

GX[®]

THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

>> GX HERO

A LITTLE COMFORT

MIKAYLA VANDERGRIF
BRINGS JOY TO FAMILIES OF DEPLOYED SOLDIERS

FIT-FRIENDLY GUARD JOINS IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HEART DISEASE

HOPE IN THE HORN

JOURNEY TO THE HORN OF AFRICA, WHERE TROOPS HELP A COUNTRY PROSPER

DALE JR.

THE NATIONAL GUARD'S NEWEST DRIVER SPEEDS TOWARD SUCCESS IN CAR NO. 88

32

ANSWERING THE CALL

We asked what made you re-enlist, and you answered. We were overwhelmed with your responses about why you proudly continue to wear your uniform. Read what your fellow Citizen-Soldiers had to say.

52

>> ON THE ROAD

HOPE IN THE HORN

Find out what Army National Guard Soldiers are doing in the Horn of Africa from CPT Tim, who was there.

78

>> GX HERO

A LITTLE COMFORT

A 9-year-old child selflessly comforts family members of deployed Soldiers with a one-of-a-kind toy.

58

>> GUARD LEGACY

THE WOLVERINE GUARD

Learn about Michigan Soldiers' 300-plus years of service at home and abroad.





DEPARTMENTS

6 LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

Read CSM John D. Gipe's heartfelt message to each of you.

7 RANTS AND RAVES

Your letters and comments.

10 RECON

Spectacular images from Utah, Michigan and Iraq.

16 INTEL

Texas Soldiers march for a fallen comrade; military working dogs in Kosovo; the Bad Voodoo Platoon's Thanksgiving in the Sandbox and much more.

42 HOME BASE

Read about a foundation that aids severely ill military children; Decade of Health keeps you in shape; choosing a retirement lifestyle, plus much more.

48 THE BUGLER

Every month we bring you the latest, greatest programs and tools for recruiting and retention to sharpen your recruiting skills.

62 FIGHTING SPIRIT

When seconds count, the Blackhawk Internal Tourniquet System aids the wounded in record time.

82 GUARD TALES

Two brave Soldiers saved lives on a deadly Kuwaiti highway.



Letter From Leadership

Dear Soldiers,
Once again, I want to begin by offering each of you my profound gratitude, respect and admiration for the professionalism, courage, commitment, leadership and selfless service you have displayed this past year!

I feel honored to be part of an organization that has never failed to accomplish a mission it has been given. This past year, the Army National Guard (ARNG) has once again proven that its Citizen-Soldiers are the match of any military force on the planet—an organization that handles roles as diverse as first responder to governors, support to the customs and border patrol and counterdrug operations, state partners in a host of countries around the world, peacekeepers in the Balkans and Sinai, and Warriors, trainers and ambassadors for freedom in Afghanistan, Iraq, the Horn of Africa and other locations around the world.

Your success is reflected on the home front by the overwhelming number of young men and women that continue to swell the ranks of the ARNG. Due entirely to your efforts, the ARNG has grown more in numbers in the past two years than all other components of all other services combined—almost 24,000 in the past 28 months! That's a reflection on what America thinks of you and the job you have done. For the large majority of Americans, when they see the military, they see the ARNG—you are the ones running to the sound of the guns when America calls, whether you're responding to a natural disaster or defending freedom.

2007 was a year of great change in the ARNG and the way we do business. Beginning in January, when Secretary of Defense Robert Gates announced the 12-month mobilization rule, the ARNG leadership, along with leadership in the



For the large majority of Americans, when they see the military, they see the ARNG—you are the ones running to the sound of the guns when America calls, whether you're responding to a natural disaster or defending freedom.



states, has worked hard to configure its pre-deployment training to reduce the amount of time spent at the mobilization site. This has proved to be a difficult challenge for units that were alerted for deployment this rotation. However, the leadership of units, such as the 45th, 27th, 76th, 37th and 39th Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), along with many subordinate and/or supporting units, worked diligently to ensure that they could take advantage of the 12-month rule as much as possible, yet still be fully trained and prepared for their missions. Units scheduled to deploy in 2009 will be even better prepared to take advantage of this policy change.

In the spring, we saw a policy change that removed APFT and Ht/

Wt as graduation requirements in the Noncommissioned Officer Education System (NCOES). This change was needed to ensure that we placed the responsibility and accountability of Soldiers to meet these standards where it belongs—on the shoulders of the unit commander and NCOs.

This summer saw the return of the 1/34th BCT, whose warriors had the distinction of being the longest continuously deployed unit. They returned home to the new “Beyond the Yellow Ribbon” reintegration program, designed to ease the transition back into the civilian sector. This innovative program represents the future of reintegration on a national level.

SPC Eric Nowak (WVARNG) and SSG Mark Dornbush (TXARNG) proudly carried the distinction of being our first-ever ARNG Soldier and NCO of the Year, respectively, to compete in the Army's “Best

Warrior” competition (see GX, November 2007). This competition will be an annual event for the ARNG, conducted at the Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, GA, and will culminate with the winners being announced at the ARNG NCO and Soldier of the Year awards luncheon at the national conference of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS).

The backbone of the ARNG's training base, the regional training facilities, were recognized this year with five Institutes of Excellence ratings—the highest possible accreditation standard. Of all the training facilities in the Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard, only 17 have achieved this

status, and 15 of those are ARNG institutions.
In October, two things happened that will ensure that we're even better positioned for success as our role as an operational reserve emerges. TRICARE is now available for all ARNG Soldiers. This initiative began in 2002 as a way to give Soldiers the opportunity to meet their pre-deployment health standards. It has evolved from a program temporarily available to Soldiers returning from deployment to full-blown health-insurance coverage available to all Soldiers and their families for a nominal monthly fee. October was also the month the ARNG introduced the Active First program, the first program of its kind in existence. ARNG recruiters are now eligible to recruit Soldiers into the active component. This program is revolutionary because it allows Soldiers to receive full incentives on the front end, then receive yet another incentive when they're released from their active duty obligation and return to the ARNG to fulfill their commitment.

As we move into 2008, we will begin the implementation of the revamped Enlisted Promotion System. The new system will ensure our units promote Soldiers with the best leadership ability and potential. It changes the focus from administrative to leadership and focuses on the total Soldier to determine who will lead us into the future. GX will be part of an educational campaign that will ensure that Soldiers understand the system and know what it takes to be promoted.

We will focus on getting Soldiers MOS-qualified and trained on the new equipment that will be fielded. We have secured an additional \$111 million to ensure that our training institutions have the funding available to train the required number of Soldiers. The Army has put into place Warrior Transition Brigades at our Regional Medical Commands to better care for our Wounded Warriors. This program should be in place soon after this

magazine's release. The ARNG will provide 25 percent of the manning for these units. The Observer Controller/Trainer Course is in full swing, teaching Soldiers how to properly facilitate and validate unit training prior to deployment. The ARNG has provided the vast majority of the Operation Warrior Trainer troops, whose job is to assist mobilizing units at the mobilization station.

All of the above accomplishments reflect what your dedication, hard work, selfless service, sacrifice and yearning to exceed the standards have reaped for this organization. Your accomplishments are what give the ARNG leadership the muscle in the Pentagon and on Capitol Hill to garner more equipment, training dollars and infrastructure, as well as more benefits, entitlements and changes in policy and law to better provide for you and your families. Each of you is the engine that drives this train.

Do I expect you to rest on your accomplishments? Absolutely not! The ARNG will continue to provide forces for fighting and peacekeeping missions. We will continue to support the governors when needed for natural disasters or other emergencies. We will continue supporting counterdrug and the customs and border patrol as directed. We will continue to train and support nations through our state partnership programs.

But more to the point, here's what I will depend on you to do, as

an NCO, Soldier and Warrior. I will depend on you to ensure that your team is fully trained by making sure your team members attend the MOS training, critical functional courses and NCOES required of them. I will depend on you to ensure that your unit training exceeds the standard by being innovative, realistic and battle-focused. I will depend on you to ensure that your families and your Soldiers' families receive the support they need and deserve. I will depend on you to support your communities and employers the way they have supported you. I will depend on you to hold your leadership accountable in upholding the standards in training, and Soldier and family support. In short, I expect you to continue in the manner that has elevated this organization to the level that it stands at today—a community-based, family-oriented organization dedicated to the Army values that just happens to be the finest military organization on the planet!

Thanks to each and every one of you for your patriotism, valor and service to our great nation. Hooah!



John D. Gipe
CSM, USARNG
8th CSM of the
Army National Guard

Rants & Raves

:: WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! ::

Send your questions or comments to
feedback@gxonline.com

Baby on Board

My son, SPC Dustin Clark of Union City, TN, gets your magazine. I took these pictures the other day when he was playing with little Azya and thought you would like to see them. Might make your readers smile with all the things going on in the world.

JC Clark



Forward March

I wanted to comment on the Fallen Soldier March that has occurred. Almost four years ago, I started a vigil, a nine-mile march to honor our fallen Soldiers. Since then, it has gone from one Soldier with a flag to many Soldiers taking up the cause and marching in several states across the country. I wanted to personally thank everyone who has increased awareness of this worthy cause.

[I'd like to thank] people like Angela Newman, who lost her son only one month prior to the march in Tennessee that she participated in ... [as well as] Soldiers from California, Texas, Kentucky, Indiana and Illinois. And, yes, even the fine folks at GX donned their boots with cameras in tow and marched. This is truly amazing. It is my hope that every state will participate and organize a [similar] march to honor our fallen. The impact this has on our communities as they continue on with their daily lives is it forces them to recognize the honorable service of all of our fallen on a day they might not normally think about such a thing.

I would like to say thank you to everyone who has taken up the cause. God Bless You and the United States.

Jim Williams, SFC
Operations SGT

24/7 Support

SSG Heather,

As I travel the road of life, many, many people talk—talk of this, talk of that, talk of supporting Americans serving in uniform. Some talk of their one-time visit or once-a-year visit to a military hospital. You are always supportive of service men and women. This places you in a rare minority because your actions speak loud. I wish to thank you for all you do for those who give us our great free country. Plus, you wear the uniform; wow, God bless.

I am lucky to have met you,

Bob Kunkel
"Joe Average" Vietnam Veteran

WE HAVE A WINNER!

➤ Get on Your Soapbox and Get a Free T-shirt

GX presents SFC James Williams, TNARNG, as our winner for January! You could be next!

Tell us what you think of GX, and we'll randomly select one winner out of the first 100 responses to receive a free GX T-shirt!

Here's how to do it:

1. Write "T-shirt Giveaway" in the subject line of an email.
2. Sound off on whatever topic related to GX you want. For example, tell us what you think of the latest feature or the magazine as a whole!
3. Send your email to: feedback@gxonline.com

Happy New Year!

This new year has already seen colossal changes. I have some very big shoes to fill, as Keith Kawasaki takes on the role of editor-in-chief, and I take a shot as managing editor.

I was thinking about what to write, and I found it fitting that this month, American heroes told us why they raised their right hand more than once and re-enlisted.

In August 2005, when I returned from a tour in the “sand box,” I read *GX* and fell in love with it. I still feel that way today. I love telling the Guard story—every accomplishment and moment of triumph, heroic action or good deed—that’s what makes this magazine what you see today. If I had my way, everyone would read *GX* and know what an amazing job Citizen-Soldiers are doing every single day at home and in the far corners of the world.

While sorting through the responses to our request for your reasons for re-enlisting, I couldn’t help but grin. My own feelings about my community, the ARNG and our country were reflected in the stories I read. There is nothing that matches the feeling of donning the uniform.

You may remember in our July 2007 issue, we asked you to tell us why you are a Patriot. There was an overwhelming response from Soldiers and family members alike. This feature is geared more toward Soldiers but, as their loved ones read on, I hope they can sense the pride these men and women have in serving their country.

In this new role, I will be learning along the way. I hope all of our readers never hesitate to give feedback (heather.allen@gxonline.com) about whether you like something, love it, can’t stand it or want to see something specific. This magazine is for you. It’s your story. I’m humbled by the opportunity to help tell it.

We have some inspirational and exciting stories in this issue. In September, CPT Tim took a trip to Djibouti with CSM David Hudson, Senior Enlisted Advisor of the National Guard Bureau. Check out his adventure on page 52 in “On the Road.” In Intel, find out which comedian will be making his rounds to an FOB near you and learn more about the road march that Soldiers from Texas conducted for a fallen comrade.

Happy New Year and may God bless you and your families for all you contribute to our nation!

Heather



ABOUT THE COVER
Dale Earnhardt Jr. talks to *GX* about patriotism, racing and his new sponsor, the National Guard.
Photographed by Pat Staub



Heather

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

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>> SEARCH AND RESCUE TRAINING

[**Camp Williams, UT**]

A Utah National Guard Soldier and 19th Special Forces member are lifted on board an HH-60 Pave Hawk during a combat search and rescue integration exercise, Nov. 9, 2007, over the Utah Test and Training Range. Members of the 34th Weapons Squadron from Nellis Air Force Base led the training. The exercise expanded the integration with Utah's 211th Aviation Group AH-64 Apache Joint Rotary Wing, 4th Fighter Squadron F-16 Fighting Falcon assets and special operations forces. Participants also conducted extensive joint combat search and rescue operations against surface-to-air threats.

