathan Neeley, ALARNG, is the many times great-grandson of General Andrew Jackson. Old Hickory, as he was called because of his strength and steadfastness, was already a hero from his victories against an uprising by the Creek Indians when his nation called on him to help defeat the British in the War of 1812. It fell to Jackson to defend New Orleans against a British force of almost 6,000. Despite being outnumbered two to one, Jackson's troops managed to route the British in a humiliating defeat. U.S. troops inflicted over 2,000 casualties while losing only 13 men. The New Orleans citizens celebrated Jackson as a hero, not realizing that had the U.S. line not held, Jackson planned to burn the city to the ground rather than surrender it.



CIVIL WAR

CPT Ken Harris, FLARNG, wrote to tell us of his ancestor Samuel Stevens, who had just turned 20 when on June 24, 1862, he joined the 8th Independent Battery of the Massachusetts Light Artillery as a Private. Despite being present at the Second Battle of Bull Run, where the Union was defeated, the Battle at Antietam, and being the lone sentry posted at the armory the night of the Cooper Street Draft Riots, he survived to return home and become a Captain in the Somerville Fire Department.

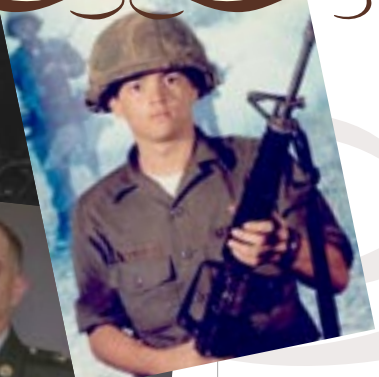
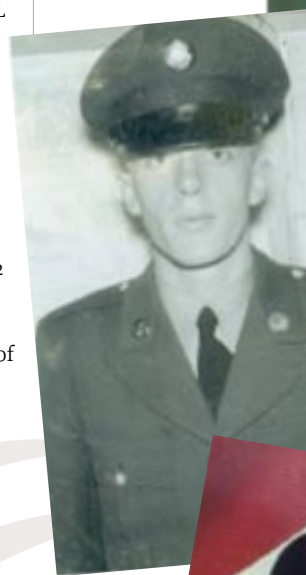




SFC Michael Booher, TNARNG, has a family legacy of service extending back to the founding of our nation, with ancestors participating in virtually every conflict since the revolution. The recent generations include, two uncles, SGTs Cecil and Claude Booher who served in WWII, his father CPL Chester E. Booher who served in Korea, a younger uncle, SGT Fred Deakins who was wounded in Vietnam. SFC Booher has also helped propagate the service tradition to

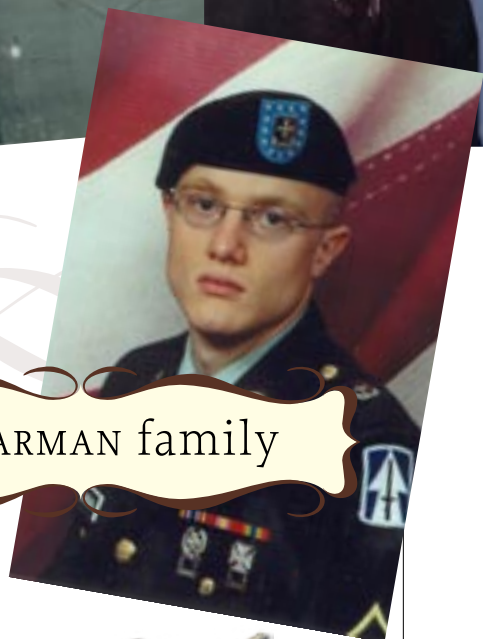
the BOOHER family

the next generation by enlisting one cousin, SGT Donovan Deakins in the TNARNG and supporting his son PV2 Seth Booher's decision to join the ARARNG where he is a member of a Black Hawk crew.



Abram Carman of the 113th Support Battalion INARNG carries on as the fourth generation of his family to serve. He is seen here with his predecessors: his great-grandfather, Alfred E. McCarty – Army, his grandfather, Alfred L. McCarty – Army, and his uncle, Alfred L. McCarty II – Navy.

the CARMAN family



THE BATTLE OF PUEBLA

Shawn McVicker, WAARNG, has a family history of military service that extends beyond the US into Mexico. His great-great-grandfather, General Felipe B. Berriozabal, led the Mexican Field Army Infantry Brigade against French troops who had been dispatched by Napoleon III in a thinly veiled effort to overthrow the Mexican government. On May 5th, 1862, between 2,000 and 4,000 Mexican troops, most of whom were hastily recruited militia met the 6,000+ French Regulars at the town of Puebla. Thanks in no small part to the French underestimating the militia soldiers' resolve, the Mexican forces were able to hold the town and force the French to retreat. This victory is still celebrated today as Cinco de Mayo.



WORLD WAR I

CPT Dennis Hammer (ret.), INARNG, told of his grandfather, Ganz Gilbert Hammer Sr., who enlisted and served in an Aero Balloon unit in WWI. Although few specifics are known about Ganz's service, the oft-forgotten record of these unusual units is very impressive. Fixed to a mobile ground unit, hydrogen-filled balloons would ascend as high as 4,000 ft to observe troop movements as far away as 40 miles. Soldiers in the balloons used a telegraph to communicate their observations to the ground unit. The balloons frequently came under fire from enemy aircraft and since the hydrogen that held them aloft also made them extremely flammable, the soldiers manning the craft would have to bail out with parachutes. Through the course of the war, balloon observers directed artillery fire at 316 targets such as troop concentrations and supply depots, noted 11,856 enemy airplane sightings, 1,113 instances of military traffic on railroads and roads, and 400 artillery batteries.



Stamp image courtesy of USPS



THESE SOLDIERS DON'T CALL THEMSELVES HEROES, THEY CALL THEMSELVES THE NATIONAL GUARD.

You hear it again and again: "I'm just doing my job." Today that job is helping people in need. Our soldiers don't do it for the ribbons or medals. They do it because it is their duty. The Army National Guard offers an exceptional

opportunity to serve, while providing extensive benefits in areas like career skills and college tuition reimbursement. To learn more, contact us today, by phone or on the web.

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YOU CAN

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visit us at
www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com

SPC MONICA SEM

CAARNG

I am the first in all my family to serve in the military. My family are refugees from Cambodia in search of a better life. I was the first born an American citizen... I joined the CA Army National Guard for many reasons. One is to stand up proudly for this country which gave many opportunities for my family and me. Another reason why I joined is that I wanted to be a part of an elite group where I know I can stand up with my head

Brother—Marine Corps, Sister—Air Force! We all felt that it was false to believe there could be peace without war! Freedom without those willing to defend it! And Good without Bad! We choose to follow our hearts and to serve! Our parents today display a flag in their yard and support our efforts to serve. Two years ago, my mother said that for the first time in her life, she felt patriotism from the pride of all her children's service!

the military was a bad thing. No one in my family had ever been in the military. I started talking to a friend in high school and he was telling me about the Guard and so I went and talked to a recruiter and now I am doing better in life. Every day I focus on what is important to me instead of going day-to-day, paycheck-to-paycheck. The military has given me a better outlook on life and I, to this very day, know that it is the best decision that I have made for my family and myself.

Starting a NEW TRADITION

high. When my parents found out I joined the National Guard, they were scared at first, but became really proud of me. They were proud because they know that those in uniform were the ones that helped them escape the war in Southeast Asia. Knowing that their daughter is going to become one of those soldiers just made them even more patriotic. My parents just recently found out I was battle rostered to go to Afghanistan this fall and, of course, any parent would be worried, but they understand that it is my duty and, with that in mind, they are being the most supportive parents ever.

SGT JOURDANA HAMILTON

MOARNG

My parents were the hippy generation, and raised us in what they "thought" was the right perspective, but my parents raised four children who ALL joined the service; Brother—Active Army, Me—Army Guard,

WHILE SOME FAMILIES
CONTINUE A PROUD LEGACY
OF SERVICE, MANY FAMILIES ARE
BEGINNING NEW STORIES AND
TRADITIONS OF THEIR OWN.

SPC PHILIP H. BURGESS

D Btry 2/180th Field Artillery Security Force,
Arizona Army National Guard

I know that taking time away from my family is hard on them. I know that the 18 months away from them is worth it because I am serving the great country that we live in. My four-year-old son knows that I am away making sure that he has a safe place to live. The National Guard is a great organization. I would tell everyone that if they are considering joining the armed forces that they should talk to a National Guard Recruiter... I grew up thinking that

PFC TERRY JAMES MORRIS

1st Bn 121st Field Artillery
WIARNG

I joined two weeks after my 17th birthday and haven't regretted any moment of it. I am the first in my family to join the military and receive the utmost respect for it all of the time. I cannot count how many times people will come up to me when in uniform and tell me how proud they are of me and of how thankful they are for what we do. Even if they don't support the reasons why we are at war, they still support our troops. My parents were leery of my decision at first, but... they realized that the benefits of being in the military outweigh everything else. The discipline, the honor, the integrity that would reinforce everything that I was taught as a child, will help me in every aspect of my life. I wouldn't know how to live my life without being in the Guard.



WORLD WAR II

LTC Kenneth Baldowski, GA PAO, shared the following story about his father: "During WWII, my father was a forward air control officer serving in the Pacific and making numerous landings on the islands of the Pacific with the Marines. One interesting experience occurred on the island of Ie Shima. My father was called in by the CO to accompany "a reporter" in the field. Little did he know at that time that the reporter was the legendary Ernie Pyle. They both boarded jeeps for a short ride across the island. It was as the jeeps rounded a trail in the jungle that the Japanese opened fire on my dad's jeep and that of Ernie Pyle. As you know, Pyle was mortally wounded. My dad and his driver swerved to the side of the trail, opened fire and killed the enemy."



Photo by Hilton Archive



“I am proud of my son and always will be. I will always support him in his service in the Guard. This is honorable service and it is something we are teaching *his* son.” – PAT STRONG, GUARD MOTHER

RICHARD GAMBINO, FATHER OF PFC GABE GAMBINO

Let me say up front that I'm certainly not looking to be a poster parent for the National Guard... every parent will have to make their own decisions. We had a difficult time with our decision and are still struggling with it (Gabe is still 17 and still in high school for another year)... but, I believe that the hardest part of being a parent is knowing when and how much to intervene.

When Gabe asked to join the NG early, we were absolutely against it. We felt he was too young to understand the scope of his decision although we recognized he was “at that age”... and he insisted. We compromised and told him that if he took the Test Battery [ASVAB] and passed with scores high enough to allow him most (if not all) occupations in the military, then we would consider it. Well, you know what happened.

It is our hope that his early entry will help him to become more focussed on completing his last year of high school as well as help him to gain a little perspective on life...

As far as how we feel about his service now? The deed is done... now, the best we can hope to do is to continue to provide him guidance over the next year to ensure that he thinks through his next decisions... but the boy isn't really a boy anymore.

Are we fearful that he could end up overseas in Iraq or Afghanistan? Damn right we are!... I understand that we maintain an army and train soldiers to do such work. The fact that I have reservations about our country's role in those places, those are neither here nor there now. My son is a Soldier and that's what Soldiers do. Hopefully, he'll do it honorably.

PAULA HICKMAN, MOTHER OF SPC DAVID WEHRER

Why do I think David chose to serve? Well, I guess one big part would be for his education. I've always told him about things that happened when I was in the Army. He was born an Army brat and I guess he'll always be one. It's just in his blood.

I have always thought this was a good choice. I hope I always feel that way. There are still those thoughts in the back of my mind though, like what if he doesn't make it back from Iraq? Will I still feel the same?