Photo by MSG Kevin J. Gruenwald







» DOWN AND DIRTY

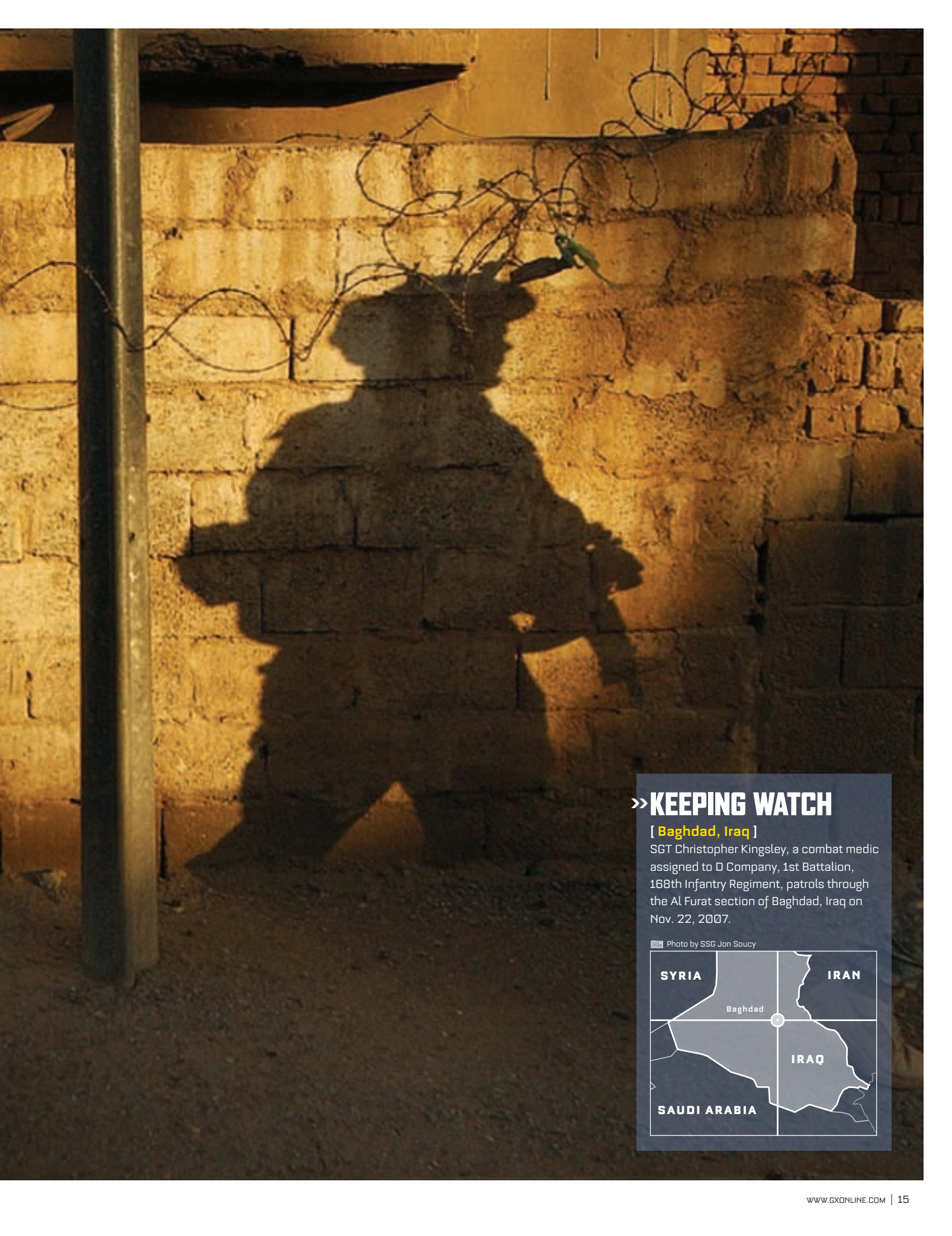
[**Camp Grayling, MI**]

Headquarters Soldiers from the 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, OHARNG, conduct hand-to-hand combat in preparation for their upcoming mobilization for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photo by SPC Ryan Cleary







» KEEPING WATCH

[Baghdad, Iraq]

SGT Christopher Kingsley, a combat medic assigned to D Company, 1st Battalion, 168th Infantry Regiment, patrols through the Al Furat section of Baghdad, Iraq on Nov. 22, 2007.

 Photo by SSG Jan Soucy



A map showing the geographical context of the location. It includes labels for SYRIA to the west, IRAN to the north, SAUDI ARABIA to the southwest, and IRAQ to the east. A small circle on the map indicates the location of Baghdad, which is situated on the border between Iraq and Iran.



Back to Battle
Texas brings WWII back to life.

19



Soldier's Best Friend
A day in the life of a military working dog.

20



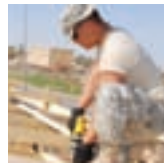
Bad Voodoo
Thanksgiving in the sandbox.

22



Partners in Planning
NYARNG joins forces with the Egyptian army.

26



Soldiers' Skills
Hobbies turn into combat MOSs.

28

371

KNOWN ORIGINALLY AS THE MILITIA,
THE NATIONAL GUARD TURNED 371
YEARS YOUNG DEC. 13, 2007



ON THE JOB: BG Maria L. Britt confers with Virginia Pearson (left) during a packing event for Operation Sandbox, a community support organization that sends packages and welfare supplies to deployed troops.

I strive to keep the right balance in my life, between my faith, my husband, my children and my Soldiers. This [balance] is my greatest challenge.

>> BG Maria Britt

Georgia Guard position itself as a leader among the other states," said Sonny Perdue, governor of Georgia, at the pinning ceremony held at Fort McPherson in November. "I am proud to have her on my team."

MG Terry Nesbitt, Georgia's adjutant general, said at the promotion ceremony, "We're not here to promote a female to general; we're here to promote a fine Soldier who has earned this rank."

Throughout her career, BG Britt has always found herself among a select group of females stepping forward in a male-dominated military.

A native of Gloversville, NY, BG Britt was a member of the fourth class in West Point history to graduate with female officers, receiving

her commission in May 1983.

She was the first woman to attend and graduate from the U.S. Army's jungle warfare school in Panama. She was selected as the first female battalion commander and the first female chief of staff of the GAARNG.

PROVING HER METTLE

BG Britt readily acknowledges that the challenges for female officers are often different from those males experience.

"I strive to keep the right balance in my life," she admits, "between my faith, my husband, my children and my Soldiers. This [balance] is my greatest challenge."

"For a woman, the focus often is not in moving ahead, but on keeping everything in delicate balance," she says.

Even when considering the lofty position of commander, she first reflected and prayed about the decision, knowing that this huge responsibility would affect the balance she stridently safeguards.

BG Britt is the mother of three girls, ranging from elementary school to college age and one about to be married. She is married to COL Timothy B. Britt, Chief, Joint Force Headquarters, GAARNG.

BG Britt acknowledges her success was helped along by key coaches and mentors—most prominently, her father, who encouraged her to pursue a non-traditional female career path as a military

SSG ROY HENRY GAARNG

Yes Ma'am

GEORGIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SELECTS FIRST FEMALE GENERAL IN ITS 275-YEAR HISTORY

Courtesy of GAARNG Public Affairs

FORT MCPHERSON, GA—The unique distinction of being the first woman in Georgia Army National Guard (GAARNG) history selected as a general officer is not something that BG Maria L. Britt dwelled on as she

prepared to take command of the 10,500-member force in December as the commander of the GAARNG.

The distinction is significant because BG Britt became the highest-ranking female member of the GAARNG in its 275 years of history.

"Her talents have helped the



BRIEFING

BG MARIA BRITT was a member of the **FOURTH** class in West Point history to graduate with female officers. She was the **FIRST** woman to attend and graduate from the U.S. Army's jungle warfare school in Panama.

officer. "It was dad who encouraged me to apply to West Point, and to continue in the military."

AN "OFFICER FIRST"

BG Britt also acknowledges the help of COL Gerald Lord, former garrison commander at Fort McPherson, who selected her as the company commander for law enforcement activities and the post's honor guard.

"This was the first time a female had ever held the position of commander of troops," she says.

She admits that at the time of her first interview before COL Lord, she was seven months pregnant with her second daughter.

"I am an officer first, a commander and a woman," BG Britt said. "I provide a different perspective and can add value, but you have to have people around you who value that perspective."

"When I raised my hand to be sworn in at the academy 24 years ago, it just felt right."

Now, 275 years after the Georgia militia first took the field, the promotion of the first female to command the state's ARNG forces also "feels right." **GX**

Eye in the Sky



▶ CALIFORNIA FIREFIGHTERS WOWED BY NATIONAL GUARD'S RC-26S

By SSG Jim Greenhill and SFC Bryan Rotherham, NGB

SAN BERNARDINO, CA—The National Guard's fleet of 11 sleek, gray RC-26 aircraft have historically played a vital role in assisting law enforcement's counterdrug efforts, helping with border security, gleaning vital information during Hurricane Katrina and flying missions over Baghdad, Iraq.

We're able to determine where we need to place ground personnel and be effective in holding the fire where it's at.

>> Ron Bollier, operations section chief for California's Grass Valley fire

Now these aircraft have provided detailed, full-motion video from 10,000 feet above the raging Southern California wildfires. A camera hangs from the belly of the RC-26s like an "eye in the sky," collecting unprecedented information while dropping flame-suffocating retardant and dumping water. A team of National Guard Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen decoded the footage and relayed it in real time to

the federal, state and local agencies tasked with extinguishing fires and managing the aftermath.

This technology, previously tested by the National Guard while fighting wildfires in Florida, was used for firefighting for the first time in California.

"Let's go eastbound to the fire's edge," said firefighter Ron Bollier via a National Guard radio. "We're going to want to reconnoiter the

easternmost edge of the fire and work it back ... we're going to fly counterclockwise from the north, and we want to look for heat signatures out to the west. Copy?"

Ron Bollier is not a pilot. He's not even a member of the National Guard. He's the operations section chief for the 1,100-acre Grass Valley fire near Lake Arrowhead northeast of Los Angeles. Bollier was speaking by radio to LTC Steven McShea of

FIGHTING FIRES: An Air National Guard RC-26 aircraft sits at U.S. Naval Air Station on Oct. 30, prior to a reconnaissance flight to acquire video images of the Southern California wildfires and feed them to agencies tackling the fires.

the California Air National Guard's 144th Fighter Wing. LTC McShea was the pilot of an RC-26 flying high above the fire.

As Bollier talked, he watched live footage from the RC-26 being projected onto a wall at the Snow Valley Mountain Resort in the northeast of Los Angeles, where hundreds of firefighters have made their headquarters and struck up camp.

"It has been outstanding to have live feed," Bollier said.

REAL-TIME SURVEILLANCE

The equipment on the RC-26 that gathers the images is from the same family as the FLIR—Forward-Looking Infrared—used by the National Guard for counterdrug and other surveillance operations.

Previously, firefighters had to rely on information that was four to six hours old. The RC-26s have flown two four-hour missions each day during the wildfires. They can monitor all of California's active wildfires in a single mission.

"The most useful thing we can provide is real-time, full-motion video to any customer, anywhere, anytime," LTC McShea said. "The new technology we just applied to this California wildfire disaster can be provided via

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

the Internet to the world—anybody who wants to can log in.”

That has made it possible for firefighters at remote locations to see the images—and for them to be seen simultaneously at the Joint Operations Center in Sacramento, CA, at U.S. Northern Command in Colorado Springs, CO, and at the National Guard Bureau in Arlington, VA.

“It’s real-time, highly accurate, high-definition information directly reaching the customer,” LTC McShea said. “They can talk to our aircraft [in] real time via radio and tell us what they want to see. This is one of the most satisfying missions I’ve been part of since I’ve been a member of the National Guard. There’s nothing better than answering the call of your neighbors. I have friends and family in this area, and I have friends who have lost their homes. It doesn’t get any better than to answer the call of your home state in an emergency like we have now.”

“We’ve never had real-time capability,” said Bob Toups, a California Department of Forestry communications technology supervisor and planning officer. “I can talk on the radio and tell my ground commanders that they have a hot spot at this latitude and longitude, and then they can put ground resources in there right away.”

TARGETING HOT SPOTS

Firefighters are able to be far more precise in their efforts using this technology. “We’re able to target specific areas of heat,” Bollier said. “We’re able to target problem

areas and address issues that may cause an escape on the line, may let the fire get outside. It really helps to have an overall good view of how much heat is inside the fire perimeter.”

As Bollier watches images of the Grass Valley fire, hot spots appear on the screen like jewels on black velvet or stars against a rural night sky.

“We’re able to determine where we need to place ground personnel and be effective in holding the fire

where it’s at,” Bollier said. “We can see where the fire’s spreading to and the point of impact, whether it be structures or anything else.”

The equipment can even see through clouds and smoke.

“Every time I stop at a fire, we provide them with a piece of information that they did not know before, and that’s

changed the way they’ve fought the fire,” LTC McShea said.

“When I can show an incident commander at the edge of the fire exactly what’s going on right now, that’s the most powerful tool we can give them. A picture is worth a thousand words.”

Firefighters say they would like to negotiate mutual support agreements to use the National Guard’s RC-26s more often.

“If we had the RC-26 tasked to us, we’d use this on every fire in California over a couple of hundred acres, certainly on every large Santa Ana-driven fire,” said Toups of the California Department of Forestry. “We could use this for flooding; we could use this for earthquakes; this could be a great tool to enhance the incident command structure and help mitigate emergencies.” **GX**

When I can show an incident commander at the edge of the fire exactly what’s going on right now, that’s the most powerful tool we can give them. A picture is worth a thousand words.

>> LTC McShea, California Air National Guard’s 144th Fighter Wing

VICTORY MAP



>> ARIZONA

Nov. 3, 2007, marked the final day of duty for the 245th Engineer Company, composed of members from Colorado, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Arizona. The incoming unit—the 972nd MP Company out of Reading, MA—appeared ready to take on the mission, having just arrived in Iraq. Their yearlong deployment will take place in Baghdad, where they will act as the Personal Security Detail for many high-ranking officials and also provide route security around the Green Zone.

>> NEVADA

The NVARNG’s 72nd MP Company began its third deployment on Nov. 10, with training at Fort Dix, NJ, in preparation for its mission in Iraq. The unit is headquartered in Henderson and includes about 100 Soldiers, as well as a detachment of about 20 Soldiers. The 72nd has been one of Nevada’s most heavily tasked units since 2001.

>> NEW YORK

Volunteers from the NYARNG’s 42nd ID helped spread holiday cheer this season by helping load donated Christmas trees bound for overseas troops and home station families across the United States. The five volunteer Citizen-Soldiers joined local tree farmers, Veterans and military family members at Ellms Tree Farms Nov. 28 to load a Federal Express delivery truck with nearly 150 Christmas trees, all bound for Fort Drum, NY, and the Army’s 10th Mountain Division.

>> TEXAS

On Nov. 15, the corner of Gabriel and Oak streets became the latest site in a series of abandoned home demolitions performed by the

Texas National Guard Counterdrug Task Force. Over the past 18 years, the task force has built strong relationships with communities, and four times a year, the Joint Forces Texas Law Enforcement Support Counterdrug Task Force rolls out heavy equipment to demolish known crack houses.