I think it has made him more independent than ever.... Stronger, mentally and physically. I guess that's part of being a Soldier, right?

PROUD PARENTS

I'm proud to know he is willing to fight for his country. I'm proud he loves and supports this country. I'm proud he wants to help others. I AM VERY PROUD HE'S MY SON!

PAT STRONG, MOTHER OF PFC KEN EDWARDS

All my son ever dreamed of was serving in the Army. He served 3 years active duty Army and is now serving in the Guard... As he grew, I asked him why he wanted to serve. He told me that he believes in the Army, what it stands for and the job. I told him he had to follow his dreams and do what he thought was right.

As a Guard parent, I know that he could be deployed, we have discussed it. I am still worried but I know my son is doing what he thinks is right. We don't dwell on what could happen. We are very open with his son about his enlistment and what could happen. As my grandson asks questions, we answer them honestly.

My son's service has given him a sense of purpose. He is a happier person.

I am proud of my son and always will be. I will always support him in his service in the Guard. This is honorable service and it is something we are teaching his son.

CHRIS VALLIO, FATHER OF PFC ANTONIO G. VALLIO

When he went into the Guard, I was a member and he was after a scholarship to become an officer. His mother and I were so proud of him for going into the Guard and getting the state service scholarship.

As are most parents, we were very concerned about the current war and his possible mobilization.

Tony has grown so fast from a boy to a man since he entered the Guard...



ABOVE: Kathy Shubert with son, SSG Nathaniel Shubert, and husband, Russell.

It is hard on all military families during long deployments, but we are very proud of our son and we know we will see him soon.

KATHY SHUBERT, MOTHER OF SSG NATHANIEL SHUBERT

We were behind him 100% and thought that [joining the Guard] was a good choice and it has done so much for him. Not so sure if he were to make that decision as an 18 yr old today, knowing where he would be headed, if we would have been as supportive. But it is still their choice and they have to do what they feel they have to do.

[We are concerned about] his safety. But then we have to be concerned about that no matter where we are or what we are doing. I have been a youth minister for 20 yrs and working with teenagers, work in a doctor's office and grew up in a town where drinking is #1 and with all of these things I know how precious life is and how fast it can be gone, no matter where we are.

It has given him a chance to be a leader and to feel good about himself and what he can do. The service has given him self assurance to know that he is a good person and is doing something good for others. **GX**

LOOKING TOWARD THE FUTURE

RALYN HILL TESTS SOLDIERS' READINESS



By SFC Howard J. Holmes

Whether a soldier serves one tour of duty, or becomes a career soldier, readiness and preparation are traits continually stressed.

These principles were also the focus for Illinois National Guard soldiers who participated in the Ralyn Hill Competition and Awards Ceremony held April 15–16 at Marseilles Training Center, in Marseilles, IL.

“The purpose of this event is to provide commanders an assessment of how prepared our soldiers are to attend Advanced Individual Training (AIT),” LTC Dan Fuhr, commander of the 3rd Battalion 129th Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP), 129th Regional Training Institute (RTI) said.

The soldiers participating in this event are basic training graduates preparing to attend AIT. “We needed to get these soldiers ready for AIT because Military Occupational Specialty (MOS)-qualified personnel greatly impacts overall state readiness. This event allowed us to gain a sound appreciation for

where the soldier is, and will allow us time to fix problems and shortcomings,” Fuhr said.

The Ralyn Hill event, named after Illinois native, Cpl. Ralyn Hill, a Medal of Honor recipient for acts of bravery during WWI,

“This event allowed us to gain a sound appreciation for where the soldier is, and will allow us time to fix problems and shortcomings.”

– LTC Dan Fuhr

was designed to evaluate how well soldiers performed certain common tasks, measured their personal readiness and performed on an Army physical fitness test (APFT).

The readiness evaluation, according to Fuhr, occurred by having soldiers move through different stations that assessed and identified problem areas such as height/weight and educational standards, and personal issues such as pending legal and medical situations.

Some of the common tasks performed and evaluated included tactics involving “proper techniques in shooting, moving, communicating and survival,” said Fuhr.

He explained that all events, with the exception of the APFT, were based on a go/no go basis, but the APFT was based on the individual's overall score and performance. “One of our biggest concerns is the APFT,” Fuhr said. “Since it is critical to the soldier's success at AIT, we wanted to focus on ensuring success in that area.” In an effort to ensure this success, Fuhr explained that the APFT scores carried a lot of weight for the competition.

The concept of the competition was designed to appraise how well units were meeting the needs of their soldiers. “The concept came about when senior leadership

began asking, 'how well, as a state, are we taking care of the unique needs of the soldier while he or she is in between basic training and AIT?'" explained Fuhr.

"General (Charles) Fleming (Assistant Adjutant General-Army) was concerned that we needed to ensure we were meeting the needs of the soldier," Fuhr said. In order to address Fleming's concerns, the leadership of the Recruiting and Retention Command, RTI and RSP came up with the Ralyn Hill plan. "We needed to come up with a way to ensure proper screening, common task knowledge and competition, and we all agreed this was the way. This allowed us to see how well the units were taking care of their soldiers."

Fuhr explained that, for him, the biggest disappointment of the event was seeing how

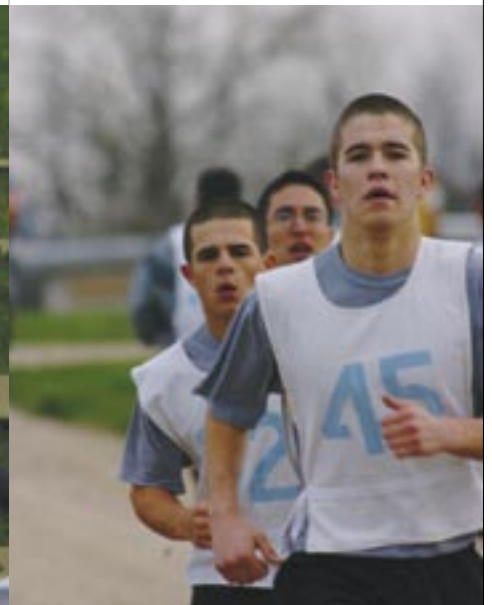
many soldiers were not prepared, but, "it is through this event that we are allowed enough time to correct and resolve the issues. We'll send the names of the soldiers with issues to the unit, and allow the unit the opportunity to take proper action to get the soldier prepared for training."

Fuhr discussed the state-wide team effort involved with coordinating and carrying out the competition. "This event was no small effort," he said. "We have about 78 support personnel who put this thing together, and every unit in the state participated in one way or another, either by supplying personnel or training equipment, it was truly a state-wide effort."

Not only was Fuhr proud of the participation from all the units, but the example of

professionalism by the soldiers who worked the event. "Both my soldiers and soldiers from other units carried themselves as professionals," Fuhr stated. "It was great to see the example being set for these young soldiers so they'll know how to act as they continue in their careers and future."

Though the future of the soldier is the reason for the event, what of the future of the event itself? "I expect this to become an annual spring event," Fuhr said. "It will occur in the spring because most of the soldiers will ship for training in the summer," he said, "and even though this was a significant investment, it will directly and positively affect our readiness, and that's what it's all about." **GX**



MOBILE EVENTS TEAM



Courtesy of the National Guard Bureau

SCHEDULE

Redmond, OR	8/3/2005
Lockport, NY	8/3/2005
Sturgis, SD	8/5/2005
Fall River, MA	8/12/2005
Springfield, IL	8/12/2005
Fairlea, WV	8/12/2005
Newport, TN	8/15/2005
Aberdeen, SD	8/16/2005

FOR MORE INFO, GO TO:
WWW.1-800-GO-GUARD.COM

The Mobile Events Team is the National Guard Bureau's aggressive new program to promote the Army National Guard (ARNG). Thirty-five soldiers were selected from a pool of over a hundred applicants for Active Duty for Special Work (ADSW) tours lasting a minimum of 139 days. These soldiers go from city to city deploying a recruiting lead-generation system working some of the largest events in the country.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

To generate recruiting leads for the ARNG through the use of seven mobile event systems, which provide maximum support to the ARNG accessions program.

WHAT IS THE SCHEDULE?

Seven teams are traveling the country on ADSW tours lasting a minimum of 139 days. Teams are normally deployed around the country for three weeks and then spend a week planning and training for their next deployment.

We are coming to a town near you very soon! Please check out the Mobile Event Team's schedule located on the www.1-800-GO-GUARD.com webpage to learn more.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: Team A of the National Guard Bureau's aggressive new lead generation program, the Mobile Events Teams, brought the #16 National Guard Ford Taurus to Cuyahoga Falls, OH, June 5th during the "Rocking for the Kids/Troops" celebration.

PFC Sean McKenna of Team A, with Randolph, Ohio resident Gary Bedard as Bedard performs 30 push-ups at the event.

1LT Amanda Clerc, Officer In Charge, Team A, Mobile Event Team at the event.

Photos by SPC Benjamin Cossel,
196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



RECRUIT SUSTAINMENT PROGRAM

OPERATION: RSP WARRIORS

YOUR MISSION:

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

Are you ready for the challenge?

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

★ **\$2000** ★

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

ARE YOU READY FOR BASIC?

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

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

Smart Recruiting

High-Tech Recruiting at the National Guard's Professional Education Center

Nestled in the green hills of North Little Rock, Arkansas, the Army National Guard's Professional Education Center (PEC) has been preparing Guard members to do their jobs with dedication and excellence for more than thirty years. One of the most important jobs this fine group does is training and preparing Recruiting and Retention personnel. In other words, they teach people the best ways to put applicants into boots.

This critical work is handled by the personnel of the PEC's Strength Maintenance Training Center (SMTC) under the guidance of CW3 Jahner and SGM Burdette. These men bring a whole-hearted and single-minded devotion to this very important task.

"You have to BELIEVE in what you are doing or the recruits will see right through you."

-MSG Wade,
Senior Instructor

Their mission, specifically, is to "...provide the highest qualified Recruiting and Retention NCOs capable of meeting the ARNG's strength maintenance mission, to train Recruiting and Retention NCOs to recruit the highest caliber individuals available, retain the best qualified Soldiers, and ensure units meet their assigned attrition rate." Additionally, SMTC is charged with the mission of providing Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) to ensure quality, tailored training teams to meet the needs of the Guard.

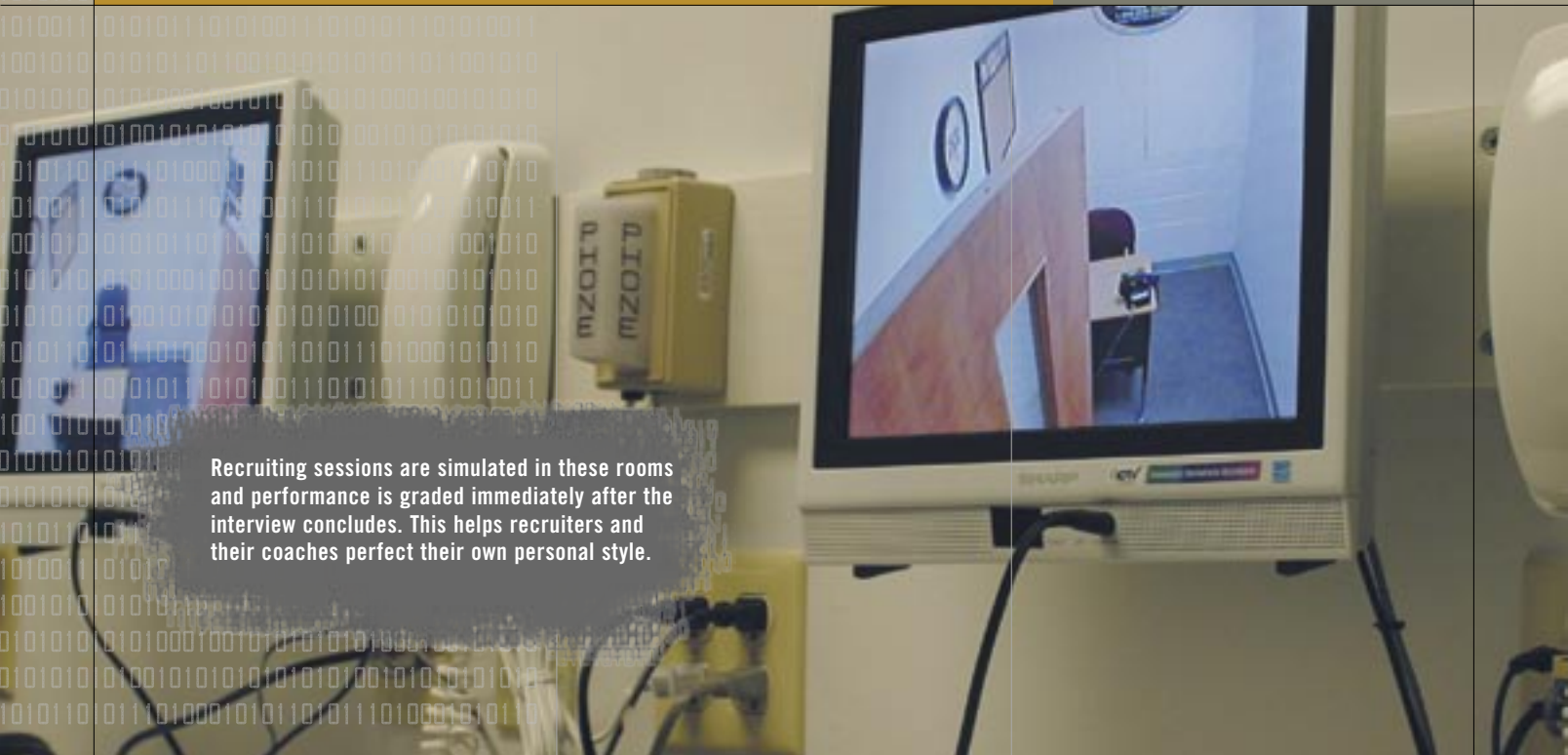
In a time of war, this is a tall order to say the least. But the SMTC crew is more than up to the challenge; they have completely reworked their Selling Skills lesson plans to better reflect the challenges a recruiter will face in a wartime environment. They have also stepped up their operational tempo to meet the increased need for recruiters and recruits. According to internal figures, in FY03 they trained a total of 5,472 Soldiers and over 4,330 in FY04. In FY05 they are on pace to train over 10,000 soldiers. This represents almost a 100% increase in the number of soldiers that moved through the SMTC in just two years.

Recruiting could be a difficult subject matter, but not according to the students attending the SMTC. SFC Morwood, a student, says that the staff of the SMTC made learning all of the eligibility regulations, an arduous task, both interesting and informative.

According to Senior Instructor MSG Wade, the SMTC staff works hard to keep the classroom material relevant, up to date and engaging. The training requires a five-week commitment, and Soldiers must remain focused and on target throughout that time. There is an enormous amount of information to cover, and if it were handled with rote memorization, the new recruiters would be burnt out long before they graduated.



Classrooms on closed-circuit television allow students a fully-featured distance education experience.



Recruiting sessions are simulated in these rooms and performance is graded immediately after the interview concludes. This helps recruiters and their coaches perfect their own personal style.

Instead, through the use of interesting lesson plans, innovative technology and focused feedback on the interpersonal skills that are “the bread and butter” of a good recruiter, the students emerge as a motivated, mission-oriented sales staff ready to take on their corner of the world.

Technology plays an important role in training a new recruiter. Before a student ever arrives at the SMTC, he or she is required to complete a week of training on an extremely sophisticated online learning system. Once on site, this same system continues to track a student’s progress through each block of instruction and examinations. An extensive set of labor-saving tools are included in the system to allow real-time evaluation of a student’s progress. After following a student from his or her initial online lessons through final exams, it even sends out all of the proper paperwork for processing.

In addition to this online system, the SMTC employs a suite of audio visual gear to record and analyze every facet of a recruiter’s performance. Mock recruiter’s offices have been built with integrated audio and video recording, allowing instant reviews of each individual’s performance. This kind of high-speed feedback greatly simplifies a new recruiter’s learning curve. Being able to see NFL-quality, super

slow-mo of a just-completed interview makes it painfully obvious where improvement is needed. This same technology is employed to refine telephone interview techniques and live presentation skills.

In the end, however, these systems are just tools. The mission must be accomplished by the Soldier. Recruiters are trained, contrary to popular opinion, not to just put feet in boots. They are trained to build relationships with



SGM Burdette emphasizes the importance of integrity in every action a recruiter takes.

potential recruits and to help them make the decision that is right for each individual. To do this, each recruiter must believe in his or her mission. MSG Wade says that the key is to “Sell from the heart! You have to believe in what you are doing or the recruits will see right through you.” According to another student, SSG Frias, the SMTC “teaches you to be more approachable. You show them (the recruit) who we are and you work to build a long-term relationship.”

This powerful combination of a mission-focused staff, motivated students, interesting lessons, highly leveraged technology and a burning faith in the Guard is having noticeable results. Last year, an instructor from the SMTC was awarded the prestigious award of TRADOC (Training and Doctrine Command) Instructor of the Year. In addition, the SMTC is the only Army Recruiting and Retention School to have received TRADOC certification.

A lot is being asked of this training facility. They have doubled the number of recruiters they train each year and are looking at the possibility of having to raise that operational tempo even higher. When asked if they could accomplish the mission with the staff on hand, MSG Wade just shrugged and nonchalantly responded, “We never ask if we can accomplish mission around here: we ask how.” **GX**

THE ROAD TO READINESS

THE NATIONAL GUARD PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION CENTER



**“Our unofficial slogan...
We make your units better.”**

- COL NEWTON, PEC COMMANDING OFFICER



Photos by Chris West

OPPOSITE PAGE, INSET: COL Newton, PEC Commanding Officer, addresses the OSAA Fixed Wing Convention. RIGHT: GEN Cody conducts a video conference with pilots at the convention. BELOW: The PEC provides a state-of-the-art fitness center for visiting soldiers to utilize.



The Army National Guard's Professional Education Center (PEC) has been improving unit readiness for over thirty years by providing ongoing training for Soldiers and ARNG civilian employees. PEC provides a wide variety of services including conferences, resident courses, online education, educational planning and counseling services.

COL Newton, the commanding officer of PEC, says that their official mission is "to train the ARNG full-time support force; increase the effectiveness, productivity, and readiness of the ARNG; and efficiently provide support, training assistance, and conference facilities in support of the National Guard..."

"Our unofficial slogan," he confides, "is 'We make your units better.'"

They accomplish this task with seemingly effortless professionalism, dedication and a focus on customer service. By handling all the logistical details such as billeting, dining, transportation, housecleaning, IT services and audiovisual support, the staff leaves the students free to focus on learning.

When a soldier comes to PEC, he or she can expect superb accommodations, manicured grounds, recreational facilities, a very well equipped fitness center and dining that is far too good to ever be called "chow."

PEC hosts five onsite training facilities that prepare full-time Guard employees (Title 32 as well as technicians) to handle logistic, organizational readiness, human resource, information technology and strength maintenance needs for their units. These include the Strength Maintenance Training Center (SMTC), the Installation Logistics and Environment Training Center (ILE), the Information Technology Training Center (ITTC), the Human

Resources and Readiness Training Center (HRRTC) and the Organizational Readiness Training Center (ORTC).

According to COL Newton, the complete and thorough training of their students is of critical importance to the ARNG. PEC students learn to do their jobs well so that the Soldiers they support can do theirs. In the event that a Soldier is worried about food, ammo, pay, benefits and all of the other necessities that PEC trains its students to handle, they won't be able to focus on their jobs or their training, and ultimately unit readiness will suffer. COL Newton and his team are making sure that doesn't happen.

In addition, PEC hosts a state-of-the-art convention and event facility which provides an exceptional learning environment for attendees. This professionally operated facility handles meetings and events of all sizes at a fraction of the cost of similar civilian venues.

PEC also provides extensive online learning tools allowing Soldiers the convenience of beginning their course work while still at home. These systems are cutting edge technology that allows precise monitoring of each step in a student's progress.

COL Newton and his team have earned a reputation for excellence throughout the National Guard. Each year, they host and train around 20,000 attendees and students. This is a far cry from the first class of thirty administration supply technicians studying in mobile trailers back in 1974. Despite the constant change and explosive growth that PEC has experienced, they have remained leaders in both training and event support. **GX**



VICTORY MAP

PUT YOURSELF IN THE PICTURE



CALIFORNIA

The State of California Dept. of Corporations and CA NG join forces to protect its Citizen-Soldiers, especially those returning from combat duty, from financial con artists. For example, Soldiers can contact TAPS (Troops Against Predatory Scams), which provides tips, background information, and helps identify “red flags” of strangers with an investment that they claim is a lucrative offer.

COLORADO

In Breckenridge, AK First Lady Nancy Murkowski and First Spouses from around the country launched a national outreach effort to raise awareness about the NG Youth ChalleNGe Program.

IOWA

700 Iowa Guard infantry soldiers have returned home after a year in Afghanistan. The troops are members of Task Force 168, the largest unit mobilized by the Iowa Army National Guard since World War II.

NEVADA

BG Cindy Kirkland became the NV NG’s 1st female Adjutant General, giving her command of 12 bases and about 3,100 troops.

MISSOURI

MO NG’s goal for its recruiters is two enlistees each month. SFC Doug Johnson hit his year’s goal—24 enlistments—by March 23, which was about halfway into the Guard’s fiscal year, which ends Sept. 30.

GUAM

Medical Command, GUARNG, COL Taitano (State Surgeon) and MAJ Valles (Dentist) recently arrived safely home from their tour of duty in Iraq. COL Cruz (Commander, Medical Command and Surgeon) is preparing for his second deployment to Iraq.

ARKANSAS

The town of Sherwood, AR, was named a five-star supporter of the Guard and Reserves by the Arkansas ESGR for adopting policies and programs that are above and beyond what is required by law.

GEORGIA

GA Department of Defense announced it expects to exceed its 2005 ARNG recruiting goal of 1,700 enlistees.

GUAM

294th Military Intelligence (Counter Intelligence) returned home to Guam after a year in Iraq.

HAWAII

The Charlie Company, Hawaii’s first Guard troops to return home from Iraq, were honored at Hickam Air Force Base. A highlight of their deployment was transporting Saddam Hussein to his first court appearance. The unit experienced zero combat injuries and zero casualties.





SEND YOUR NEWS TO:

✉ editor@gxonline.com

IRAQ

100 Soldiers from the 116th BCT's E Troop, 163rd Cavalry, Task Force 2-116 Armor were awarded the Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB), and two medics received the Combat Medic Badge (CMB).

IRAQ

116th Brigade Combat Team's Task Force 2-116 Armor visited pediatric hospitals in Kirkuk, Iraq, May 31 to deliver toiletries, school supplies, toys, and other items to the patients.

IRAQ

Iraqi soldiers and Coalition Forces, working together and independently, captured 11 known terrorists in a series of morning raids in central and western Baghdad.

IRAQ

116th Brigade Combat Team's Task Force 2-116 Armor taught first aid courses to Iraqi policemen from Kirkuk's Aruba district.