>> WASHINGTON, D.C.

Kate Deyermond went on a \$15,000 holiday spending spree Nov. 14, but not for herself or with her own money. The manager of the three Fisher House facilities at Walter Reed Army Medical Center used donations from Wal-Mart to buy presents and necessities for military families who stay at Fisher House while their loved ones recover from combat injuries or illnesses. Operation Deck the Walls is a new Wal-Mart program to bring holiday cheer to military families at 38 Fisher House facilities in the United States and Germany.

>> KOSOVO

The situation in Kosovo is “stable but potentially fragile,” says BG Douglas B. Earhart, former commander of the American contingent in the NATO-led Kosovo force. He says he is proud of the job that his 1,500-member force has done and believes the province is ready for several key events. BG Earhart commands a multi-national force based around the National Guard’s 29th Infantry Division. The 39th Infantry Division took over command on Nov. 2.

>> CAMP VICTORY, IRAQ

The 1st Cavalry Division and the 138th Fires Brigade, Kentucky Army National Guard, conducted a

traditional Saint Barbara's induction ceremony at the Al-Faw Palace on Nov. 23. More than 130 Soldiers and guests attended the ceremony, a tradition among artillerymen, where 21 new members were inducted into the Order of St. Barbara.

>> FOB KALSU, IRAQ

In a dramatic transformation, a courtyard that a year ago was home to insurgent weapons caches designed to inflict destruction and chaos in the Arab Jabour region has become a training ground for a group of potential Iraqi policemen who want to help rebuild and bring order to their community. On Nov. 13, Delaware National Guard Soldiers of the 153rd MP Company, currently attached to the 2nd BCT, 3rd ID, gave 25 Arab Jabour citizens training to help them on their way.

>> CAMP ARIFJAN, KUWAIT

GEN (ret.) Colin L. Powell, the 65th U.S. Secretary of State, made a surprise visit to service members stationed in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, on Nov. 18. He was greeted by the thunderous applause of hundreds of service members. GEN (ret.) Powell said he was proud to have served and that, in June, he would be celebrating 50 years from when he began his service in the military as a second lieutenant. He referred to his time in the service as some of the best years of his life. **GX**



WWII CLEARANCE MISSION: "Soldiers" of the Texas Military Forces Living History Detachment clear a German-occupied position during their re-enactment of a combined infantry-armor "close assault" at Camp Mabry for Veterans Day weekend.

BRIEFING

Back to Battle

▶ **TEXAS DETACHMENT BRINGS WWII TO LIFE**

By MAJ Eric Atkisson, 36th ID PAO, TXARNG

CAMP MABRY, TX—They came here from across the state, from cities as far as Beaumont and Amarillo, wearing the same uniforms and carrying the same weapons that American and German Soldiers used throughout the epic struggle for Europe in WWII. These "Soldiers" of the Texas Military Forces Living History Detachment, or G Company, assembled at Camp Mabry on Veterans Day weekend with a single mission: to entertain and educate spectators with a re-enacted battle the 36th (ID) fought throughout that war.

"The 36th ID was the largest component of Texas National Guard troops to serve in WWII," said Jeff Hunt, Texas Military Forces Museum director, to the audiences who came to watch the re-enactment. "And it is their history in particular that we are going to focus on here today. We're going to try to bring to life a little bit of the experience of the infantryman of the 36th Division on the battlefields of WWII."

G Company did that by showing the uniforms, equipment and even a couple of the vehicles the "Fighting 36th" used, including a Sherman tank and M-3 half-track. They also blank-fired some of the main firearms Americans and Germans used during the war.

What the audiences wanted to see above all else, and what the "Soldiers" of G Company gave them with a zest worthy of Hollywood, was a combined infantry and armor "close assault" on a fortified German position the detachment created at Camp Mabry, complete with burned buildings, barbed wire and anti-tank obstacles.

THE LARGEST component of Texas National Guard troops to serve in WWII, the 36th Infantry Division landed by sea at Salerno, Italy, in September 1943, against intense German opposition and went on to take part in a series of actions in Italy, France and Germany.

those who have worn, who wear and who will wear the uniform.

"By honoring the Veterans of the 36th ID of WWII," he added, "we are also honoring all the Veterans of our country; those who have served from the American Revolution down to the current day."

"I thought it was very realistic," said Austin resident Mack Palmer, a Veteran of both WWII and the Korean War. "I learned more about the German weapons than I had known before. The re-enactment was very professional and educational, particularly for youngsters [who] only know about what's going on in Iraq."

In September 1943, the 36th landed by sea at Salerno, Italy, against intense German opposition and went on to take part in a series of actions in Italy, France and Germany, including the capture of Rome, the breach of the St. Marie Pass and the battle of the "National Redoubt" at Künzelsau, its final combat in the war.

The division was deactivated in 1945 and replaced by the 49th Armored Division, but on May 1, 2004, it was reactivated as part of the U.S. Army's larger transformation to a lighter, more agile force for combat operations in the Global War on Terror. Since then, the 36th ID has deployed Soldiers to Iraq, Afghanistan, Kosovo and the Sinai. **GX**

"We don't do this to glorify war," said Hunt after the assault, which ended, like the war, with a German surrender. "We do this to educate, to remind our people what our Soldiers faced and [still] face on the battlefields that they are sent to, and to remind our people of the service and sacrifice of

We don't do this to glorify war. We do this to educate, to remind our people what our Soldiers faced and face on the battlefields. >> Jeff Hunt, Texas Military Forces Museum director



TAKE DOWN: CPT Darrin Haas finds out what a military working dog can do.

I noticed Ronnie's long ears perking up as he eyed me fiercely. At this point my heart was pounding in my throat, and I was afraid my legs would not work. I wondered why in the world I had agreed to do this. >> CPT Darrin Haas

and they are trained to then sit calmly after discovering something. "It's a safe way to conduct searches, because if the dog begins scratching at what he finds, like you see in the movies, he could accidentally trip an IED or get stuck by a needle if he was searching for drugs," SSG Landis said.

These aggression-trained dogs also serve as a force multiplier for the Soldiers. "Our dogs can increase the level of security and safety on post. Most people fear big dogs. They can de-escalate a situation just by being there as a deterrent, thus making the use of lethal force less likely."

SSG Landis also pointed out that, "It's safer for the troops to use a dog because it limits the chances that a U.S. Soldier could get hurt."

"GET HIM BOY!"

SSG Landis continued my training by outlining a

scary exercise. "If a perpetrator is stupid enough to try and run from us," he said, "then he will probably try to fight back. So when we train, we also fight back so the dog gets used to it. If you just lay down during training, then the dog will expect that in a real situation and not know how to react."

I couldn't imagine who would be stupid enough to run from Ronnie, the name of the huge monster drooling and eyeing me as if I was a T-bone steak, but I understood the logic. So I took a deep breath and waddled out to the training field wearing a full-body bite suit that weighed more than 40 pounds and carrying my foam noodle.

As soon as I came to the appointed spot, I turned and faced them. Ronnie sat obediently by his master's side as SSG Landis issued his command: "You in the field: Respond to the sound of my voice." That was my cue to pace back and forth being non-compliant. Faking agitation wasn't hard because I was scared, and the yelling part was difficult because I couldn't speak. I finally managed to shout something threatening at the dog.

A Soldier's Best Friend

MY TRAINING DAY WITH A MILITARY WORKING DOG

By CPT Darrin Haas, TNARNG

CAMP BONDSTEEL, KOSOVO—"You want me to do what!?"

SSG Brian Landis, a military dog handler, handed me a foam baton and said, "When the dog attacks and has a hold of you, I want you to fight back until he has you completely taken to the ground ... or I yell stop."

I twisted the baton in my hands, which had the strength of a wet noodle, and then looked down at the 75-pound German shepherd glaring at me. "Let me get this right: After that dog jumps on me and is trying to rip my arm off, you want me to smack him with this thing?" I replied, holding up the "stick."

SSG Landis looked at me and said, "Yup. It won't hurt the dog at all." I agreed, but at that moment, I wasn't worried about the dog.

MWDS: A FORCE MULTIPLIER

I was on a day of training with SSG Landis, a kennel master from the 13th Military Police Company from the South European Task Force (Airborne) and NCOIC for Task Force Guardian's K9 unit. The K9 team, working with KFOR9 stationed at Camp Bondsteel, consists of three U.S. Army dog handlers and three highly trained Military Working Dogs (MWD) named Ronnie, Zorby and Allen. The small unit is attached to the Provost Marshall's Office currently operated by Task Force Guardian and the 130th Military Police Company, TNARNG.

"Each dog is trained in aggression, but they also have other skills in either narcotics or explosives detection," SSG Landis said. "They can either sniff for drugs or explosives, but not both. It would be dangerous if a dog was searching and found something, and we didn't know whether to call EOD (Explosive Ordnance Detachment) or to check for hidden drugs."

MWDs have a 95% accuracy rate when searching for explosives and 90% for drugs. The dogs will sniff out any area that a handler points to,



MAN'S BEST FRIEND: Ronnie, a military working dog, is honing his skills in Kosovo.

SSG KEITH THOMAS

SSG Landis raised his voice and repeated the command, "You in the field: Please respond to the sound of my voice!" I noticed Ronnie's long ears perking up as he eyed me fiercely. At this point, my heart was pounding in my throat, and I was afraid my legs would not work. I wondered why in the world I had agreed to do this. As I was instructed, I turned and charged at SSG Landis and Ronnie, screamed and then took off running as fast as I could in the opposite direction.

I saw Ronnie lunge at me, but SSG Landis still held him tightly as I turned to flee. I could hear the dog howling and barking at me as I ran as fast as I could, knowing deep down it was impossible, in a 40-pound bite suit, to outrun a trained working dog. Next I heard SSG Landis yell, "Get him boy, get him!" I no longer heard the dog barking; all I heard was my own footsteps and heavy breathing. I did not dare look back. I just kept running.

PULLED TO THE GROUND, FOAM NOODLE AND ALL

I knew a large mass of fur, teeth and muscle was gaining on me. And all I had was that foam baton. I heard nothing. Just silence. Then, after what seemed like eternity, the silence ended with an inhuman snarl and a thud.

The snarl was Ronnie sinking his teeth into my padded arm and grunting as he pulled me to the ground. The thud was me hitting the earth from a dead run.

I was spun completely around and thrown onto my stomach. Stunned, I tried to get on my knees and fight back, but Ronnie was clamped down on my left arm and violently jerking me back to the ground. The baton I was instructed to fight with was also in my left hand, now rendered completely useless.

Ronnie kept pulling on my arm and dragging me to the prone position

every time I tried to get up. I could hear SSG Landis yelling, "Good boy Ronnie, bring him here," a command meant to keep me captive. I finally gave up, curled into a semi-fetal position and stopped resisting, hoping that this whole thing would be over soon. Then Ronnie stopped tugging,

knowing I was beaten, but he still kept control of my arm with his teeth and tensed muscles.

I heard Landis in the background yelling over Ronnie's throaty growling and breathing, and my pounding heartbeat. "Ronnie ... out!" he yelled. I stayed frozen on the ground hoping my arm would not get torn off. Next, SSG Landis was standing over us and with just a gesture, Ronnie unclamped my arm, stepped back and sat down beside SSG Landis, never taking his eyes off me.

SSG Landis ordered me to my feet, and I slowly stood up with Ronnie watching intensely. Caked in mud, I spun around and faced the two in order to be "searched and taken into custody." SSG Landis cautioned, "Be sure not to make any sudden movements, especially to run or [do] anything that looks like you might be attacking me or Ronnie. You will end up on the ground again."

Later that afternoon, I watched as Zorby, another MWD, pulled a 220-pound Soldier wearing a bite-suit to the ground within seconds. I noticed that his foam noodle didn't work either. **GX**



Actor/comedian
Carlos Mencia

COMEDY HEAVYWEIGHT GIVES TROOPS A LAUGH IN THE PERSIAN GULF

Courtesy of USD

ARLINGTON, VA—Superstar and stand-up comedian Carlos Mencia will soon take his no-holds-barred comedy to service men and women stationed in the Persian Gulf on a USD/MNC-I expeditionary entertainment tour. Mencia will embark on the first comedic USD (United Service Organizations) tour to entertain troops with his trademark performances, insightful perspectives and uncanny ability to incite laughs. He will also visit with members of the U.S. Armed Forces, sign autographs and tour military installations. Comic newcomer Brad Williams will open for Mencia on the tour.

Whether conducting his man-on-the-street interviews, taping commercial parodies or performing to sold-out crowds, Mencia is known for his outspoken style. The comic genius behind "Mind of Mencia," one of today's highest rated shows, Mencia draws an average of 2.1 million viewers per episode. Now starring opposite Ben Stiller and Michelle Monaghan, Mencia shows his acting chops as uncle Tito in the DreamWorks' film *The Heartbreak Kid*.

"I joke a lot about the war and terror, but the people I respect the most are those that not only put their lives on the line to serve this country, but also sacrifice being away from their

families," Mencia says. "It's my pleasure to give back to them and to tour with the USD."

Mencia was born in Honduras and is the 17th of 18 brothers and sisters. Raised in Los Angeles and Central America, he studied engineering before pursuing a career in comedy. Performing stand-up since he was 19, Mencia has been showcased at such comedic hot spots as the Laugh Factory and The Comedy Store.

Earning the title "International Comedy Grand Champion," he has guest-starred on TV shows "The Shield" and "Bernie Mac," among others. The voice of Juan in the *Farce of the Penguins* and Felix in "The Proud Family," Mencia also released his stand-up DVD, "Carlos Mencia: No Strings Attached," in 2006.

"We're extremely pleased to work with such talented entertainers as

I joke a lot about the war and terror, but the people I respect the most are those that not only put their lives on the line to serve this country, but also sacrifice being away from their families.

>> Carlos Mencia, stand-up comedian and USD entertainer

Carlos to provide comic relief to our troops serving far from home," says Edward A. Powell, USD president and CEO. "If you really want to support the troops, the USD is the way."