IRAQ

Georgia National Guard's 48th Brigade Combat Team took over primary support and security missions south of Baghdad June 17, transferring authority from the 2nd Brigade, 10th Mountain Division.

UZBEKISTAN

GUARNG's 1224th Engineer Detachment (Utilities) arrive safely in Uzbekistan where the unit will provide public works-type services for the base camp. The unit officially assumed responsibility for all construction projects on the forward operating site (FOS).

IRAQ

Company A, 1st Battalion, 108th Armor, 48th BCT, discovered a large weapons cache that included about 100 82mm mortar cases, 67 mortar fuses, a mortar base plate, and several mortar tubes.

AFGHANISTAN

Two former Taliban commanders reconciled with the Afghan government and turned in a large cache of weapons and ammo.

PAKISTAN

Afghan and Coalition Forces apprehended 17 insurgents armed with rifles and Taliban propaganda along the Pakistani border.

AFRICA

GUARNG, Alpha Company 1-294th Infantry (Light) will be returning home after a year in the Horn of Africa as part of the CJTF-HOA. Alpha Company Soldiers are regularly engaged in activities spanning the full spectrum of support functions required to sustain counter-terrorism operations in the region.



SUMMER Travel

by Kathy R. Williams

Shades of Green®

If you are thinking about traveling to the Orlando area this summer, check out the best-kept military lodging secret out there—the Shades of Green® Walt Disney World® Resort.

Shades of Green is the only Armed Forces Recreation Center in the continental United States. This resort, located in central Florida, has recently expanded to 586 oversized rooms. You cannot beat their room costs, comfort, and luxury in a Walt Disney World Resort. Standard rooms range from \$72 for two adults to \$250+ for a family suite per night. Standard/poolside rooms sleep up to five guests, junior suites sleep up to six, and family suites accommodate up to eight. Total room cost is based upon the sponsor's rank and total number of occupants. Prices can change so check with the resort for current rates.

Shades of Green, open to eligible members of all military branches, offers all the amenities of a resort destination. The

standard guest amenities in its rooms include two queen size beds, a single sleeper sofa, coffeemaker, refrigerator, in-room safe, hairdryer, iron, ironing board, and a large bathroom with a separate sink area. Each standard guest room features either a private balcony or patio that overlooks a lush tropical setting and is among the roomiest available at the Walt Disney World Resort.

The resort includes cascading waterfalls and lush landscaping. There is a championship golf course on the property, swimming pools with a handicap lift, arcade, multiple stores including an AAFES general store, multiple restaurants, large lobby with a two-sided indoor/outdoor fireplace, wireless Internet available in the lobby and rooms, indoor and outdoor waterfalls, and lush tropical garden surroundings.

A guest relations representative can help you plan and purchase tickets for local attractions. Shades of Green offers additional savings on Walt Disney World tickets. A Shades of Green bus service provides scheduled transportation to and from the Disney theme parks.

Shades of Green has guest rooms designed to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act standards. In fact, many of the design options exceed the standards. The ADA-friendly resort includes standard oversized rooms, oversized elevators, handicapped accessible ramps, and special transportation options.

This resort was designed to provide rest and relaxation for U.S. service members, their families, and select other eligible people. Specific eligibility criteria must be determined before a guest can make a reservation. Please check the website www.ShadesofGreen.org to determine your eligibility before making reservations. The Shades of Green reservations office, 888-593-2242, is open Monday through Friday from 0830 to 1700 hours, (EDT). The best time to call is on Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Friday afternoons. You can make your reservations online 24 hours a day, seven days a week at www.ShadesofGreen.org.



Operation Rest and Relaxation

Service members and their families on leave from Operations Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom can take advantage of special package pricing.

Shades of Green offers four- to eight-night packages that include accommodations, breakfasts, and dinners at a greatly reduced cost. This resort is a marvelous site to reunite service members with family and enjoy all that the Orlando area has to offer.

GOLD LEAF PACKAGES

Shades of Green offers a Gold Leaf Package which includes accommodations, breakfasts, dinners, baggage handling, and gratuities. Eligible guests can book a four to eight-night package. Contact the resort for complete details.

www.ShadesofGreen.org

Photo by Picturequest/BananaStock

Photo courtesy Imagevision

Here's to the Heroes

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

Sesame Place is located in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. SeaWorld parks are located in Orlando, San Antonio, and San Diego. Busch Garden parks are located in Tampa Bay, Florida, and Williamsburg, Virginia. Busch Gardens Williamsburg has been named the world's "most beautiful theme park" again this year by the National Amusement Park Historical Association.

See www.herosalute.com for complete details and park info.

www.herosalute.com

Families Helping Families



ABOVE: CW5 Layne S. Pace with Halima after she returned from her surgery.

Hotel Rebates

www.Military-Travel.net offers hotel discounts and rebates to all military members and their families. This program is an affiliate of Hotels.com and extends a 5% rebate on hotel costs. The rebate is available in addition to the Hotels.com guaranteed low rates. You must go through the website, www.Military-Travel.net, to qualify for this offer or make reservations at 800-275-9183.

www.Military-Travel.net issues your rebate by check or PayPal.com, 14 days after checking out from the hotel. You may use this service in conjunction with official military business, leave, or personal use. There are no restrictions on the number of times you may use this service.

www.Military-Travel.net

A Soldier's Story

By Kathy R. Williams

ARNG CW5 Layne S. Pace of the 1/211th AVN Regiment not only served excellently in Afghanistan, but he also went to extreme measures to help save an Afghan child's life.

Pace, a Task Force Pirate safety officer and Apache pilot from West Jordan, Utah, arrived in Bagram, Afghanistan, in April 2004. His predecessor showed him around the base for the transition. He understood what his military duties would encompass. The safety-officer part, he got immediately.

Shadowing his predecessor for about a week, Pace accompanied his "mentor" to the Egyptian base hospital during their time off. The Egyptian hospital medical staff treat the locals. His predecessor and several other Soldiers had made numerous humanitarian missions to the hospital and had taken donated items from their families back in the states to the sick children.

Pace said, "I immediately caught the bug." He decided that he also wanted to visit the hospitals during his time off.

Pace heard that the base commander was going to the Bagram Valley Orphanage and asked to accompany him.

Pace and his fellow Soldiers were so enthusiastic about their visits, they told their wives about them. The wives were so enthusiastic they started a support group, Angels for Afghanistan.org. Simultaneously, the families of the Chinook pilots started Operation Shoefly. The consolidated efforts were astounding.

Pace said "At that point, I knew I wanted to do more but didn't know what."

It was then that he met members of the Parwan Provisional Reconstruction Team (PRT). These U.S. military teams access Afghan villages for security and reconstruction needs. They evaluate schools, wells, some roads, and then engage local contractors to hire locals to make improvements. While talking to Pace, the guys from the PRT

suggested that if Pace wanted to do more, Pace's unit could adopt a village.

Pace said he thought, "It is difficult to get even one mission approved. How can we make this happen?"

He requested a parallel mission with the PRT teams who needed support for the village of Jegdalek. The PRT teams talked to the village elders about the group "adopting" them. The elders were very excited and said yes.

"Again, how could they adopt a village and get supplies in without creating their own mission?" Pace wondered.

The Chinooks traveled rotating routes throughout Afghanistan. About every two weeks, the Chinooks would travel the route to Jegdalek. The Angels for Afghanistan and Operation Shoefly sent donated supplies, and the Chinooks carried them on the scheduled flights.

"We all caught the bug," said Pace.

Pace knew the supplies meant something to the people of the village. Yet he wanted to do more.

On a trip back to Jegdalek, he met a young girl named Halima. Halima had her eyes pointing in two different directions with blurred vision, a medical condition called strabismus. He wanted to help her but was not sure what he could do.

Through a series of visits with doctors on base, he arranged for her to have eye surgery to correct this condition. Halima took a helicopter ride with her father for her surgery. Pace said, "She must have thought she was climbing aboard a spaceship," but Halima happily climbed on and flew to the hospital for an overnight stay.

The operation was a joint surgical effort; an Egyptian doctor operated on one eye while an American doctor fixed the other. The operation was a success. After she was cleaned up and pampered, she slipped on a new dress and pair of shoes that the Angels for Afghanistan group sent her.

After Halima's successful surgery, a previously shy Halima would joyfully come running out to greet the American Soldiers when they came to the village. Pace said, "Halima came running and would hold my hand for hours on end. There we were, these rough Soldier guys with guns."

Pace went to the village in his off-hours to give out humanitarian aid, shoes, and clothes. However, some of the villagers were seeking medical help.

Pace noticed a father that repeatedly brought his boy who looked very sick.

Pace got the flight surgeon to examine this Afghan boy named Asedullah.

The Army surgeon diagnosed a possible heart condition in which oxygen-replenished blood in the heart mixes with oxygen-depleted blood returning from the blood stream. Tests confirmed that Asedullah had a hole in his heart. He had one-third less oxygen in his bloodstream than normal.

There was not a heart surgeon in Afghanistan that could operate on him. There was nothing further they could do.

Pace could not accept that. He would do whatever it took to get this 12 year-old boy well. Asedullah's father, a proud man, was crying when he heard the news that Pace was going to try to help. Through an interpreter, he said "I can't believe that America is going to do so much trouble for my son."

Pace found a way. He started an email campaign to have the Afghan boy flown back to the states for surgery. Pace went to anysoldier.com and signed up. He wrote a request and asked for money to fly Asedullah to the United States for surgery.

Pace said, "Guys were pulling \$200, \$300 out of their wallets to help. Senator Mark Dayton, (D-Minn.), gave \$350 or \$450. We had \$2500 of donations from www.anysoldier.org. We soon had \$6500 total for their transportation and surgery," said Pace.

Now, they needed a surgeon. Actor and Gift of Life spokesperson, Chad Everett asked Dr. Leonard L. Bailey, M.D., at Loma Linda (CA) University Medical Center to do the surgery at no cost. The heart surgeon agreed. Gift of Life, a Rotary International-sponsored program, helped with finances for the hospital and surgery. Gift of Life arranged for a greatly-reduced hospital cost.

Now, they needed transportation to the states. Arrangements came very quickly. Jet Blue and Pakistani Airlines agreed to provide the 25-hour flight needed to get to Southern California for no charge.

"The doors started flying open, left and right," said Pace.

Then came the brick wall in the form of the U.S. Embassy. Approval could take months and might be difficult to obtain.

Pace said he thought the senator must have made some phone calls, because suddenly, all the passports and visas were approved.

Pakistan Air and Jet Blue flew Asedullah and his dad to Loma Linda University Medical Center. Asedullah's surgery was a complete success.

"The real disaster in Afghanistan is the lack of medical help. I had to get involved."

- CW5 Layne S. Pace

The end of Pace's tour was nearing. Pace was flown to New York when he returned to the United States for an awards ceremony for Gift of Life. Unknown to Pace, until he was introduced, he was a featured award recipient. Pace said, "I still didn't know what the event was. Everyone was dressed up; I was looking at nice dresses and 500 tuxes. I was in my flight suit. I felt like I went to the ball that night and found out I was a guest speaker."

Chad Everett presented him with the "Gift of Life Angel" award.

While reflecting on all the events, Pace said, "I was at the forefront, but there were a lot of Soldiers doing a lot of work to make this happen. Really, what I provided was leadership."

Pace continued, "The real disaster in Afghanistan is the lack of medical help. I had to get involved."

Pace will never forget his last trip to the village of Jegdalek. He said that the normally reserved village elder, thanked him profusely and shook his hand repeatedly.

As he climbed aboard the Chinook, and tightened his seatbelt, he noticed a group gathered near. "All the villagers had found an American flag and were flying it for us and waving goodbye," Pace said.

"This was about the relationships. That is how we affected the village. They really loved us. The stuff (donations) was the medium. We saved one boy's life," said Pace.

Before Pace left, he showed his replacement around the base for the transition. His replacement understood what his military duties would encompass. The safety-officer part, he got immediately...



ABOVE: Lydia Townsend paints her "Freedom Rocks."

Freedom Rocks!

"Kid Expressed" Family Shows Appreciation for Troops

By Kathy R. Williams

Freedom Rocks. Just ask five-year-old Lydia Townsend of Rockford, Michigan. She has taken it upon herself to pick up rocks out of her yard, pull out her paints, and paint the American flag on each one of the rocks she has collected. Her mom, Susan, took Lydia to a local air show where the family was representing America's Voice/Kid Expressed. Lydia rode around the airshow and gave out her rocks and hugs to all the service members she saw.

"The service members that got a rock and hug said, that's what makes serving this country all worthwhile," Susan said.

America's Voice/Kid Expressed is a non-profit kids organization that supports all branches of the military by paying for and displaying billboards, giving out "Freedom Rocks" and hugs, and providing phone cards for deployed U.S. Soldiers. The organization, supported in part by the Department of Defense, was started by Lydia's oldest sister, Christie. Christie, now 18 and married to her childhood sweetheart, wrote a poem of gratitude in 2004 supporting the U.S. military. She was inspired after seeing a pictorial history of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The poem, "America's Voice," has been read at numerous ceremonies and earned her a letter of recognition from President George W. Bush. Christie also raised more than \$7,000 for phone cards for troops. The cards enabled troops deployed overseas to call their families during the holiday season.

Mother of eight children, Susan Townsend, says she is proud of her children and their patriotism. Instead of continuing with just their family, they formalized their efforts to gain additional support. That is how KidExpressed.org was started. Susan works as the director of the non-profit group.

The group has now posted four billboards in the Grand Rapids, Michigan, area. The billboards include a photo of kids in uniforms saluting from each branch of the military. The billboards state, "To our Defenders of Freedom and their Families—We Appreciate You... Beyond Expression!"

"We all really want kids to be aware of the freedoms we have in this country. Our troops give us freedom and protection," she said. When her children know that a classmate's mom or dad is overseas, they are sure to give the child extra support.

The Townsends are hoping to place the billboards nationwide. They have hopes of erecting a billboard near the Walter Reed Army Medical Center and the in the middle of Times Square. Kid Expressed has not raised the \$100,000 for that New York City billboard yet.

Susan said that she feels that America's support is critical to the troops. "[T]he goal of America's Voice/Kid Expressed [is] to inspire our future generation with appreciation and support for our military." **GX**

America's Voice

by Christie Townsend

We know you are out there fighting for our freedom, our safety and our security.

Your bravery excels all men.

Your courage is undefeatable.

You are in our prayers.

Every minute of every day someone is praying for you.

We are pulling for you, thinking of you.

America has not forgotten.

For every wound, a victory is gained.

For every life lost, a war is won.

When you feel your courage failing, remember we care, and that God is in heaven,

Waiting to hear your prayers.

He sees you and He cares.

In a world of war, you are our defenders.

In a world of peace, you are a husband, a wife, a son, a daughter.

You are a soldier of the United States of America.

A Hero in all of our hearts.



Visit www.kidexpressed.org to get involved!



Nancy Thomson and her husband, MAJ Loren Thomson, WYARNG, outside their home in Cheyenne, WY.

Photo by 1SG Dave Penhollow, 115th BDE, WYARNG



Tie a Yellow Ribbon

by Jon Mabe and Ed Brown

For Americans awaiting the return of a loved one, yellow ribbons have become a common decoration for trees, mailboxes, doors, and automobiles. Whether made of satin or silk, homemade or mass-produced, each ribbon is a symbol of hope and love and a reminder that freedom does not come without sacrifice.

Though there is little evidence to support it, folklore dates the symbol as far back as the Civil War. The true origin, however, seems to be an urban legend that describes an ex-convict who hopes to see a yellow ribbon on a roadside oak as proof his beloved wants him to return. The urban legend became an article for the New York Post by Pete Hamill in 1971 and then a movie for TV starring James Earl Jones. But it wasn't until *Reader's Digest* reprinted Hamill's article in June of 1972, that the story caught the attention of songwriter Larry Russell Brown.

Larry Russell Brown served in the Armed Forces in the late 50's and early 60's, first

as a radio code operator, and later as an entertainer. He was one half of The Distant Cousins, a duo that toured Europe for the Army, and a co-author of hit songs for Mitch Ryder and The Detroit Wheels and The Four Seasons.

When Brown saw the article in *Reader's Digest*, he took the idea to his writing partner the late Irwin Levine, and in less than an hour, the two of them had written *Tie a Yellow Ribbon 'Round The Old Oak Tree*. Released by Tony Orlando and Dawn in February of 1973, the song sold 3 million copies in three weeks and was a #1 hit by April of that year.

That might have been the end of the story, but in November of 1979, Ambassador Bruce Laingen and 51 other American citizens were taken hostage by terrorists in Iran. As America struggled to cope with the anger and outrage, Ambassador Lingen's wife, Penne, appeared in the Washington Post with a message of hope.

The article describes a giant yellow ribbon tied around an oak tree in Lingen's front yard.

Penne says in the article, "I'm standing and waiting and praying... and one of these days Bruce is going to untie that yellow ribbon. It's going to be out there until he does." By the time the hostages returned over a year later, thousands of yellow ribbons decorated the country. The song once again hit the airwaves and took on the meaning it has today.

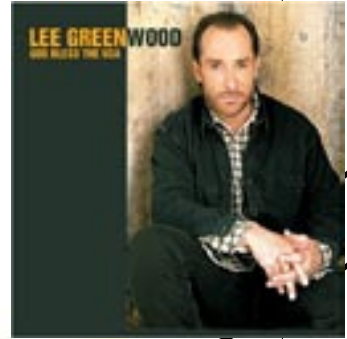
When asked about the anthem for a national tradition that took less than an hour to create, Brown is obviously humbled. He tells his story with phrases like, "I feel like I was just a vehicle," and, "I was chosen." Proud of what his song has come to mean, he is more proud of the Americans who put themselves in the line of fire for freedom.

Being the co-author of such a popular song has given Brown the opportunity to meet famous people from around the world. He says his greatest reward, however, is when a soldier or a family member tells him, "Your song helped me." You can see it in his eyes when he talks about the song and the soldiers, and you can hear it in his voice when he says, "You tell those boys whatever Russell Brown can do for the Army National Guard, I'm there!" **GX**

A Tradition of Song

by Ed Brown

The American songbook is full of music inspired by the hope and tragedy of battle. When Americans have been at a loss for words, our songwriters have found our common voice.



WAR OF 1812

The Star Spangled Banner by 1LT Francis Scott Key, Georgetown Field Artillery, D.C. Militia

Detained aboard a British ship during the British Navy's all night bombardment of Fort McHenry on September 14, 1814, Francis Scott Key knew that the city of Baltimore was still defended by his occasional glimpses of the American flag over Fort McHenry as it was illuminated by rocket fire. When the sun rose the next day, our flag still flew and the British were in retreat. Commemorating a great victory in the life of the young republic, the song became popular immediately. The granddaddy of all American battle songs was made the official anthem of the United States on March 3, 1931 by President Herbert Hoover.

CIVIL WAR

When Johnny Comes Marching Home Again by Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, 24th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment, Massachusetts Militia

Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore was an Irish immigrant and bandleader who enlisted his entire band in the Union Army at the beginning of the Civil War in 1861. Serving as musician and stretcher bearer, "The Father of the American Band" was present at Bull Run, Antietam, Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Gilmore was inspired to write *When Johnny Comes Marching Home* while stationed in occupied New Orleans in 1863 under orders to reorganize the state military bands as Grand Master of the Union Army.

WORLD WAR I

Over There by George M. Cohan

Born on the 4th of July, 1878, (or, so he always claimed), George M. Cohan spent his childhood touring America as part of his family's song and dance act. In addition to originating a series of stage performances that helped define the American persona, Cohan was one of America's most successful songwriters. Cohan had already written the hits *Yankee Doodle Boy*, *She's a Grand Old Flag* and *Give My Regards to Broadway* when he was inspired by newspaper headlines about American troops deploying to Europe to write *Over There*. In 1936, Cohan received the Congressional Gold Medal for his songwriting contributions to the war effort.

WORLD WAR II

I'll Be Home For Christmas (If Only in my Dreams) by Walter Kent and James "Kim" Gannon

The second Christmastime hit for Bing Crosby in as many years, *I'll Be Home for Christmas* followed *White Christmas* to the top of the charts. Written by Walter Kent and James "Kim" Gannon in 1943, *I'll Be Home For Christmas* perfectly captured the hopes of soldiers and civilians alike caught up in the middle of WWII. The song remains one of the most-recorded non-gospel Christmas songs of all time.

VIETNAM WAR

The Ballad of the Green Berets by SSG Barry Sadler

Coming at the peak of anti-war sentiment in the United States, SSG Barry Sadler's 1966 hit about the life (and death) of a Green Beret struck a patriotic chord in America. Sadler's performance of the song on the Ed Sullivan Show while still on active duty and in uniform helped give a human face to the Americans serving in that difficult war and led to the song becoming the most played song of 1966.

OPERATION DESERT STORM

God Bless the USA by Lee Greenwood

Known as a singer and performer, Lee Greenwood demonstrated a less publicized talent when he wrote the words and music to *God Bless the USA* in 1985. Released at a time when the American spirit was beginning to rebound, the song took on a whole new meaning when Operation Desert Storm began in 1991 and again on September 11th, 2001. Though not really inspired by war, the military's embrace of the song and Greenwood's untiring support of the troops has made *God Bless the USA* a modern anthem. **GX**

The Star Spangled Banner by Percy Moran, Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore, courtesy of The Library of Congress; photo: George M. Cohan by Carl Van Vechten, courtesy of The Library of Congress; photo: Bing Crosby sings to Allied troops in London in 1944, Pearson/Landov; image: The Ballad of the Green Berets; © Collectors' Choice Music; image: God Bless the USA, by Lee Greenwood, © Liberty

Nowhere to Run, Now

Counter-Drug Operations With The NMARNG

By The Brothers West

The border between Old and New Mexico consists of nothing more than two parallel stretches of road in the middle of the desert: one on the Mexican side and one on the U.S. side. They are separated by about 10 feet of dirt, bushes and an occasional length of fence. There are border checkpoints, but it's not difficult to walk around them. To all appearances, the border is wide open.

Appearances can be deceiving, though, and we can all rest assured that someone is watching that lonely stretch of dirt road. Someone is watching very, very closely. Hidden in and among the scrub brush are the Soldiers of NMARNG Counter Drug Operations, and even though you can't see them, they've got an eye on you.

These Soldiers support the Border Patrol along with other federal, state and local law enforcement agencies by locating and coordinating interdiction of illegal drugs, illegal aliens and special interest aliens (potential terrorists). In the last year alone they have assisted in the capture of over thirty thousand pounds of marijuana with an estimated street value of over 24 million dollars. Additionally they assisted in the capture of more than 79,000 illegal aliens and helped turn back another 47,000.

To accomplish this job, they employ some of the hottest gear available: air and ground assets, state-of-the-art detection systems, a high-tech dispatch center and long-term strategic analysis by highly trained personnel.

The vigilant Soldiers of the NMARNG are on patrol making sure their section of the border, the front line in the war on drugs and the war on terror is constantly under watch.