This tour continues the USD's tradition of bringing A-list celebrities to troops serving away from home. In 2006, celebrity entertainers traveled to 26 countries and 13 states, entertaining more than 184,000 service members and their families. In the first nine months of 2007 alone, the USD produced 48 tours with 287 distinct entertainment events for the troops. **GX**

95%

>> THE ACCURACY RATE FOR MILITARY WORKING DOGS WHEN SEARCHING FOR EXPLOSIVES.

KEVIN WINTER/GETTY IMAGES

On the Ground in Iraq

A SANDBOX THANKSGIVING WITH BAD VOODOO

By SFC Toby Numm

Lying in my rack trying to wrestle a few more sacred minutes of sleep before what is sure to be another crazy “Sidewinder” day, I came to terms with the fact that five hours was all I was going to get. My radio crackled with the ominous sound of our operations cell requesting my immediate presence. I got dressed and headed to our command post, wondering about the urgency.

Of course, over here in Iraq you really never know—a message like that could be something really good or it could be something really bad. Our tents were not that close to the post, so there was some time to think through different scenarios before getting there. Mainly, the anticipation just tries your patience.

Reaching the post, I looked at the operations sergeant with bated breath and noticed the supervision

of the commander, which made me more leery. “What can I do for you, gentlemen?” I asked. Then it came: “We just got a mission to Al Asad—looks like it’s Bad Voodoo’s turn!”

THE MEN GET THEIR MISSION

Well, that wasn’t bad at all, I thought. I have been waiting on a good push somewhere other than the usual, and I was ready to get out there in the mix again. I glanced at a large map of Iraq in the operations cell and realized Al Asad was way out in the An Bar Province.

Bad Voodoo has carried out missions to Al Taqaddum Airbase before but not Al Asad, and I couldn’t recall anyone else going there from our brigade. I felt compelled to ask the question, “Are we the first?”

“Looks like it. Do you have any room for passengers?”

I knew immediately this would be a great mission for the men of Bad Voodoo. It took a day to prepare, and then we moved out ready to face

the world. When we linked up with the unit we were escorting from the Georgia National Guard, I was pleased to see a bunch of highly motivated faces looking forward to a good mission. I inquired whether anyone had been there before, and got that same blank stare I got in our tactical operations center.

This just added to my excitement and pride; nothing makes me prouder or happier than knowing that Bad Voodoo is on the job.

MURPHY’S LAW STRIKES

I’m sure that everyone is familiar with Murphy’s Law—this mission was no exception. On the first leg of the journey, we suffered mechanical and electrical problems that forced us to stop and seek repairs.

We spent our time at a roadside camp getting mechanics to straighten out all but one of our vehicles. Sometimes the gremlins bite, and

BRIEFING

OTHERWISE KNOWN

as the “Bad Voodoo” Platoon, members of the 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1/160th Infantry Regiment, California Army National Guard, are currently deployed to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

always at the worst time. But with the help of some motivated troops from the 82nd Airborne, we were back on the

road and ready to roll quickly.

The next leg took us into the An Bar Province, which at first really didn’t seem that bad. The last time I was over here, we did a little work in Fallujah, which is right off of Highway 1, a major supply route.

But then we hit a snag: The lead truck took a turn and exited off the nice three-lane highway we were cookin’ down and turned us right into the dark desert.

After a few disconcerting seconds, I grabbed my map, made a few notations and took over the point position. The lead truck hadn’t made that big of a mistake: It’s not like each part of the desert looks different. I had better technology and more land navigation skills, so we restarted.

Once we were back on track, we started a crawl pace through the Iraqi Badlands on what was a road sometime before electricity. I thought back to Roman times and how they must have moved through these regions, and come to the harsh reality of being out here alone.

I made some radio calls and found a lone F-18 fighter jet overhead that identified itself as our “support.” I knew the men would find it comforting to know that if things went wrong, we would be bringing in thunder from the skies to clear it out.

After a long trek through the Dakotas of Iraq, we arrived at our destination. The Bad Voodoo crew were not acclimatized to the cold temperature and had to turn the heater on. Yeah, we were a long way from California.



::GOOD EATS:: The Soldiers of Bad Voodoo Platoon chow down on a much-deserved Thanksgiving feast in Iraq on Nov. 25.

COURTESY OF SFC TOBY NUMM

LET'S EAT!

As we were talked through our priorities, I went into my platoon sergeant role and looked for a place to eat and rest.

We were so excited when we found a chow hall because it had been a long 15 hours since our last meal, and it was time to feed the machines. However, as we walked up to the door of the hall, we saw the heartbreaking sign: "CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING PREPARATIONS."

Was it Thanksgiving? Indeed it was. With all the focus on the mission, it had slipped by that the holiday season was upon us. I offered the guys old standby MREs, but I had no takers.

All we could do was head off to find some sleep. Most places we go have a transient or temporary housing unit, but this place didn't seem to have one. We were able to negotiate with a Marine Corps unit to get some space in their housing block for the day and night. The weathered and extremely leathery gunnery sergeant made it clear that his hospitality was available, but the holidays were helping it improve along with his demeanor.

A few hours later, I woke up all the guys. We were able to bathe, which was a bonus, and headed to the chow hall that only hours earlier took us to an emotional state we were not prepared for.

This time, we dined like kings on the sweetest of turkey loins, all the fixings with the candied yams, stuffing and cranberry sauce. There was a shrimp bar for the coastal folks like me, along with a bounty of pastries and an apple cider bar to wash it all down.

"Good Troops, Good Meat, Good God, Let's Eat!" became our new battle cry.

Thanks was, is and will be given for another Sidewinder success story, and the Bad Voodoo crew will roll on. **GX**

[SOLDIER PROFILE]



KEITH KAWASAKI

READY FOR ACTION

During train-up at **CAMP SHELBY, MS**, **GX** interviewed members of the 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1/160th Infantry Regiment, California Army National Guard, otherwise known as the Bad Voodoo Platoon. We caught up with **PFC Ramon Mata, 25**, before he and other Soldiers in his platoon left for their current deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Q: What prompted you to join the military?

A: My father was in the Army. He was an infantry Soldier also. So, I kind of followed in his footsteps. In 2005, I started everything out.

Q: Why did you choose the Guard?

A: I love California. I like being close to home.

Q: Why did you choose infantry?

A: I'm kind of an active person. I like to be outside. I want to have some fun.

Q: Are you psyched to use the new Guardian vehicle?

A: I'm excited. I'm going to be a gunner. .50 Cal on top or the 240B.

Q: Have you fired both?

Yes, I enjoy it thoroughly, especially the .50 caliber. It's very powerful. It's an experience.

Q: What is your civilian career?

A: I'm a security guard right now, going into law enforcement. **GX**

COUNTRY MUSIC STAR BRAD PAISLEY VISITS WOUNDED SERVICE MEMBERS

Courtesy of USO

▶ ARLINGTON, VA—Country music singer-songwriter Brad Paisley accompanied the USO on a visit with wounded troops Nov. 2 at the Brooke Army Medical Center's Burn Unit in San Antonio, the U.S. Department of Defense's premier burn center. During the trip, Paisley walked from room to room shaking hands with service members, listening to stories, signing autographs and expressing his heartfelt thanks for their service.



Paisley also provided service members with free tickets to his concert that night at the Verizon Wireless Amphitheater.

Touched by their dedication and selflessness, Paisley gave an impromptu concert in early August to more than 35,000 Soldiers and their family members at Fort Campbell, KY. Proclaimed by Paisley as his most important concert of the year, the event detoured his Bonfires & Amplifiers 80-city tour and included performances by Kellie Pickler and Taylor Swift. For his efforts in support of U.S. troops, Paisley received a special plaque signed by U.S. Army MG Jeffrey J. Schloesser.

"Today's USO visit was surreal," Paisley says. "Sitting with service members who have been through so much and hearing their stories is something I'll never forget. To them I am just a country music singer, but to me they're my heroes, and I wish them all a speedy recovery."

Paisley's most recent No. 1 hit, "Online," became his ninth chart-topper in a short 15 weeks, tying his own record for quickest trip to No. 1, which he set when his single "He Didn't Have To Be" became his first hit in December 1999.

Among artists who landed No. 1 songs since that time, Paisley leads the list with nine. He has sold more than 10 million albums since his 1999 debut. Paisley tied with George Strait for the most CMA Awards nominations this year, with five, including best entertainer, male vocalist, album (*5th Gear*), single ("Ticks") and video ("Online").

In times of peace and war, the USO has consistently delivered its special brand of entertainment and comfort to service men and women serving around the world. In 2006, the USO staged 328 special entertainment events, including music concerts, autograph signings, hospital visits and movie screenings. **GX**

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Memorial March

MEMORIAL MARCH: In the tradition of the infantry, Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry honor SSG Tommy I. Folks.

TEXAS GUARD MEMBERS RAISE MONEY TO HONOR FALLEN COMRADE

Story and photo by CPT James M. Campbell, TXNG PAO

WELLINGTON, TX—A cool, autumn breeze greeted the Soldiers of Company D, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, as they gathered at a local park to remember a fellow Soldier who lost his life in combat.

About this time back in 2005, the Guard members lost SSG Tommy I. Folks Jr. to a roadside bomb attack in southern Iraq. It was SSG Folks' second deployment in the War on Terror and, sadly, his last.

"Tommy was a gentle-natured, soft-spoken person who knew how to lead," recalled SFC Ricky Lane of Company D, in Wellington. "He was one of the most professional Soldiers that I've ever worked with."

The Guard members, however, decided to do more than just ponder great memories. In the rich traditions of the infantry, the Soldiers of Company D held a 5K road march to raise money and awareness for the memorial scholarship fund established in SSG Folks' name.

"Tommy was a student at West Texas A&M University in Canyon [Texas] before he was called for his second tour of duty," noted SFC James A. Gray, Company D's readiness NCO. "A memorial scholarship fund was established to keep his memory alive, and we feel this road march was the least we could do for Tommy."

Company A in Amarillo, where SSG Folks was assigned, held a similar fundraising event to boost the memorial scholarship fund.

"Our goal is to raise \$10,000 by next year to keep SSG Folks' memory intact," said CPT Kris Hulse, commander of Company A. "If we reach our goal, scholarships will be awarded based on the interest paid from the initial \$10,000 investment."

As the Soldiers in Wellington tightened their bootlaces and adjusted their rucksacks for the 5K event, two men from American Legion Post 68 in

Shamrock, TX, pulled up in their blue pickup truck. They walked over and presented SFC Lane with a check for \$500.

"I almost cried when they gave me that check," said SFC Lane, who, although overcome with emotion, gratefully accepted the donation and thanked the two men as they walked away.

Tommy was a gentle-natured, soft-spoken person who knew how to lead. He was one of the most professional Soldiers that I've ever worked with.

>> SFC Ricky Lane, Company D, 2nd Battalion, 142nd Infantry, TXARNG

SUPPORTING THE CAUSE

One Soldier, PFC William Larkin of Company D, placed \$300 in the donation can on behalf of the employees of Bell Helicopter in Fort Worth.

"I work with these guys, and when I told them what we were doing on Saturday morning, they started giving me tens and twenties," he said. Combined, the Guard members raised approximately \$800 before the road march even started.

One person, Chrissy Gutierrez of Wellington, joined the Soldiers at the park and decided to join the march.

When they were ready to go, the Soldiers grabbed U.S. and Texas flags and commenced with the road march. As they made their way to the downtown square and around the city, people stepped out of their houses and shops and waved as the Soldiers passed by.

"I grew up in Wellington and saw all of you marching downtown this morning," said Debbie Gonzales of Sulpher, OK. "I came by the park to see what was going on." Gonzales and her husband just happen to be involved with the Patriot Guard Riders in their community and presented the Guard members with a check to honor the commitment of SSG Folks.

As the road march concluded at the park, the Soldiers felt a deep sense of satisfaction, knowing they helped contribute to the preservation of their fallen comrade's memory.

"We raised more than \$1,000 this morning, and Alpha Company in Amarillo raised more than \$1,400," SFC Lane said. "We're honored to do this for Tommy." **GX**

OPERATION BUTTON-UP

▶ NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS ASSIST NORTHWOOD TORNADO VICTIMS

Courtesy of NDARNG PAO

BISMARCK, ND—Soldiers and Airmen from the North Dakota National Guard (ND NG) were placed on state active duty status to support the ongoing Button-Up Northwood effort in response to an Aug. 26 tornado that devastated the community. Guard members were in Northwood on Nov. 16–18 to assist residents with rebuilding efforts so that homes and businesses get repaired in time for winter.

ND Governor John Hoeven visited Northwood on Nov. 17 to lend assistance and thank volunteers. He was joined by Adjutant General David Sprynczynatyk, Division of Homeland Security Director Greg Wilz, Northwood



David Sprynczynatyk, ND ARNG's Adjutant General, visits with Soldiers from the NDARNG on Nov. 17.

Mayor Richard Johnson and Northwood City Administrator Marcy Douglas.

"Our first priority is the safety and well-being of the residents who are living in homes that may still be exposed to the elements," Gov. Hoeven said. "Winter is just around the corner and homes need to be 'buttoned up'

so they can withstand a North Dakota winter. We appreciate the efforts of our National Guard in helping the citizens of Northwood."

While rebuilding efforts have been extensive, some residents have had difficulty finding contractors qualified to make them. The shortage of skilled labor in the area has necessitated the Guard's assistance in facilitating repairs of approximately 17 severely damaged homes to make them habitable for winter.

"Guard units from Fargo and Bismarck, in conjunction with student

volunteers from university and college vocational trade schools from across the state, were in Northwood on Nov. 16–18 making the needed repairs," MG Sprynczynatyk said. "Soldiers and Airmen acted as team leaders for the volunteer force, supplying needed construction expertise and providing construction personnel as laborers."

Wilz said, "In some cases, the repairs needed are extensive and range from closing exposed roof rafters and ceiling trusses to installing siding, windows and rebuilding chimneys. I am confident that our efforts will be successful and needed repairs will be completed over the weekend."

The efforts were coordinated by the North Dakota Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters and supported by the City of Northwood, the North Dakota Department of Emergency Services, the ND NG, Bismarck State College and the North Dakota State College of Science-Wahpeton. **GX**

Winter is just around the corner, and homes need to be "buttoned up" so they can withstand a North Dakota winter.