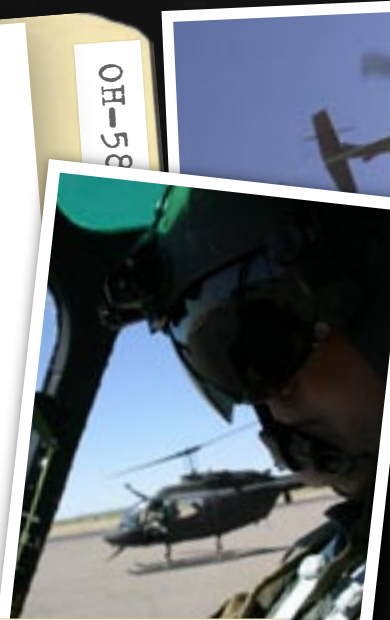
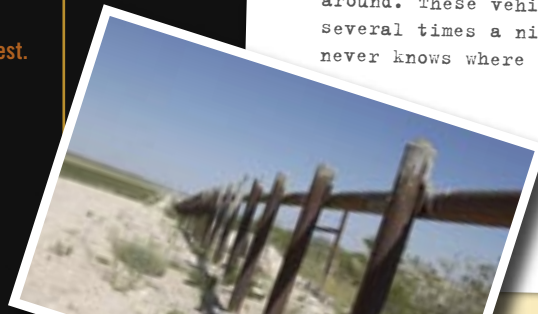
Photos by SSG Cheryl Hackley and Chris West.

OH-58D Kiowa Helicopter

The Kiowa is an excellent surveillance vehicle capable of quickly reaching otherwise inaccessible areas. Kiowa crews scout out suspicious groups using gyro-stabilized binoculars, cameras, night vision technology and the ever reliable "eyeball Mkl." They vector law enforcement to the target with coded radio communications and tactical links that let ground units see exactly what the Kiowa sees.

FLIR Trucks (Forward-Looking Infrared)

When you have to cover over 14,000 square miles of desert, there will be inevitable gaps in your surveillance network. That's where the FLIR Trucks come in. Rolling out as the sun sets, they creep into the desert in total darkness for a night of "hide and seek" with the various illegals coming over the border. Once in place, a twenty-foot boom raises a high power Infrared camera above the desert allowing the Soldier to sit comfortably in the cab of the truck and observe activity for miles around. These vehicles relocate several times a night so their quarry never knows where they will be.



Where to Hide



RVSS (Remote Viewing and Surveillance System)

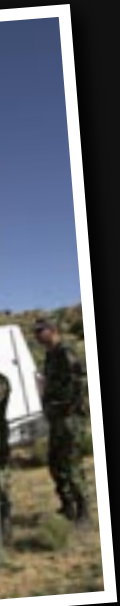
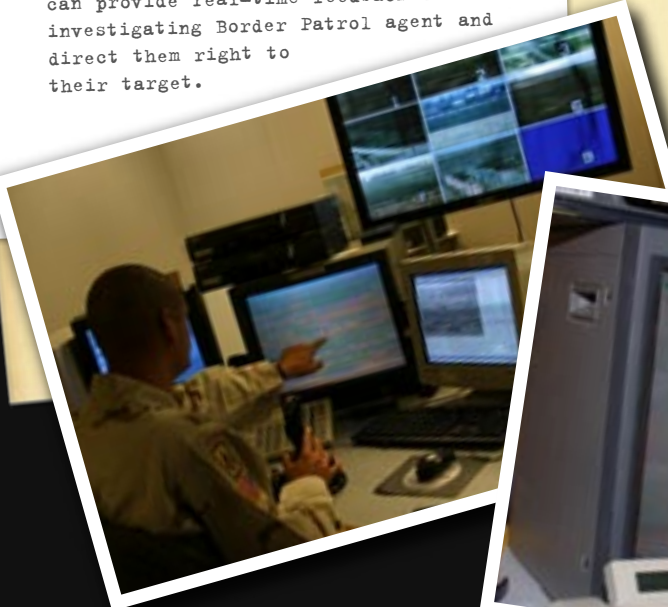
The RVSS consists of a network of hundreds of seismic-, magnetic-, laser- and pressure-activated sensors strategically placed on known smuggling routes; a series of cameras peering across miles of desert throughout the day and the night and a 3-D computer-generated relief map that puts all of it into perspective. This suite of detection gear can be monitored and controlled remotely from a central location by one or two Soldiers. As soon as a sensor is tripped and a suspect has been verified, these same Soldiers can provide real-time feedback to the investigating Border Patrol agent and direct them right to their target.

RVSS

The Bad Guys

Drug smugglers are extremely clever and tactically sophisticated opponents that use their own technology to sneak drugs past the NMARNG and the Border Patrol. Incredibly well hidden air-tight compartments that are effective against drug dogs, drag rugs used to obscure their tracks and a sophisticated intelligence network tied together using cell phones help the drug cartels avoid detection of their ongoing smuggling activities.

Bad
Guys



PACKHORSE

[WITH ATTITUDE]



When it absolutely positively has to be in the war overnight...

200 miles an hour at an altitude of 100 feet, that's how the pilots of the Army National Guard's C-23B Sherpa like to fly in Iraq. They claim it's safer that way. Although they have to worry about telephone lines, birds and occasional small arms fire, they are safer from surface-to-air missiles. Since the Sherpa has no armor, one missile hit would bring them down. Coming in low and fast, by the time a bad guy can sight it in a launcher, these guys are already gone.

Let's be clear: we are talking about nape of the earth barnstorming with the throttle all the way open. This is high tension, white-knuckled flying that demands everything the pilots have to give. There's no autopilot to help out either; at 100 feet off the ground things happen far too fast. This sort of flying is physically and mentally exhausting for the pilots as they fight constant low level turbulence, 130 degree temperatures and the need to maintain intense concentration throughout the flight. Why you ask, would these madmen fly like this?

Because their cargos are the ones that absolutely positively have to get into the war overnight. Transporting cargo from depots to FOB (Forward Operating Bases) through

normal channels can sometimes take days. In the case of critical supplies such as ammunition, blood and repair parts, that is simply too long. That's where the Sherpas come in. They are the Army's "FedEx" service, except of course that most civilian pilots would probably faint just looking at a Sherpa's flight plan.

Capable of transporting up to 7,000 lbs. in freight, this tough little plane can go anywhere there is an airstrip. It is equipped with self-contained ground handling equipment that makes it largely self-sufficient. If, for some reason, there isn't a Movement Control Team (Ground Crew) on the far end, no problem; the Sherpa's three-man crew has everything it needs to accomplish the task.

This workhorse of an aircraft can transport up to 30 passengers in airline style seats or 18 patients in litters for medical evacuation. When moving supplies, it is capable of easily handling and airdropping palletized cargo. It can be quickly configured for multiple

missions including ordnance movement, troop and vehicle transport, airborne/airdrop missions, medical evacuation and other specialized duties such as surveillance.

The Sherpa's operational experience has proven it to have extremely low operating costs due to its simple, robust construction. Its hearty airframe, in addition to its low fuel consumption, makes it an excellent platform for daily operations in Iraq.

Despite its impressive performance record, the Sherpa is destined to be replaced by the future aircraft program. The pilots of the Sherpa know that change is coming, and they stand ready to quickly adapt to their new planes. Until that time though, they'll keep flying their crucial missions, bringing critical supplies to places no one else can reach, treetop level and wide open. **GX**

On a battlefield in the near future, a convoy of American armored vehicles quietly stalks the narrow streets of an area known to harbor a large number of enemy forces. The loudest sound to be heard is the wind blowing through the streets... these vehicles are absolutely silent.

The enemy is known to have infrared cameras, but that won't be a problem since this vehicle has no detectable heat signature. This stealthy predator is a hole in the night as far as the bad guys are concerned.

In startling contrast, the Special Forces Soldiers inside have complete battlefield awareness. Their on-board, extended range, multi-spectral imaging sensor suite is feeding them detailed information from a variety of sources.

As they roll up to an alley too narrow for the vehicle, an amazing transformation happens: the vehicle lowers down and the wheels retract reducing the vehicle's width to 60 inches, allowing the Soldiers to continue their clandestine approach.

Arriving undetected, the Soldiers bring their target acquisition and designation system to bear. Full command and control capabilities

including long range secure communications, positioning/navigating systems and cooperative engagement software allow these Soldiers to instantly coordinate a joint forces attack on the enemy position.

This sounds like something out of the new Batman movie or a Tom Clancy novel, but this technology exists now in the form of the Reconnaissance Surveillance Targeting Vehicle (RST-V). This isn't some far future technology; it is currently scheduled to reach the field for operational environment systems demonstrations during the summer of 2006.

The Office of Naval Research and the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) are working together in support of the DOD transformation initiative to develop the RST-V as a possible next generation replacement vehicle for the USMC Humvees (HMMWV). The Army is keeping a close eye on this project through an ongoing research agreement with DARPA and the USMC. If this type of technology makes it into Army service, it will most likely see use by Special Forces who can best leverage the RST-V's stealth capabilities to the fullest potential. **GX**

AIR TRANSPORTABLE – Transportable in roll-on / roll-off mode in CH-53 Super Stallion and CH-47 Chinook helicopters, as well V-22 Osprey and C-130 Hercules aircraft, allowing rapid deployment in almost any environment.

POWER SYSTEM – High efficiency, reduced signature hybrid electric propulsion system with increased fuel economy; capable of exporting power for battlefield loads such as the Unit Operations Center and radars, simplifying battlefield logistics by providing electrical power without towed generators.

CARGO AREA – Cargo capabilities comparable to the Humvee; can be configured for a variety of mission load outs including forward observer/ forward air control vehicle, reconnaissance, light strike vehicle, battlefield ambulance, air defense, logistics vehicle, personnel carrier, and a Command Post variant.

WEAPONS – The RST-V is capable of mounting a variety of weapons including a 7.62mm machine gun (M240, M60), .50 caliber machine gun (M2), Mk19 40mm grenade launcher, Objective Crew Served Weapon (OCSW), Javelin "fire and forget" missiles or TOW anti-tank guided missiles.

SURVIVABILITY – Defensive countermeasures include suppression of all signatures (infrared, acoustic, etc.), camouflage/concealment treatment, silent operation mode, smoke grenade launchers, laser and radar detectors, and missile launch sensors.

silentSTALKER

Reconnaissance Surveillance Tactical Vehicle (RST-V)

Sources: Office of Naval Research, GlobalSecurity.org, General Dynamics, Military.com



There is no denying that Greg Biffle is dominating the NASCAR® Nextel Cup this year, with more wins and laps led than any other driver in the series so far. Still, it was a surprise to everyone that Greg Biffle was able to run away with a victory at the MBNA RacePoints 400 at Dover International Speedway, the notorious “Monster Mile.”

The weekend, like several others this season, got off to a slow start when it rained all day on Friday, causing the cancellation of practice and qualifying. It was back to the regular schedule, however, on Saturday, and Biffle went out for practice in the No. 16 National Guard Ford Taurus. He turned in the 10th and 18th fastest times in the two practice sessions, and with valuable input on the shocks from the crew of Roush teammate Matt Kenseth, Biffle’s crew went to work perfecting the car.

Because of the rain on Friday, the cars would start the race based on points standings. Biffle was able to hold second position for the first five laps, but slowly fell back as he reported the car was very tight.

After several cautions, the team struggled to find the perfect setup for the car. They began to narrow down the problems as the car went back and forth between 4th and 13th positions for the first half of the race. By lap 206, the team made their first stop with only four tires and no handling changes.

From out of nowhere, Greg Biffle was hitting his stride. By lap 214, he passed his teammate Matt Kenseth for 5th position and made his way up to teammate Mark Martin in 4th by lap 216.

Biffle would continue to blow past other drivers on his way to the lead, and by lap 241, he had secured first place by passing Elliot Sadler, who was third in the points race.

Biffle would lead the rest of the race, except for a 10-lap green flag pit rotation, and take home his fourth win of the season.

“I wanted to win so badly here at Dover for the National Guard and all of the Soldiers who I know are out there watching and cheering for us every week,” said Biffle. “I met a guy today who came to the track with General Blum and had lost his leg in Iraq. It’s just incredible to know what these guys have done for our country, and for him to be able to leave Walter Reed Army Medical Center for the day to come out and watch us race, I just can’t explain it. This team is incredible and I’m proud to race with them every weekend.”

Greg Biffle ran the race with a photo of SPC Ryan Doltz, 112th Field Artillery, NJARNG, who was killed in the line of duty exactly one year ago to the day, taped to the rollbar. Proud indeed! **GX**

DOVER DOMINATION





LEFT: Greg Biffle and the National Guard No. 16 Ford avoided a collision the whole race, until he backed into the retaining wall during his celebratory burnout. Photo by Getty Images Sport/Ezra Shaw
ABOVE: But in the end, everyone had a good laugh. The whole crew celebrated their fourth victory with team owner, Jack Roush (bottom left) and driver, Greg Biffle. Photo by Getty Images Sport/Darrell Ingram



THE WINNING STRATEGY

GREG BIFFLE WINS HIS FIFTH RACE AT MICHIGAN INTERNATIONAL SPEEDWAY

It's been seven years since anyone has been able to put a mark on racing history the way Greg Biffle has. He has won the most races at this point in the season since his Roush Racing teammate, Mark Martin, did the same in 1998. And with their fifth win after 200 laps at the Batman Begins 400 in Michigan, the #16 National Guard team was able to keep Biffle within striking distance of Jimmie Johnson in the hunt for the championship.

The race at Michigan was an impound race, which means after qualifying and inspection, the crew was not allowed to touch the car again until raceday. With that in mind, crew chief Doug Richert decided to focus on the aerodynamics of the car. Because of that, Biffle was very fast in practice but only qualified in 25th position.

"These guys have built an incredible car," said Biffle. "We may not have qualified that well, but this thing will be a rocket ship tomorrow for the race. I'm not worried a bit; we'll be up front before you know it."

And, indeed, by lap 40, Biffle was in the lead.

The race at Michigan was long and fast with few cautions. For most of the race, Biffle was trading the lead back and forth with Tony Stewart, who was sure to win after leading a total of ninety-seven laps in the race, the most led for the day.

During a caution on lap 170, Biffle took an all-too-familiar gamble, choosing to stay out of the pits to get the lead back, while Stewart would go in for four new tires. Fans of the Guard Car were biting their nails all the way, remembering Biffle's loss at Bristol where he also chose to stay out on old tires.

"It was my decision," Biffle said. "It's just so hard to pass here. I was hoping that six or eight guys would stay with us and give Tony some people to have to burn his tires off to try to catch us."

And that's exactly what happened. Stewart was able to catch up to Biffle on lap 198, but he didn't have enough grip left to finish the job. In the end, Biffle would lead the most important, final lap.

"I tell you what: this 16 team and the National Guard car—these guys have worked really hard," said Biffle. "We've got great race cars right now. I'm really focused as a driver, and I just love this race track. Somebody asked me what's your favorite race track and it's Michigan. I used to live up here, and all the fans up here are awesome. We're just excited to get a win for Ford in their hometown. It's the 100th win for the Ford Taurus and that's pretty exciting." **GX**

ABOVE: Greg Biffle celebrates another great win at the Batman Begins 400 at Michigan International Speedway.

BELOW: "Can I drive the Batmobile? C'mon!"

Photos by SFC John Metzler

American Soldier

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ABOVE: Greg Biffle jumps the #16 National Guard Ford over the rumble strips during the NASCAR Nextel Cup Dodge\Savemart 350 at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma, California. Biffle placed 14th and moved into first place in the series championship.
Photo by Jonathan Ferrey/Getty Images

ONE BIG STEP FOR MANKIND



On a monthly basis, professional wrestler Mick Foley either flies or drives the long trip from his home on Long Island, NY to the nation's capitol to meet his personal commitment to military service members being treated for injuries from the country's war on terror. This past May 10-12th, Foley visited D.C. military hospitals and is expected to make a return visit in early July. During the upcoming visit, Foley will attend a monthly luncheon at the Pentagon for wounded service members.

Eighteen months ago, Foley teamed up with the USO of Metropolitan Washington (USO-Metro) to show his support and admiration for our country's military. His first USO event was a send-off for troops headed back to Iraq after their two weeks of mid-tour leave.

"I showed up the first time to see if I could brighten the soldiers' day on an otherwise difficult day," said Foley. Despite having been retired from the ring for nearly five years at that point, the soldiers he greeted that day responded enthusiastically to his presence. Soldiers waited in a long line to have a photo taken with the professional wrestler they remembered as "Mankind."

"When I visited that day, I found out I could be helpful," commented Foley.

Adrienne Trout of USO-Metro first saw Foley that day with a box filled with books. "I thought he was a guy making a delivery," said Trout. Foley had copies of his most recent New York Times' bestseller, entitled *Have a Nice Day!*, in the box to give to soldiers.

"Mick's commitment to the mission of the USO of Metropolitan Washington and

to the well-being of our men and women in uniform is truly extraordinary. We are consistently amazed at his dedication and energy," said Lisa Frederick, Deputy Director of Communications for the USO of Metro-Washington.

Foley also volunteers with the USO-Metro once a month, to visit soldiers being treated at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C. Foley has visited the soldiers there fifteen times over the past eighteen months.

On visits to Walter Reed, Foley has had soldiers ask him about his many visits to countless doctors over his fifteen years of active professional wrestling. "Many of them know about my arthritis and how I lost half my right ear in a match," said Foley. Humbly, Foley dissuades soldiers from making comparisons about his battles in the ring to their battle to defend freedom in the United States' war on terror.

One idea Foley tries to leave with the service men and women recovering from oftentimes life-altering battle wounds is to consider writing down their experiences as a healing tool for any emotional and physical trauma. Foley said, "Being able to write down feelings with the serious emotions every soldier must have would be one of the best ways to cope with the past." Foley continued, "Had I not sold the first copy, writing [his latest book] would have been a great experience for the sake of closure. It has to be a lifetime worth of experiences over there." **GX**

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CORE TRAINING TIME

PART 1 OF 2

By SGT KEN

The new fitness buzzword is “CORE Training!” Over the next couple of *GX* issues, Stephanie and I are going to provide you exercises that will help you strengthen your core. But, the question that we often receive is, “What is your core?”

A dictionary may define core training as a training regimen that focuses on strengthening the body’s trunk muscles, especially the stomach and lower back. Another way of looking at it is to strengthen the muscles that support your spine. Bottom line is that core

training begins with the transverse abdominus, a deep abdominal muscle group connected to the inner surface of cartilage of your lower six ribs, and the lumbar fascia.

I believe that core training is the most important fitness training anyone can perform! When I was in high school, my sports activities came to a screeching halt when an aggressive move on the football field ended with a serious back injury. Because of the core training that I received in boot camp, I have not had a problem since then.

Photo by Jonathan C. Miller



ABOVE: (L-R) Stephanie and SSG Ken Weichert

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

SGT Ken Weichert, six-time Soldier of the Year and veteran of both Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, began the START Fitness™ program in 1997. Now partnered with his wife Stephanie, Strategic Director of START Fitness and a certified personal trainer, the Weicherts are conquering the fitness industry. START Fitness™ has been profiled in *Backpacker Magazine*, the *San Francisco Chronicle*, *The Washington Post*, and now you can expect it in the pages of *GX*.

For more information, visit:
 startfitness.com

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



FLUTTER KICK

Start the exercise by lying on your back with your palms on the ground and your hands against the sides of your buttocks. You can look toward your legs or keep your head down against the ground. First, bring your legs straight in the air together and lower them approximately 10-20 inches from the ground with your feet flexed.



The movements begin by shifting your legs vertically up and down approximately 12 inches. Your legs move opposite of each other and your feet remain flexed. The lower your legs are positioned, the more back muscles you engage. Warning: If it feels uncomfortable in your lower back, your legs may be positioned too low for this training session. Never drop your legs on the ground.

FOUR-POSITION PUSH-UP

Start the exercise in the push-up position with a normal or wide grip. Your hands should line-up underneath your chest and not above your shoulders. Tighten your rear end muscles and look slightly forward. Your feet can be together or up to twelve inches apart. Slowly move to the second, third, and fourth positions by bending your arms at the elbows slightly until your body lowers a few inches each time. Hold these positions for a few seconds each and then return to the first position. The normal grip is intermediate and the wide grip is advanced. Your body armor can be used to increase the intensity of this exercise. You may reduce the intensity by going to your knees.



Product photo by Raye Dene Berry

GOT A QUESTION?

ASK SGT KEN™

✉ askthetrainer@startfitness.com



Illustration by Seamas Gallagher

Dear SGT Ken,™

I'm TDY again and had the pleasure of reading previous additions of *GX* magazine on the flight over. I LOVE your fitness column.

What kind of yoga do you teach at your studio? Since they have Bikram's Hot Yoga in SFO I'd be curious to see what you thought of this particular yoga. I've heard in NY they can make the room 120 degrees plus!

When you sent this I was TDY and brought the Bikram's tape and got 5 people to do it with me. I've turned lots of soldiers from the NMNG onto Bikram's. Our TAG even went five times! I hope you can try it and let me know what you think - especially with your fitness background.

I'll look forward to reading your columns in future *GX* editions. HOOAH!

MAJ Kimberly Lalley, NMARNG
State Public Affairs Officer

Dear MAJ Lalley,

Hello. Stephanie, the *GX* staff, and I would like to thank you for the encouraging remarks you made! We have had hundreds of emails expressing positive support of the START Fitness columns in *GX* magazine! I particularly liked your recent email regarding Bikram Yoga.

The three main components of physical fitness are Strength, Stamina, and Flexibility. Good fitness programs must present the opportunity to experience all three components in a weekly routine. Great fitness programs should include all three components in the same hour-long session each time.

What has worked immensely for our START Fitness students is to end the last ten minutes of our sixty-minute indoor sessions with intense Yoga and Pilates exercises. This way the students leave the sessions with better posture and loosened muscles.

Using heat during Yoga activities is a great way to get deep tissue muscle groups to release earlier in fitness sessions. Bikram Yoga is a great program! We always recommend that everyone should consult his or her physician prior experimenting in new fitness routines. It sounds like you're doing exactly what your body needs. My only advice is to remember not to sacrifice

strength and stamina building routines during your weekly fitness schedule. I realize that Bikram Yoga includes strength and stamina characteristics. However, at START Fitness we stress diversity of fitness styles. If your body gets use to the routine, you may stop to achieving results. Great work, Major! Hooah!

Dear SGT Ken,™

I was wondering if you could give me some tips on the best way to improve my run. Also, for weight training I am doing 3 sets of 15 reps. Is this sufficient (if by the time I'm getting to the 13-15 rep it's harder to do)?

Thank you,

SGT Jodi Fleckenstein, NDARNG

Dear SGT Fleckenstein,

Hello. Thanks for contacting us. It seems that seeking methods to improve run times are the most popular questions that we receive. In our first START Fitness column published two issues ago, I told a man named SGT Dustin Loftis to use Interval Training. I believe that is exactly what will help you as well. We'll make certain that we send you a back issue so that you can use our fitness guidelines.