>> North Dakota Gov. John Hoeven



:: JOINING FORCES ::
 BG Paul C. Genereux Jr., deputy commander of the Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division, confers with Egyptian BG Sala Fouaad, deputy commander of the Egyptian 9th Armored Division.

Partners in Planning

NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD (NYARNG) JOINS FORCES WITH EGYPTIAN ARMY IN SIMULATED COMBAT EXERCISE

By LTC Richard Goldenberg, HQ, 42nd INF
 Courtesy of DVIDS

CAIRO, EGYPT—Nearly 200 members of the NYARNG's 42nd Infantry "Rainbow" Division headquarters based in Troy, NY, will execute a large-scale command post exercise jointly with Egyptian Army staff officers in Cairo as part of Bright Star 2007.

The division, composed of Citizen-Soldiers from across New York state, will team with members of the Egyptian Army's 9th Armor Division command and staff to replicate a multi-national senior headquarters during next week's battle simulation exercise.

The Bright Star deployment of the division headquarters staff and Special Troops Battalion Soldiers supports the biennial multi-national exercise, which includes more than a dozen allied, coalition or partner nations in Egypt.

"For more than 23 years, since 1983, the success of Bright Star demonstrates to enemies around the world, as well as allies, that we can deploy a division headquarters, deploy an army headquarters, conduct an airborne operation from halfway around the world and insert

an infantry company on the ground," said LTG R. Steven Whitcomb, commander of the Third Army and U.S. Army Central, the 42nd Division's higher headquarters for the training exercise, "and you can interface and interact with conventional forces almost routinely."

A MILITARY BRAIN EXERCISE

This year's exercise will include a large-scale battle simulation exercise meant to challenge senior leaders and staff in the command and control of combat forces operating jointly.

"All of us know that a command post exercise exerts pressure on the generals, colonels, lieutenant colonels and majors because it is a brain exercise," LTG Whitcomb said to the combined American and Egyptian staff. "So challenge each other—learn from each other."

The computer-generated battlefield is based on fictitious nations in conflict and a coalition of nations responding to restore security and an internationally recognized border. The 42nd Infantry Division commander and staff will control a fictitious force of more than 110,000 troops for the command post exercise.

"There is no better expert on warfare in this maneuver box that we are conducting operations in than the Egyptians," LTG Whitcomb said. "This is their territory—they know how to fight this fight, and we ought to learn from them."

Nearly three dozen Egyptian officers from the Egyptian 9th Armored Division will complement the 42nd Division staff for the exercise. Joint training began almost immediately after the division's deployment, as members of the Egyptian staff learned about the Army's military decision-making process and techniques for the command and control of combat forces.

"We question each other and learn from each other," LTG Whitcomb said, "and that is the real value of Bright Star."

EXTENSIVE TRAINING

"We came with a plan," said 42nd Division Chief of Staff COL Carl Pfeiffer. "We are here to demonstrate to the Egyptians that we are willing to work, partner and listen to them as we work through the [training] scenario.

"Our report card here is when our Egyptian partners write a letter to LTG Whitcomb," COL Pfeiffer continued, "and tell him that they enjoyed working with the 42nd Infantry Division."

Many members of the 42nd Division deployed to Cairo are veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom, having served with the headquarters in Tikrit, Iraq, in 2005. Much of the training sessions and mission planning involved applying lessons learned from that deployment to the control of thousands of troops in the simulated combat environment.

Part of the cooperative training included discussion and comparison of the two units' capabilities and techniques for battle command. The two division commanders, MG El Araby El Suray from the Egyptian 9th Armored Division and BG Paul Genereux from the 42nd Infantry Division, led discussions among the joint staff.

"This exercise is a good way to bring our Soldiers together," MG El Araby said. "When we train like this, we'll know everything about each as well as we can."

"I cannot be more pleased in the cooperative effort I'm seeing between our two staffs," BG Genereux said. "My goals for this mission were to safely deploy our command post and train alongside the Egyptian 9th Armored, achieving real unity in our two organizations for the exercise. Ninety percent of what I wanted to achieve in Bright Star, we have already done."

"They [the Egyptians] are taking our products to get synchronized with us," COL Pfeiffer said. "That is unusual, but of all the units I've

BRIEFING

BRIGHT STAR'S computer-generated battlefield is based on fictitious nations in conflict, and a coalition of nations responding to restore security and an internationally recognized border. The 42nd ID commander and staff will control a fictitious force of more than 110,000 troops for the command post exercise.

SFC PETER TOWSE

worked with in this part of the world, this unit [the Egyptian 9th Armored Division] is the best, by far.”

The division was selected to support Bright Star 2007 immediately after its redeployment from Iraq. While overseas, the division led a mixed task force of more than 23,000 Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard forces, including two active duty brigade combat teams.

The deployment marked the first time a National Guard division headquarters has led forces in a combat theater since the Korean War. The division chief of staff credits the unit's successful operations commanding combat forces in Iraq as part of the rationale in the Army and Central Command's selection of the Rainbow Division for its role in Bright Star.

“We are, I believe, the National Guard division of choice,” COL Pfeiffer said.

“It is great to have the 42nd Infantry back in theater again,” noted LTG Whitcomb in his remarks to the combined U.S. and Egyptian staff members. **GX**

SUPPORT A RECOVERING AMERICAN SOLIDER

Courtesy of Walter Reed Army Medical Center

WASHINGTON, DC—The Walter Reed Army Medical Center often receives letters, cards and packages addressed to “Any Wounded Soldier,” “A Recovering American Solider” or the like. Unfortunately, the hospital cannot accept these well-intentioned sentiments.

Instead, the medical center is requesting that donations be given through one of the more than 300 organizations listed on the “America Supports You” Web site: www.AmericaSupportsYou.mil. Under the Homefront Groups link on this site, supporters can find ways to contribute to Soldiers. In categories with links to other sites, visitors can gift nearly anything, including letters, homes, jobs, scholarships and frequent flyer miles. Alternative organizations include:

- > **USO (www.USOCares.org)** The USO accepts donations in \$25 increments to send care packages containing pick-me-ups such as toiletries, snacks, calling cards, sunscreen, entertainment items and the donor's personal message. The packages cannot be sent to specific Soldiers.
- > **To Our Soldiers (www4.Army.mil/ocpa/ToOurSoldiers/)** Visitors to this site have the opportunity to post and read support messages sent to Soldiers. This is a free site, so donating requires only time and thought.
- > **American Red Cross (www.RedCross.org)** At the ARC's site, visitors can give funds specifically to Soldiers or provide donations via a number of other options, including their local chapter. The minimum donation is \$5.

For those without a computer, contacting your local military organizations is the best option. These usually appear in the phone book under the “Veterans & Military Organizations” heading. This change in accepting “To Any Soldier” letters and packages corresponds with a 2001 transportation policy decision by the Office of Deputy Under Secretary of Defense. The medical center is taking this precaution to ensure the safety of its patients, visitors and staff. The U.S. Postal Service is also following these guidelines. All mail sent to specific Soldiers will be forwarded, as always. **GX**

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—United Services Organization-Metropolitan Washington

Soldiers Use Skills to Build, Beautify and Protect

By SGT Jasmine Chopra, 302nd MPAD, Courtesy of DVIDS

LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA, ANACONDA, IRAQ—Take a look at the exquisite French provincial table or grandfather clock handcrafted by SPC Don Dilbeck, and it's hard to believe he's a chef. Watch SSG Ernest Mallahan hammering nails into wooden planks while balancing on narrow beams high above the ground, and you might not know he is a truck driver.

For several Soldiers with the 118th Maintenance Company, including SPC Dilbeck and SSG Mallahan, carpentry and masonry is their job at Logistics Support Area (LSA) Anaconda, even though it is not their MOS.

Drawing on their hobbies and civilian job skills, these California Army National Guard Soldiers (CAARNG) build wooden structures, furniture and fixtures that improve conditions at LSA Anaconda.

"For me, building stuff is like watching a great movie," says SPC Dilbeck, a Lathrop, CA, native. "It's fun and relaxing."

He often comes to the wood shop on his days off. He was supposed to work in force protection here. But when his first sergeant saw his talent and skill for woodwork during pre-mobilization training in Texas, he decided to assign SPC Dilbeck to the wood shop instead.

"The company needed a brace to ship a forklift in a conex from Texas to Iraq," SPC Dilbeck says. "They had some wood and a handsaw, and I said, 'Is that all you've got?' So I pulled out my own electric saw from my duffle bag, and I built that brace fast."

He brought his tools with the intention of using them for recreation, but they ended up getting him a job he loves here, he says. He has four MOSs—none of which has anything to do with carpentry.

SHARING TIME AND TALENT

For SSG Mallahan, it was his 26 years of civilian experience in construction, including work on San Francisco skyscrapers, that secured his position as wood shop NCOIC.

"You can't be afraid of heights," he says, while nailing down planks of wood atop the 15-foot-high would-be roof of a deck he is building.

SSG Mallahan served here in 2003, too. Back then, LSA Anaconda lacked many of the structures it now has.

"Let's just say it was a lot more primitive here back then," says the San Mateo, CA, resident.

He and other Soldiers quickly built buildings, furniture and fixtures to make living and working conditions here better, and they continue to improve conditions now. SSG Mallahan, SPC Everardo Rubalcava of Fairfield, CA, and SPC Derrick Yang of Humboldt County, CA, also with the 118th, are currently working on a large-scale deck project spanning more than 200



SHARING HANDIWORK: SPC Derrick Yang (right) of Humboldt County, CA, a shower, laundry and clothing repair specialist with the 118th Maintenance Company, and SSG Ernest Mallahan (left) create a roof on a structure at Logistics Support Area Anaconda, Oct. 30.

The company needed a brace to ship a forklift in a conex from Texas to Iraq. They had some wood and a handsaw, and I said, 'Is that all you've got?' So I pulled out my own electric saw from my duffle bag, and I built that brace fast.

>> SPC Don Dilbeck, 118th Maintenance Company, CAARNG

feet in length. Though SPC Rubalcava and SPC Yang are shower, laundry and clothing repair specialists, they learned how to build from their fathers.

"I started in construction with my dad in 1987, and I've been building since," SPC Rubalcava says. He enjoys construction more than he does his MOS, he says.

SPC Yang pointed out Soldiers often fulfill duties that are not in their official job description, yet manage to get the job done.

"You see it a lot in the Guard and Reserves—Soldiers using their civilian job skills and training for the benefit of the Army," SSG Mallahan says. "It's good for Soldiers too, because they get to do work they enjoy and are very good at." **GX**

SGT JASMINE CHOPRA



::HOLDING ON:: SGT Calvin Duvall attempts to force assistant instructor Michael Markley in a clinch hold.

TAKING IT TO THE MAT

▶ JTF TROOPS SHARPEN WARRIOR MENTALITY THROUGH COMBATIVES TRAINING

Story and photos by SGT Scott Griffin, JTF Guantanamo PA

GUANTANAMO BAY, CUBA—Soldiers from the 525th MPB, 65th Infantry Regiment participated in Level I Combatives Training on Oct. 8–12. What followed was a series of strained muscles, rashes, raspberries and one beauty of a shiner.

SGT Calvin Duvall had his fists raised to protect his head. He lunged forward to engage his attacker and received two swift punches in the side of his face. The troopers surrounding him began to yell and holler.

“Keep your guard up!”

“Go for the clinch!”

“Punch him in the face!”

“Oooohhh ...”

Blows continued to rain on SGT Duvall’s arms, his head and his face. He drops his head low, raises his hands higher, lunges forward, beneath his attacker’s swinging fists, and then brings his arms underneath him, clenching his hands tightly around his attacker’s back and raising the man off his feet. The attacker continues swinging, but the blows fall ineffectively around SGT Duvall’s shoulders and back.

“That’s the clinch!” SSG Steven Barthmaier hollers. The bout ends and SGT Duvall and his attacker break. The attacker pulls off his boxing gloves, and the two Troopers shake hands and laugh.

Not a bad way to spend a week.

SSG Barthmaier was the lead instructor for Level I Combatives Training held at the Denich Gym. Troopers volunteered from the 525th MP Co. and C Co., 1st Battalion, 65th Infantry Regiment to participate in the week-long training that primarily employs

Brazilian Jujitsu. The students came from a variety of backgrounds, including mechanics, medical, logistics, administrative, arms rooms, cooks and Army military police.

According to SSG Barthmaier, the goal of Level I Combatives Training is to instill the warrior mentality in a student.

“Students basically gain the confidence to achieve the momentum in a fight,” SSG Barthmaier said.

GAINING THE UPPER HAND

To do this, students learned to render an opponent immobile through a series of grapples, locks and traps. Striking techniques—such as punching and kicking—were set aside in favor of using an opponent’s size against him or her. When factoring in that an attacker may outsize a defender and quickly overwhelm them, combative techniques are used to move the defender from a vulnerable to a dominant position.

SSG Barthmaier started students out with ground fighting techniques that utilize what seemed like easy grapples and traps. The moves were completely simple—that is until one tried them against an opponent who didn’t want that to happen.

To make the training as realistic as possible, students went head-to-head in “bouts,” starting from kneeling positions and attempting to get each other in the “mount” or the “guard,” or any number of “arm bars” or “guillotines.”

That’s where a lot of the rashes and raspberries came from.

Classes accelerated as students progressed toward certification day. Instructors put on boxing gloves and were eventually allowed to swing at 100% strength at the defending students. Taking blows and fighting through attacks built confidence in the students, teaching them that they can not only defend themselves against larger opponents, but also neutralize them by gaining the dominant position. That’s where the shiner came from.

SSG Barthmaier was happy with the end results of the class.

“The leadership enabled us to do this training, and the community supported it,” he said. “You train as you fight, and this training needs to be sustained. We’d love to do more.” **GX**

Staying Connected

▶ AVANQUEST SOFTWARE DONATES PHOTO-SHARING EQUIPMENT TO FAMILIES OF COLORADO TROOPS IN IRAQ

By Jennifer Welding,
courtesy of The Pen Group

DENVER, CO—To help troops in Iraq stay connected to loved ones back home, Avanquest Software, a leading developer and publisher of business and consumer software for the global PC market, announced that it is donating its comprehensive photo-sharing and archiving solution, SendPhotos 5, to families of National Guard Soldiers from Colorado.

With SendPhotos 5, troops and their families will be able to enjoy private, secure photo-sharing with minimal strain on military bandwidth. SendPhotos 5 comes with a private online locker with 2 GB of storage at www.SendPhotos.com and a powerful desktop application that simplifies the process of backing up, organizing and editing photo collections.

"We are pleased to accept this gracious donation and look forward to providing it to the families of our troops," said Charlene



Shields, State Family Program Director for the COARNG. "We appreciate the well of support we have received from our community leaders in helping our

troops stay connected to their families while stationed in Iraq."

With their SendPhotos 5 subscription, families will be able to create private photo sharing websites where they can invite the Soldiers and other friends and family to browse photos, and even add their own unclassified photos to the online photo albums.

With its easy-to-use "Photo Story" creator, which brings multiple photos, personalized captions and colorful themes

together into one customized page, SendPhotos 5 eliminates the need to send and download photos as file attachments. Photo stories can be displayed on the online site or easily placed in the message body of an email, allowing multiple photos to be sent and received up to 25 times faster than with individual attachments.

"We are proud to support the troops by providing a simple way to share photos without having to worry about security or storage issues," said David Wright, President of Avanquest's OEM Division. "We hope this contribution will help boost the morale of Soldiers and families who are separated during this time of conflict." **GX**

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ANSWERING

Soldiers share their reasons for signing on the dotted line, again

THE CALL

Intro by SPC Miko Holloran



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SGT Santos J. Lebron re-enlists in the PRARNG because he believes in democracy.

What made you re-enlist in the Army National Guard? GX asked, and you responded. It takes a great deal of courage and sacrifice for someone to stand up and raise his or her right hand more than once. Read why these true Patriots signed on to serve their beloved country once again.

ALWAYS A SOLIDER

I am SFC Dennis Patrick Cash, assigned to the embedded training team in Khowst, Afghanistan as a mentor with the Afghanistan Border Police, who handle border checkpoints along Pakistan. I recently re-enlisted Sept. 25, 2007, at the Pakistan/Afghanistan border in a location called Jaji Midan. This is my final re-enlistment, as it will put me over my 20-year mark with the military.

I initially joined the active Army in 1983 after graduating from high school in Fort Worth, TX. I spent four years on active duty, then took a couple of years off, and then joined the Army Reserve for a few years until I realized what the National Guard had to offer. At that point, I joined the Guard and have been affiliated with it ever since. I have spent the last six years as a recruiting and retention NCO, both in Nevada and now back in Maryland, where I will retire.



SFC Dennis P. Cash takes the oath of re-enlistment.

I have come to realize, as a senior NCO and recruiter, that in order to get Soldiers and new prospects to be willing to deploy to a combat zone and be proud of what they can do for their country, I must be willing to do the same. That is why I volunteered for this mission and gave up my AGR position to do so. I feel that as an infantry Soldier and a mentor to another country's military, I can and have made a difference. I hope the young Soldiers willing to make that sacrifice today, as so

many others have done prior to this, can appreciate what the Army National Guard can actually do for them if they are willing to be a Soldier when called upon.

Thanks to all the service members who have served and are serving now to protect this great nation. HOOAH!

SFC Dennis Patrick Cash, MDARNG

COURTESY OF GXREADERS

PATRIOT FIRST

Starting in 1986, I served three years in the Army on active duty with the 24th Infantry Division on Fort Stewart, GA. I ETSed [end time of service] in 1989 and thought I wanted to be a civilian. I held several high positions in the civilian industry, but none of them gave me the satisfaction I felt while in the military.



SGT Robert Chalkley

After 9/11, something inside was eating at me. I couldn't stand knowing there were people in this world who could ever dream of hurting the citizens of this great nation. At this point, I decided to come back to what I knew best: military life. I felt the need to do my part and defend this country for the sake of my family, friends and all those who cherish this land. I knew the risk, but it was something I had to do. This time, I joined the Army National Guard. This way, I could serve my country and still serve my community and family.

I joined the Guard in Savannah, GA, with the 1/118th Field Artillery. Since joining the unit, I feel as if I am whole again. It's like I found the other half of my family. I went to artillery school and was Top Gun and honor graduate from my class. I have been to combat in Iraq during OIF during 2005 and 2006 with this unit and the 48th BDE. I served as the military intelligence sergeant during this deployment. It was an honor to be with fellow Soldiers who fought to defend our freedom.

Since returning home from Iraq, I decided to re-enlist for six more years. I was selected to work with the Recruit Sustainment Program or "Det 3 RSP" on Fort Stewart. I teach new Soldiers the basic survival skills they need and how to take care of their administration and supply issues prior to leaving for basic training. I get great satisfaction knowing I can help mold young people's lives as they enter a great historic profession with the Georgia Army National Guard.

SGT Robert Chalkley, GAARNG



PAYBACK TIME

I joined the Army in 1985, before most of my current company was born, [and] served in the 82nd Airborne and 35th Signal BN (both at Fort Bragg, NC). I left the active Army in August 1989 and joined the 12th Special Forces Group (Airborne), a Reserve unit.

My intent was to go to college and become a better Soldier. Shortly after I joined, Operation Desert Shield and then Operation Desert Storm occurred. I volunteered several times, but was told that I wouldn't be able to go. I was instead given a burial detail. Thankfully, we did not perform a single detail.

In 1992, I re-enlisted back into the active Army. After being assigned to the JFK Special Warfare Center, I was sent for Special Forces Advancement and Selection (SFAS) at Fort Bragg, NC. In December, I was injured, which ended my career, and I was discharged in June 1993, after I learned to walk again.

I started a business, until one day, as I was adjusting my tie, I saw what I first thought was a movie trailer. It was Tuesday, Sept. 11, 2001. I felt that there was something that I could do, but I didn't know what.

I felt the need to do my part and defend this country for the sake of my family, friends and all those who cherish this land. I knew the risk, but it was something I had to do.

>> *SGT Robert Chalkley, GAARNG*



I wanted to pay my country back for all the opportunities I had been given. A couple of months later, we were in Afghanistan. I knew then what I needed to do. After four years, I was in shape to make a payment on the debt I owed.

On Sept. 11, 2005, I joined the Illinois National Guard under the one-year [Try One] program. I joined because it was close to home and [it gave me] the ability to do something good.

After my one year was up, I saw that we, the Guard, had two days a month to do what the active Army does in 30 days. I saw the spirit of the Citizen-Soldier in every drill I attended. My unit, 135th Chemical Company, was given a mission to protect our country. In addition to the educational benefits (both military and civilian), I was given the responsibility that is most unique to the military—training, leading and safeguarding the most valuable resource the United States of America has: its young Soldiers.

I re-enlisted because of those who are reading this now. I re-enlisted to protect and bring comfort to your loved ones as well as mine.

Ssg Jeffrey W. Metheny, ILARNG



MEANT TO SERVE

I am a member of the Mississippi National Guard, 859th Vertical Company. The reason I re-enlisted, ironically, was my deployment to Iraq. I was involuntarily transferred to the 2/114th FA, part of the 155th

BCT, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

When I got the letter in the mail, I was upset. I didn't want to go. We got in theater, and I got close to the people I was with. The hardships and combat brought us together. We got a lot of good work done during our year. I came back to the 859th after that, transferred back to the 2/114th and then transferred back to the 859th to take an E5 slot.

I love the Army. I love everything about it. Iraq opened my eyes and made me realize what I was put on this earth to do. Being a Soldier is my purpose.

SGT Christopher Cole, MSARNG



STANDING GUARD

I've been in the military for eight years and nothing has really changed since the day I enlisted. I wanted to make a difference in the world for myself, my friends and, most importantly, my family.

Today, I am a member of the Missouri National Guard. I joined in April 2003, mainly due to the war that had been taking place since [9/11] occurred in 2001. Nothing is more important to me than the safety of my family. I have four children, and when the Twin Towers went down, my guard went up. I realized for the first time that America and the people who believe in America were vulnerable to attacks on our own soil. And that meant my family was more vulnerable than ever before. Although I can't do much to protect my family and the families of oppressed countries from terrorists, I can, and have, pledged my life to help whenever, wherever I can.

I served a tour in Iraq, and throughout the training processes, I got to encounter people in different countries. It was an awakening. There were families [who would come] on live-firing ranges to pick up brass

COURTESY OF GKREADERS

My love of adventure hasn't worn out yet. That is why, when the time came to sign on the dotted line for a second time, I didn't hesitate for a moment. I said, "Bring it on!"

>> SSG Marie J. Brown, 670th MP Company, CAARNG



casings from our shooting exercises so they could resell the brass to the government to make a living.

I feel that what we do as individuals will define what we are as a country. If there are hundreds of thousands of individuals like me in the military, you can't help but believe in what we as Soldiers have to do, want to do, have pledged to do. I re-enlisted while in Iraq, where what I was doing was making a difference.

SGT Andrew Williams, MOARNG

KEEPING WATCH

I re-enlisted because my watch is not yet over. I joined the Navy in 1980 because our naval fleet was outclassed by the Soviet Union's. I wanted to do my part. Afterward, I went to college. But in 1984, I joined the Air Force because President Ronald Reagan was facing down the Soviet Union at a very dangerous time in our history—and I wanted to do my part.

In 1988, I returned to college. I attended ROTC and joined the Army Reserve in 1990 because our nation was fully expecting the crumbling Soviet Union to send armored troop units through the Fulda Gap in Germany. I wanted to stand with my countrymen, my brothers and sisters in arms, in defense of our nation and our families. I earned my Army commission and served as an ordnance officer.

With the Soviet Union collapsed and the Russian Bear gone from the field, I figured my watch was over. The United States was safe. It was time to turn the reins over to others and resume my own life; others did the same.

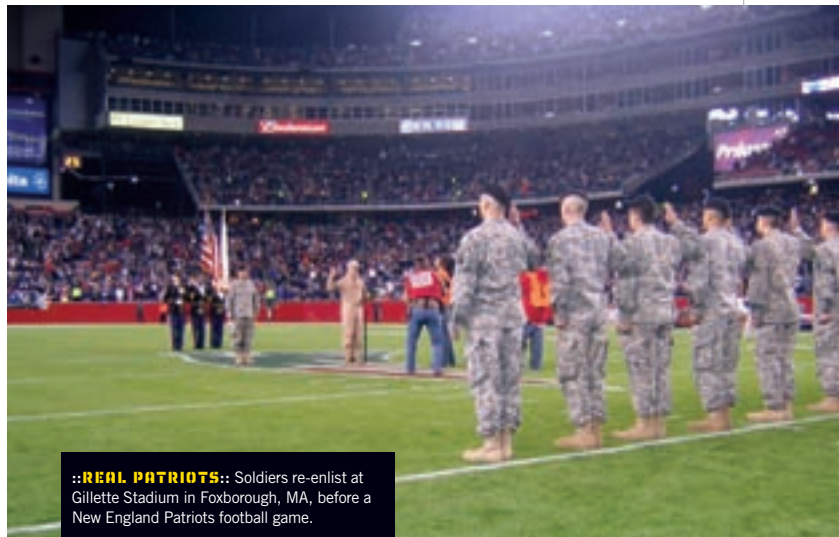
In September 2001, the planes hit the [World Trade Center]. The next month, I joined the Army National Guard. I, along with many other Vets, came back so we could bring the fight to the enemy. I re-enlisted recently so I could defend our nation at our Southwest border. As Thomas Jefferson said, "The price of freedom is eternal vigilance."

SPC William James (Jim) Boyd, TNARNG

PROMISE OF ADVENTURE

Why did I re-enlist for another six years in the California Army National Guard? People ask me that question repeatedly.

So what's the answer? The answer is pride. I am very, very proud of what I do. I wanted to be a Soldier since I was a young child, and by being a member of the Guard, I am living that dream. Putting my uniform on makes me smile—it's like I lead one of those exciting "double lives" that characters in movies have. On one hand, I'm a 25-year-old woman who works as a security officer, takes online classes, loves shopping, makeup, new clothes and hanging out with friends. On the other hand, I'm a staff sergeant—an MP who has done time as a SAW



REAL PATRIOTS: Soldiers re-enlist at Gillette Stadium in Foxborough, MA, before a New England Patriots football game.

gunner, experienced firefights in Iraq, is fiercely loyal to her team leaders and knows the meaning of duty.

I get to do things I could never do in any regular civilian job, and the friends I have made along the way have become like a second family to me. My love of adventure hasn't worn out yet. That is why, when the time came to sign on the dotted line for a second time, I didn't hesitate for a moment. I said, "Bring it on!"

SSG Marie J. Brown, 670th MP Company, CAARNG

A DIVINE MISSION

I re-enlisted to better serve God and country as a chaplain assistant. I was originally [in the Guard] as a cannon crewmember and then later as an infantryman. I went in at 28 years old, just a month shy of turning 29 in 1988. I [had] served eight good years when I got out in 1996. I was out for 11 years. In 2006, I became an ordained elder in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. This kindled my interest in [getting] back into the Guard as a chaplain. Since my master's degree is in education and not theology, I could not get in as a chaplain, only as an assistant. However, I got back in with the idea that later I could be a full chaplain.

I am 48 years old and am ready to take the 36 credit hours in theology that I need to more effectively serve. I still have until age 50, so I am confident I can [get the job done] with the Lord's help.

SPC Ricky D. Leonard, ARNG

A PIECE OF THE ACTION

I'll be bluntly honest: I re-enlisted in Iraq for selfish reasons: to take the fight to the enemy and get them before they attack U.S. Soldiers, civilians and our allies; to take a break from my civilian desk job



PROUD MOMENT: SPC Gilbert Apacible extends his current enlistment on a Black Hawk over southern Iraq. LTC Walter Mercer, 2/183rd CAV commander congratulates him after he recites the Oath of Enlistment for another six years.

(what better adventure than a sabbatical in Iraq?); and to spend time with like-minded people who appreciate sacrifices.

I re-enlisted at FOB Speicher near Tikrit, Iraq in December 2004. My re-enlistment was quite subdued. OIF was a great experience on a personal level and being surrounded by good people is what made it great. Family support back home was stellar, and there was much pride in our role as a battalion of “Trailblazers.”