As far as whether or not you are performing the correct amount of repetitions per set in the weight room, I can help you with that. When a person endures 3 sets of 13-15 repetitions of a weight training exercise, the person is achieving a mass reducing quality. Some people in gyms refer to it as 'toning' or 'sculpting'. The theory is that heavy weight training with 3 sets of 4-6 repetitions per set will help you achieve more mass. Lighter weight training with 3 sets of 13-15 repetitions per set will help you maintain strength and keep you from gaining mass. If you wish to perform greater mass reducing efforts, simply reduce the weight and increase the repetitions per set.

Keep in mind that weight training may not help you to achieve better results in the physical fitness test. For example, the only

thing that will help you to achieve more push-ups is to train harder with different styles of push-ups. Although the bench press exercise may make you stronger, it will not help you to achieve more push-ups. Also, remember to let your body rest a day before pushing specified muscle groups to total exhaustion or "muscle failure." In other words, if today is the day that you are going to perform the most push-ups that you can until muscle failure, then tomorrow should be a rest day for that exercise.

Great question, SGT! Let your colleagues know that START Fitness and *GX* magazine are ready to answer any of their Health and Fitness questions!

Got a fitness question? Email SGT Ken:™

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“Sometimes nothing can be a real cool hand.”

- Cool Hand Luke

DEAL ME IN!

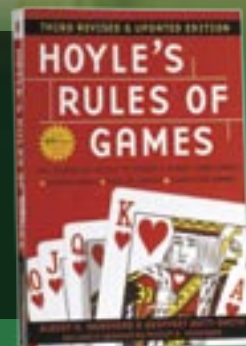
You need luck, skill and the ability to lie your butt off with a straight face to walk away from the table with your friends' money. Ahh...poker, that most perfect of games. We've had a successful game running for more than ten years straight and would like to pass on a few tips for a successful, friendly poker night.

- 1** Set the stakes low. No one should lose more than they would spend for a night out on the town.
- 2** Establish the ground rules before you begin playing. Include allowable games, number of betting rounds, number of raises and betting limits.
- 3** Keep it light. A friendly poker game is just an excuse to hang with your friends and pick up bragging rights.
- 4** Use poker chips. They are easier than cash, and there's something about the clatter of chips that means poker.
- 5** The only real televised poker game is the World Series of Poker; those celebrities are some of the worst players we've ever seen.
- 6** Do not buy poker kits! They are overpriced and usually poor quality. See our guide for the necessities.



Bicycle Playing Cards: As far as we are concerned these are the only cards there are. Minimum two decks, one red, one blue.

\$2 per deck



Hoyle's Rules of Games: The definitive reference for rules, regulations and variations of the hallowed game of poker. Keep a copy around to avoid any disputes over the rules.



Bicycle Plastic Chips: Although they are a little lightweight, these chips are dirt cheap and available almost everywhere.

\$2 for 100 chips.



Bicycle Clay Chips: For a little more, these 8 gram clay filled chips really bring the Vegas vibe to the table. They sound great hitting the table when you raise that chump bluffing with his pathetic pair of deuces and feel just as good in your hand as much more expensive brands.

\$6 for 50 chips.

RANK OF HANDS (LOWEST TO HIGHEST):



High Card



Pair



Two Pair



Three of a Kind



Straight



Flush



Full House



Four of a Kind



Straight Flush

BROTHERS WEST

SNEAK PEEK!

PRISM GUARD SHIELD

Hooah! We finally have a game where the hero is a member of the Army National Guard.

The Army National Guard, Playlogic International and developer Rival Interactive are currently working feverishly on the development of Prism—The First Line of Defense.

Set in the near future, this first-person shooter allows players to take on the role of the newest member of a secretive homeland defense unit known as PRISM.

PRISM is an acronym for the Preemptive Reconnaissance and Identification Security Mainframe, a new computer system that the government is using to tap into video surveillance equipment across America. When terrorist activities are identified, players are called into action.

Players will use new and emerging weapon systems such as Computer Guided Assault Rifles, Active Camouflage and Hover Cameras to wage an unconventional war on terrorists. Players will battle individually and in teams against the game's AI controlled terrorists and react to a wide variety of homeland terrorism scenarios.

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LEFT: PFC Preston Allen, Battery C, Anadarko, and his team enter a room to clear it of "enemy" aggressors.

BELOW: SPC Stephen Brosh and PVT Justin Finch maneuver a building corner during Urban Combat Skills training

Photos by 1SG Fred W. Baker III



ROCKETS TO RIFLES

FIELD ARTILLERY SOLDIERS PREPARE FOR CLOSE COMBAT

By 1st Sgt. Fred W. Baker III, Battery A, 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery (MLRS), OKARNG

"I want to see you knock it down," someone yells.

PVT Jonathan Anderson of Comanche, Oklahoma laughs. He's never broken down a door before. But there's a first time for everything. "Sounds like a lot of fun," he says and laughs again.

As a field artillery soldier, the Oklahoma Army National Guardsman would normally spend his two-week annual training in the field firing rockets. Instead Anderson and his fellow 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery Battalion soldiers are being immersed into infantry-style, close-combat training in preparation for what could be the call to serve in Iraq or Afghanistan as a Security Force (SECFOR).

At Camp Gruber, near Braggs, the soldiers are training in full "battle-rattle," wearing all of the gear similar to what they will wear if deployed, including body armor and Kevlar helmets, and carrying weapons. The additional gear weighs as much as 35 pounds.

The unit is training on short range marksmanship, convoy operations and Military Occupation, and Urban Terrain (MOUT) skills. Each soldier is training on several weapons systems including the M-4 carbine, 9 mm pistol, M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon,

M-240B machine gun and the .50 caliber machine gun.

The training is intended to prepare the unit for close combat in an urban environment. So far it has taken them through second-story windows as four-man squads. They have busted down doors, stormed into rooms, and eliminated the enemy threat. They have smashed fingers, banged-up noses, and tasted the dust of a convoy trail learning to

"Field Artillery soldiers are trained for stand-off combat. Now they are going to learn to engage the enemy face-to-face."

- LTC ALLEN BENTLEY, BATTALION CMDR



survive while traveling with loaded weapons and engaging the enemy from a moving vehicle. They have cleared buildings, scaled walls and learned that a second thought could cost a soldier his life.

Training days start about 5 a.m. and can last well after sundown. Temperatures have reached in the mid-90s with high humidity levels typical of eastern Oklahoma.

They have sweat buckets. And more buckets.

They are learning to fight a different fight.

"Field Artillery soldiers are trained for stand-off combat," said LTC Allen Bentley, battalion commander. "Now they are training as a SECFOR, and are going to learn to engage the enemy face-to-face."

Combat veterans from the 45th Infantry Brigade and the 90th Troop Command, fresh from recent deployments, are training the soldiers. The training is designed to expose the soldiers to the tasks and dangers they will encounter in their deployment. The training develops skill sets needed for the soldiers to survive in a close-combat, urban-operations environment.

"What happened in there?" an instructor asked after a four-man squad attempted to clear a room with an armed aggressor.

“Besides getting my entire team killed?” the team leader responds.

He is visibly upset.

These are the lessons they are learning.

“It’s upping their survivability in Iraq,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Horn, from Tahlequah. He is one of the instructors for the training and serves with Detachment 2, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 179th Infantry, Reconnaissance Detachment. He recently finished a one-year tour in Afghanistan.

“I think it’s probably the best training. Soldiers are all riflemen first. It’s violent,” he said. His trainers know that this is new to the field artillerymen. They still cut them no slack.

“We let them have it with both barrels,” Horn said. “We know that they are new to this, but we want them to get better. If they are going to be in cities, they need to know how to fight in buildings.”



BELOW: (L-R) PFC Justin Finch, SPC Nathaniel Cordes, SPC Terry Wylder and SGT Jesse Neugerbauer move from building to building during Urban Combat Skills training.

ABOVE: SPC Christopher Himes fires at targets from his moving Humvee with his M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon during the live-fire portion of the convoy operations class.



“We are making them constantly think on their feet. When they hit that door, and those simulators go off, the adrenaline goes up. They have to be able to keep a cool head so they don’t make mistakes. That’s the most difficult part of combat.”

SGT Bill Straily, of Comanche, was a policeman but never learned to shoot from a moving vehicle. He said he appreciates the demands of the training and the trainers.

“It’s not just ‘get them through and get them out,’” he said. “It’s training to standard. We are learning here what we will have to apply over there (Iraq).”

Bentley said that despite the newness and the rigors of the training, the soldiers are highly motivated and willing to accept the lessons learned.

“These soldiers know it’s for real. They are treating it like it’s for real. They are like sponges. They are soaking it up,” Bentley said.

“We are a nation at war. We fight the enemy we’ve got. These soldiers are dedicated to our community, our state and our nation.”

The MOUT training was the most exciting for SPC Christopher Durham, from Chickasha. He loved breaking down the doors.

“I’m the ‘door-breaker,’” he said. “It’s the adrenaline rush—you don’t know what’s in there. You don’t know what’s behind that door,” he said. Durham admitted it would be “very scary” should he have to perform the same task in combat. He said that with all of the gear and the physical demands of the job, physical fitness should be a “number one” priority for anyone preparing himself or herself for deployment. **GX**

THE AMBUSH OF RAVEN 42

don
LOWE

THE AMBUSH OF A CIVILIAN TRUCK CONVOY IN THE SALMAN PAK SECTION OF SOUTHEASTERN BAGHDAD BY 40 TO 50 HEAVILY-ARMED IRAQI INSURGENTS KILLED THREE AND WOUNDED SIX TURKISH NATIONAL TRUCK DRIVERS.



SGT LEIGH ANN HESTER, CALL SIGN RAVEN 42, OF THE 617TH MP COMPANY, A NATIONAL GUARD UNIT OUT OF RICHMOND, KY, HAD BEEN SHADOWING THE CONVOY AT A DISTANCE. UNDER HER COMMAND THE THREE HUMVEES CHARGED FORWARD.

PASSING THROUGH THE KILL ZONE, AUTOMATIC WEAPONS BLAZING, THEY DREW THE HEAVY FIRE OFF THE CONVOY AND ONTO THEMSELVES.



UNDER HEAVY FIRE, THE MIDDLE VEHICLE WAS HIT BY AN RPG, AND THREE ABOARD THE GUN PLATFORM WERE WOUNDED.



SGT HESTER AND HER TEAM CHARGE THE DITCH WHERE THE TEN INSURGENTS HAD TAKEN COVER. WITH HELP FROM THE .50 CAL AND SAWS MOUNTED ON THE HUMVEES, THEY RIPPED THE BADGUYS APART.



SNIPER FIRE FROM THE FARM HOUSE WAS ANSWERED WITH AT-4 POCKETS, SILENCING THE SHOOTER.



LOW ON AMMO, SGT HESTER RESUPPLIED HERSELF AND HER TROOPS FROM THE LEAD HUMMER WHILE THE TROOPER ON THE .50 CAL KNOCKED OUT THE BADGUYS' ESCAPE VEHICLES.



REINFORCEMENTS FROM THE 617TH ARRIVED TO CLEAN-UP. SGT HESTER'S SQUAD OF SEVEN AMERICANS, WITH THREE WOUNDED, ACCOUNTED FOR 24 ENEMY DEAD, SIX WOUNDED AND ONE CAPTURED.



SGT LEIGH ANN HESTER, THE FIRST WOMAN SOLDIER SINCE WWII TO DO SO, RECEIVED A SILVER STAR ALONG WITH SSG TIMOTHY NEIN AND SPC JASON MIKE. SHE SEEMED A LITTLE CONFUSED ON WHAT ALL THE FUSS WAS ABOUT. JUST DOING HER JOB... AND DOING IT WELL.



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