Due to the massive reorganization of the Guard, we are transforming into a different role. However, the tradition of engineering excellence carries on with company-sized deployments of our Co A, 164 Engineers, who recently returned from the same mission. Godspeed to the guys who continue the tradition.

SSG Gabe Gietzen, 141st ECB, NDARNG

SPIRIT OF SACRIFICE

Why did I re-enlist? Boy, that’s really tough to put into words. How do you adequately describe the feelings you get from being a part of the National Guard? I am not a poet, and I know that my words won’t be enough. But let me give you a little of my story.

I enlisted in the Army in October 1986

and did a two-year tour in Germany and a two-year tour stationed at Fort Polk, LA. After ETSing in July 1990, I went back to being a full-time parent and full-time student. I thought I was content.

In 2003, while teaching at a school in North Dakota, I decided to join the National Guard. I had been thinking about joining something, whether the Guard or Army Reserve, for over a year. It was just something that I felt compelled to do. I decided on the Guard because I could get a unit close to where I lived, I didn’t have to go back through basic training, and I got to come back in at the rank I was when I ETSed in 1990.

I have continued to stay in the National Guard because I am proud to be a part of what being in the Guard means. It means a dedication to country, state and community that is surpassed by none. It means caring about people where we live and around the world. It means a desire to excel in all things, personal and professional. We train hard, and set high standards for ourselves. We don’t know the meaning of the word “can’t.”

I recently returned from deployment to Afghanistan (OEF 2006–2007) and worked with Army, Air Force, Navy and foreign military personnel. I am proud to say that we have changed the perception that other

branches have [of] the National Guard. They now know we are dedicated to excellence and completing the mission. We aren’t just Weekend Warriors. We are doctors, teachers, businessmen/women, mothers, fathers and students who believe in our country and what it stands for. We believe in the American flag and get goose bumps and tears when we hear “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

SGT Shari Gerszewski, 1-188th ADA, Grand Forks, ND NG

THE GOOD FIGHT

I decided to re-enlist because I believe in democracy. I am proud to be an American Soldier and believe I have to do my part for the peace of the world and [to build] a new future for the people who come after us and will continue the job we started. I love the U.S. Army and the Puerto Rico Army National Guard.

God Bless the USA and Puerto Rico!
SGT Santos J. Lebron, PRARNG

DUTY BOUND

Why did I re-enlist? It’s not for the money or the people; it’s for my love [of] this country. I truly love this country. I believe in

I truly love this country. I believe in what the Founding Fathers stood for. I believe in the Constitution, freedom and the United States of America.

>> SSG Melvin F. Rolon, C TRP 1-18th CAV, CAARNG



what the founding fathers stood for. I believe in the Constitution, freedom and the United States of America. I'm 45 years old, and I still smoke kids half my age on PT.

SSG Melvin F. Rolon, C TRP 1-18th CAV, CAARNG



SPC Brent Harney

DEFENDING FREEDOM

I tell my three children that defending what is right is the right thing to do. How can you tell them it is right and not do it yourself? I re-enlisted after a break in service of 21 years and am currently deployed to OIF.

SPC Brent Harney, 3637th Maintenance Co, ILARNG



MATTER OF PRIDE

I am currently with the 442nd Military Police Company in Jamaica, NY. My MOS is 63B, Vehicle Mechanic. I have been in the military for 18 years. I continue to re-enlist because I love the military and am proud of serving my great country.

SGT Sheila Robinson, NYARNG



SEAL OF APPROVAL

I was all set to ETS ... I was looking forward to getting out of the military. I felt my wife and kids had been through a lot after 10 years of service, a tour to Germany and two deployments. I spent five months enjoying the feeling of complete freedom from the military. During the last month of my break in service in August 2006, I felt like something was missing.

The National Guard lingered in my thoughts, and I was not able to get them out of my head.

I convinced my wife that these thoughts were not ceasing, so she needed to pray about what we should do, about what God wanted us to do. That night she had a life-changing experience ... God answered her prayers.

Since that time, she is always loyal and supportive of my desire and commitment to serve my country. As feelings of respect and honor swept over her, she shed tears of love on the day I swore back in.

My unit is preparing for a deployment to Afghanistan. Although my wife would rather have me stay home, she is proud of my opportunity to serve her, our family and our neighbors. There are no feelings of resentment like previous deployments. I am grateful that, as a direct result of my re-enlisting in the military, our bond is so much stronger than before. It is a beautiful thing. I look forward to what the future in the Guard holds for us.

SSG John Mrykalo, D Co, 142nd MI BN, UTARNG

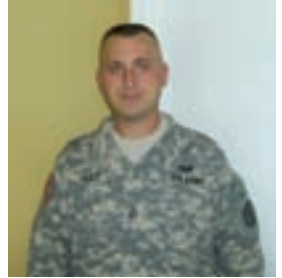


SSG John Mrykalo, D Co, 142nd MI BN, UTARNG

border of Iraq and Iran in full battle rattle, wearing my DCUs, I knew that my family would always come second to the world and its needs. I knew that this burden as a Soldier is not about a promotion, but about pride to serve with Soldiers whom I could make better by passing on what I have learned over the years.

I am now a part of a unit that has changed for the better because NCOs are holding Joe to the standard. We PT everyday for drill. We give credit where credit is due. We are providing outstanding leadership. I feel that the Guard is better equipped with people that have more to offer to countries that are torn by sectarian violence. We have all kinds of professions in our unit that make us readily able to make on the spot decisions. I am so glad that when I go home after a long day of work, I smile and thank God that I am still in the Army, to do my part, to answer a call that few will ever endeavor. Sappers Clear the Way!!!

SSG Jason D. Sanchez, ARNG



::PROUD TO SERVE:: GX received the above photos from other Soldiers who were proud to re-enlist.

EARLY ENLISTMENT

To be honest, I joined the National Guard for the college money. For me, there was no other way I was going to go unless I had some assistance. After serving for five years and currently on a deployment, I decided that I was there for more than the college money. I was there to serve my country in place of those who could not. I decided that I was going to make a career out of the National Guard. I signed up one year early because I was enticed by the tax-free bonus money. Otherwise, I would have signed up at my six-year mark, tax-free or not.

I was overseas in Iraq in 2005 when I re-enlisted and I did receive a nice tax-free \$15,000 bonus, but I didn't have a big ceremony during a football game or even in one of Saddam's palaces. A few months into the deployment, we were told that we could re-enlist one year out. When I heard this, I was one of the first ones in my unit to re-enlist out of those who were eligible. I signed my papers and went back to work.

SGT Christopher Wittig, KSARNG

EASY DECISION

When I first enlisted, I was a very easy recruit. I can remember coming into the recruiter's office and asking, "Where can I sign?" My re-enlistment was a little more involved. The paperwork was done by the URNCO and I signed it and was sworn back in by our Brigade Executive Officer.

SGT William R. Hardy III, PAARNG

AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE

I chose to extend [my enlistment] another six years for many reasons. When I initially enlisted in January 1996, I had already decided that I wanted to go all the way and make it to 20 [years in the Guard]. My initial look at the armed forces was extensive, and the Army Reserves had the benefits I was searching for. The decision to switch to the National Guard also had some different aspects. The ability to be able to make a direct impact on things occurring within my own state was a large plus in my decision. In my years in the Guard, I have been fortunate enough to be in two amazing units. They have supported my civilian career as a high school teacher and community college coach. The camaraderie in my company is amazing, and our attrition has been small. It would be a lie to say that money had absolutely no impact—the bonus I received was large. And the assistance I will receive when I pursue my master's degree is also an amazing benefit. But those things wouldn't matter if my experience in the Reserves and Guard wasn't positive, relevant, and fun!

SPC Trinity Meriwood, WAARNG GX

BEARER OF FREEDOM

I got sent to Iraq with little time on my service contract so I knew that I would qualify for an in-country bonus of \$15,000, plus I had just been Early Promotion Selected to staff sergeant. So, they said to make six, I had to re-up [re-enlist]. This made it easier, a whole lot easier.

[When] I took my oath of re-enlistment, [I thought about how] I would strive to fight for my Joes. As I stood on top of Magic Mountain, right on the



This organization believes in **keeping families together during a child's medical crisis** because normal family life has a powerful influence on the healing process.

Foundation of Hope

▶ **BELIEVE IN TOMORROW** REACHES OUT TO MILITARY FAMILIES WITH CRITICALLY ILL CHILDREN

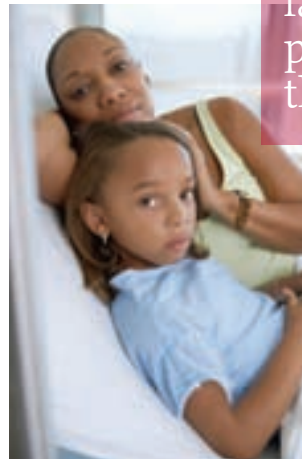
Courtesy of Believe in Tomorrow

ANY FAMILY WITH A SERIOUSLY ILL CHILD must deal with many emotional and financial challenges. But military families in this situation face a special set of problems.

When one spouse is deployed, the other is left for periods of time with tremendous responsibilities and limited financial resources. While the military can provide treatment at certain hospitals with pediatric facilities, seeking the right care often takes families far from home, where they don't have the support of extended family members.

The Believe In Tomorrow Children's Foundation is there to help, acting as an outside support system that gives families the opportunity to be together in a comfortable environment.

This year, for instance, the Believe In Tomorrow House By The Sea in Ocean City, MD, and the Believe In Tomorrow House on Wisp Mountain in the Allegheny Mountains in McHenry, MD, are providing free housing to families being treated at Portsmouth Naval Hospital and the Walter Reed Army Medical Center.



increase its military initiative in the near future in both its retreat and hospital housing programs.

Believe In Tomorrow provides exceptional hospital and retreat housing services to critically ill children and their families. This organization believes in keeping families together during a child's medical crisis because normal family life has a powerful influence on the healing process. **GX**

LINK UP: FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT THE FOUNDATION'S WEB SITE AT WWW.BELIEVEINTOMORROW.ORG.

Ready Boots? Start Walkin'!

THE GUARD'S **DECADE OF HEALTH** PROGRAM JOINS FORCES WITH THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION'S **START! WALKING** WORK-SITE PROGRAM.

By Judith S. Harris, ARNG Decade of Health Educator, BSN, MA, CHES, and Ann Stark, ARNG Decade of Health Program Development, BA

THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION/AMERICAN STROKE ASSOCIATION (AHA/ASAT) has named the National Guard Readiness Center a Start! Fit-Friendly Work Site. This gold-level recognition awarded on Oct. 10, 2007, makes the ARNG the first Department of Defense organization to be recognized by AHA/ASA as a Fit Friendly ally in the battle against high blood pressure and obesity. COL David Sproat, ARNG Chief Surgeon, will spearhead this effort throughout 2008 to enhance the ARNG's Decade of Health Program, a 10-year strategic outreach campaign promoting a healthy military force by emphasizing the central message, "Always Ready, Always There ... Always Healthy."

"The entire nation is focused on preventing and reducing health risks in the general population—and so is the Army National Guard," COL Sproat says. "That's why we developed the Decade of Health Program to provide a targeted media outreach that includes an emphasis on health literacy in addressing critical wellness issues related to deployment and quality of life for our Soldiers today."

"The 2007 blood pressure campaign 'Get Cuffed!' is proving to be

extremely successful in bringing awareness about this silent killer to thousands of Citizen-Soldiers and their families," COL Sproat continues. "We will pursue these same goals as we launch the 2008 campaign, ARNG Lighten Up!® for healthy weight management."

Start! is the AHA's groundbreaking national movement that calls on all Americans and their employers to create a culture of physical activity and health to live longer, heart-healthy lives through walking. Promoting physical activity through workplace walking programs can help employees reduce their risk for heart disease and stroke and lead longer, stronger, healthier lives. For more information, visit the American Heart Association Web site at www.Heart.org.

"The American Heart Association is honored to continue our alliance with the Army National Guard's Decade of Health program," says Daniel Jones, M.D., AHA president, the Herbert G. Langford professor of Medicine and Dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Mississippi. "We applaud their efforts to provide Soldiers and civilian employees at the Arlington work site with the tools they need to maintain good cardiovascular health."

To participate in an AHA/ASA-sponsored event in your state or territory, please visit www.kintera.com/spherelite/public/asp/eventcentral.asp?orgid=22 to find a Heart Walk near you. **GX**

THE BONUSES OF WALKING

What's the easiest way to start a physical activity program? It's simple enough: start walking. Nearly everyone can do it, the potential venues are almost endless, and it can be a great family or group activity. It's virtually equipment-free—a good, properly fitted pair of walking shoes and, for some, a cane or walking stick are all that's needed. (There are many areas where a person whose mobility requires the use of a wheelchair or scooter can join in with friends, family or a walking club.)

According to the National Institutes of Health, here are some of the many benefits of walking:

- * Increased energy
- * Reduced stress and increased relaxation
- * Increased muscle tone
- * Increased calories use
- * Strengthened bones and muscles
- * Improved stamina and fitness
- * Lowered risk of chronic diseases, such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes
- * Weight loss and/or maintenance

You'll reap these benefits with just 30 minutes of brisk walking most days of the week!



Tips for Getting Started

Before you embark on a walking program, check with your doctor or care provider. Once you're ready to go, follow these tips:

- * If unaccustomed to exercise, start slowly with five- to 10-minute walks and build up.
- * Track your progress (distance, time, energy, stress level) with a journal or log.
- * Walk safely: Avoid congested traffic, rough surfaces and deserted areas when alone.
- * Wear reflective clothing and carry a flashlight at dawn, dusk and night.
- * Walk with erect posture, toes pointed forward and arms swinging.



4

ESSENTIAL STEPS TO BUYING LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE

1. Think Ahead:

Purchasing earlier, before any major illnesses arise, can cut premiums in half.

2. Bargain Shop:

Compare premiums and policies of several providers to find the best deal.

3. Analyze the Options:

Know exactly what benefits and duration of coverage you're paying for.

4. Pick a Powerful

Partner: Check insurance company ratings to be sure your provider will still be around in 20 to 30 years.

Choosing Your Retirement Lifestyle

▶ HOW INVESTING IN LONG-TERM CARE INSURANCE CAN PREVENT FINANCIAL DRAIN ON YOUR SAVINGS

By LTC/J.J. Montanaro, USAA

The fact that Americans are living longer than ever can be both good and bad news. From a retirement planning perspective, it increases your chances of needing some sort of expensive, long-term care such as a nursing home stay. The American Society on Aging estimates that 70 percent of people over age 65 will require this type of dedicated assistance during their lifetime.

Long-term care includes a wide range of medical and support

services for the ill or aged. The services exist to help people who have trouble with everyday activities, such as eating, bathing or dressing. Beyond nursing homes, long-term care can also take place in assisted-living facilities, home care arrangements or other settings.

With any of these services, the chief concern is the incredibly high cost. According to the Genworth Cost of Care Survey, an industry benchmark, just one year in a nursing home today can cost more than \$75,000. And with costs increasing at about

5% annually, the price tag could skyrocket to \$185,000 or \$300,000 a year in 20 to 30 years. While it takes most people decades to build the financial security they need to retire comfortably, it's easy to see how just a few years of long-term care could potentially wipe out their hard work.

Long-term care insurance is designed especially to prevent that type of devastating financial impact. With a policy in place, the insurance company will help cover your costs if you need long-term care. And this can help preserve your hard-earned retirement fund or allow you to pass an inheritance to your heirs.

But preparing for the possibility of long-term care is a challenge most retirees must solely address. TRICARE and Medicare don't cover most long-term care expenses, and

Medicaid is reserved for people who have nearly depleted any retirement savings. Furthermore, Veterans Affairs hospitals limit long-term care on a "space available" basis. So, long-term care insurance is often the only option to safeguard your retirement assets—and your way of life—if this kind of care becomes necessary.

WEIGHING THE COSTS

Because of the potentially enormous costs of long-term care, this insurance is also a considerable expense for policyholders. But it may not be as costly as some might think. For example, a 60-year-old married person in average health

“I know what these people are feeling,” says Stevens, whose husband has been in the military for more than 20 years. “It’s tough being a military spouse.”

Operation Westside

► MINISTRY OFFERS EMAIL ENCOURAGEMENT

By Bethany Dye Akridge

ON A WEEKLY BASIS, Rachel Stevens, education secretary at Eden Westside Baptist Church in Pell City, AL, sends the gift of encouragement from the Southeast all the way to the Middle East and other areas around the world. In March 2003, Stevens, with the support of her church, began Operation Westside, an email ministry to deployed Soldiers and their families.

Stevens says she felt God calling her to begin such a ministry when a fellow church member was deployed overseas. “I know what these people are feeling,” says Stevens, whose husband has been in the military for more than 20 years. “It’s tough being a military spouse.”

In addition to the emails, Operation Westside sends care packages to Soldiers to meet specific needs. For instance, the ministry collected about 100 boxes of Pop-Tarts and 75 boxes of cereal bars to feed a group of Soldiers who had to leave camp each day before the mess hall opened for breakfast.

Since Operation Westside began, more than 100 Soldiers have been reached through its ministry. Stevens says most families who request to be part of the ministry hear about it through word of mouth.

“A GREAT WAY TO REACH PEOPLE”

“Operation Westside is a great way to reach people at their point of need,” says Jacky Connell, pastor of Eden Westside Baptist, which is a member of the St. Clair Baptist Association. “Rachel is being used by the Lord to get Soldiers and their families connected, and it allows the church to become familiar with their needs.”

Some Soldiers, upon returning home from deployment, have driven more than an hour to visit Eden Westside and say, “Thank you.”

A Soldier with the 131st Aviation Group, which is providing humanitarian aid in Afghanistan, flew an American flag on his plane in honor of those involved with Operation Westside. When he returned to the United States, he presented the flag and a certificate to the church.

Eden Westside also continues to honor these Soldiers once they return to the states, with events such as an annual Independence Day service. One Soldier who had participated in Operation Westside drove two hours from his hometown to attend the Independence Day service in 2006 and brought enough family members to fill two pews.

“I’m thankful for ministries like Operation Westside that God birthed in the church, and I’m thankful for a church that supports ministries like this,” Connell says. **GX**

For more information about Operation Westside, visit www.EdenWestside.org or email Rachel Stevens at tmStevens@CenturyTel.net.

could expect to pay around \$2,000 a year for the coverage. This is more than pocket change, but the likelihood of needing long-term care in the future could make the cost worthwhile.

Let’s assume you remain moderately healthy for many years and don’t need long-term care until you’re 85 years old. If you chose to buy long-term care insurance at age 60, you would pay for the coverage for 25 years before you needed it. At an annual cost of \$2,000, you’d pay a total of \$50,000 for insurance before ever filing a claim. A bum deal? Not so fast.

Now imagine how not having insurance could affect your retirement savings. Again, the industry predicts that in 20 years, each year in a nursing home could cost around \$185,000 (more than \$500 a day). Paying the total expense from your personal savings, you’d pay \$925,000 after only five years. That bill could be enough to severely deflate or even empty your retirement fund. If you’re fortunate enough to recover and care for yourself again, you may return home to financial hardship. Or, if you spend your final days in a nursing home, it could erase the inheritance you had hoped to leave your children and even put the financial burden on them to pay for your care.

With long-term care insurance to cover the total expense, however, you would make up your \$50,000 in premiums in just a few months.

WHAT AND WHEN TO BUY

If you decide long-term care insurance is for you, never make a purchase without doing some research first. Active and retired military personnel qualify for the Federal Long-Term Care Insurance Program (FLTCIP), but it’s not always the least expensive. It’s important to compare the costs and options of both government and

private insurance companies and be sure you completely understand what’s covered.

The two main components of a long-term care policy are the “daily benefit,” which is the maximum amount the insurer will pay for services per day, and the “benefit period,” which is how long the policy will pay for your long-term care services. Be sure to choose levels that reflect the projected costs in your area and a time frame you’re comfortable with. Of course, as you increase your level of coverage, your premiums will also rise.

As for timing your purchase, acquiring a long-term care policy while you’re younger and still in good health usually results in much lower premiums. But even if you’ve been retired for years, it’s not too late to find an insurance solution that works within your budget.

Without a crystal ball to see the future, deciding whether you need long-term care insurance can be a complex process of balancing your risk with your financial resources. Consulting a financial planner can help you choose the right path and find peace of mind in your decision. **GX**

70%

OF PEOPLE OVER AGE 65 WILL REQUIRE ASSISTANCE WITH LONG-TERM CARE DURING THEIR LIFETIME.

Source: The American Society on Aging

Safe Body Sculpting

▶ CONSIDERING SUPPLEMENTS?
LEARN HEALTHIER WAYS TO TONE UP

By MAJ Karen E. Fauber

IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT FOR Soldiers to be physically fit. A common question related to this is: "I wanted to get into better shape, so I began lifting weights, running more and eating healthier. Are there any supplements I should take, too?"

The short and simple answer is, no, you don't need to take any supplements. Weight training and running alone will make you stronger and increase your metabolism, good cholesterol and muscle-building hormones while improving bone density, self-esteem and the heart's and lungs' ability to bring oxygen to muscles and get rid of carbon dioxide.

Unfortunately, advertised sports supplements are rarely based on good research; they are not regulated by any agencies, and sometimes they're dangerous. So, how do you improve body composition? With a healthy diet, a well-designed strength training program, cardiovascular exercise and daily physical activity.

For an additional edge, there are some foods that are useful for exercise recovery. These foods, which include low-fat cottage cheese, chocolate or vanilla soy milk and low-fat chocolate milk, are also inexpensive. They are great because they have important proteins for muscle repair. They also contain a 4-1 ratio of carbohydrate to protein, which helps replenish glycogen (stored carbohydrate) that can be used for your next workout.



Although diet plays a huge role in gaining muscle and losing fat, it is just as important to stick to your program. Don't fail by trying a workout that is too rigid to fit into a busy schedule or too intense for the body to withstand. The best idea is to make small changes, like eating breakfast daily, drinking low-fat chocolate milk after exercise, eating more fruits and vegetables, consuming more low-fat meat instead of high-fat meats, drinking less soda or sugar drinks and switching to whole-grain bread instead of white bread.

Whatever changes you decide on, make them last forever. **GX**

The Bugler

STRENGTH MAINTENANCE



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



>> THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

The Guard Experience is an exciting new recruitment program designed to drive accessions by providing potential Soldiers with an opportunity to learn about the Guard from Soldiers in a relaxed setting. An offshoot of the G-RAP recruiting model, Guard Experience Nights are held over a pizza dinner at a local armory or another central location, where recruiters provide information and Soldiers share experiences while answering questions. Just for showing up, potential Soldiers are rewarded with gift cards redeemable for movies and restaurants, and a backpack filled with cool Guard stuff! Be sure to ask your local recruiter or RA about the next Guard Experience Night near you!



>> ASVAB PREPARATION MATERIALS STUDY

The study is a joint effort between the Office of the Secretary of Defense and the ARNG. The study is being conducted to evaluate how test preparation materials affect the Armed Forces Qualification Test (AFQT) score. The AFQT is a score that represents an overall mastery of the ASVAB and determines eligibility for occupations and enlistment incentives. All participants will be given study materials prior to the test. There will be experimental and control groups. The experimental group will receive commercial study materials; the control group will receive preparation materials developed by the DoD. Applicants will be randomly placed in either one of these groups.

SUPERSTUDIO, GETTY IMAGES; ALLEN CLARK



>> HERITAGE OUTREACH

Heritage Outreach is a curriculum-based military history lesson focused on the individual Citizen-Soldier and involvement of National Guard during the War of 1812, the Civil War, WW I and WW II. It will include a litany of awesome visuals that include replica uniforms, replica war subsistence items, an interactive PowerPoint presentation and many other powerful visuals that will encourage educator and student involvement. It will also add a professional appeal, appearance and feel to teaching the history and lineage of the ARNG in a classroom setting.



>> GREAT IDEA

Think of creative ideas for getting the ARNG recognition. CW2 George Chip of the 118th PSD, Georgia National Guard, referees professional boxing and has been doing so for 12 years in Georgia. He has refereed several world championships for fighters such as John Ruiz, O'Neil Bell, Vernon Forrest and Paul Williams, and worked on ESPN, ESPN 2, CSS, Univision and Pay Per View televised events. CW2 Chip customarily wears a Georgia National Guard patch on his referee shirt pocket to help promote the Guard.



>> IT'S FOR REAL!

Charita Slaughter is an RA from Alabama. This 24-year-old college student and daughter of a retired Guard Soldier has successfully mentored 13 people into the ARNG. By marketing herself to family and friends, G-RAP has helped Charita boost her confidence. Now she meets most of her potential Soldiers through word of mouth. As a student in ROTC, Charita comes in contact every day with young people who are looking for personal growth. "This is a way to get school paid for with skills and experience," Charita says.

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



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

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

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



YOU CAN

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

On the Road

DISPATCHES FROM THE FIELD



HOPE IN THE HORN

Guard Soldiers from North Carolina, Alabama and Guam bring stability to an obscure area of Africa

As I write this, I am sitting in the Nairobi, Kenya airport waiting for a plane to take me to my final destination. Everything around me is foreign. Voices spoken in a dozen different tongues mixed with distinctive aromas make me feel as if I'm in an *Indiana Jones* flick. Man, what a story I have to tell when I get home—and I've barely started this trip. Getting this far is an adventure in itself. But I haven't come to tell my story; I've come to tell the Guard's story, to tell your story.

Story and photos by CPT Tim W. Irvin

:: SCENES FROM DJIBOUTI :: (Left)

A young Djiboutian boy who lives and attends school in Assamo gets clean drinking water from one of three wells that the North Carolina Guard's 1132nd Well Drilling detachment drilled for villagers. (Right) A Guard convoy of SUVs travels down a dusty highway on the road to Assamo.



“FIVE AND COUNTING”: Soldiers from the 1132nd Well Drilling detachment pose with CSM Hudson (third from right) while he pumps water from one of five wells they have completed during their time in Djibouti.

In the November issue (*GX* 4.10), I had the honor of covering an event honoring the top Soldiers in the Guard—the Soldiers and NCOs of the Year. It was during that trip that I met CSM David Hudson, senior enlisted advisor of the National Guard. With the highest enlisted position in the Guard, CSM Hudson serves as LTG H Steven Blum’s command sergeant major and right-hand man.



When *GX* editor Keith Kawasaki introduced me, CSM Hudson asked, “Are you CPT Tim?” I found that somewhat funny coming from the highest enlisted person in the Guard, but somehow I managed to stutter affirmative. He replied, “I want you to go on a trip overseas with me.” I was speechless, but very honored. My mind was racing over the possibilities. Then CSM Hudson asked, “Have you ever heard of Ja-booty?”

“Ja-booty?” I said to myself, “He’s messing with me, right?”

CSM Hudson explained Djibouti (which sounds like ja-booty) is in Africa. “Oh, Djibouti ... yeah, okay,” I said, trying to disguise my lack of knowledge. Luckily, MSG Donald Morris, CSM Hudson’s NCOIC, saved me from further embarrassment when he politely informed the CSM that the Soldier of the Year ceremony was about to start. As CSM Hudson went to honor the top Soldiers in the Guard, MSG Morris and I quickly exchanged email addresses so we could plan the details of the trip.

DJIBOUTIN’ IT UP

Obviously my geography knowledge could use some serious work, not to mention my spelling skills. But after several failed attempts at spelling Djibouti (Oh, the “D” is silent!), Google finally rescued me with its “did you mean” feature. Thankfully, I realize that not only does Djibouti actually exist, there have been Guard Soldiers there since 2003. Okay, now I feel stupid. How did I miss this? I wasn’t alone in my ignorance.

“A lot of people don’t know anything about Djibouti, even where it is, or what we are doing here,” CSM Hudson told me.

Once I looked at a map, I saw that Djibouti is smack-dab in the middle of the Horn of Africa. Surrounded by Ethiopia and Somalia, it’s also the main port in the region. Kenya, Uganda and Sudan are all nearby. With the formation of the new Africa Command (ARFICOM) in 2007, Djibouti has become a major front on the War on Terror. There is a huge strategic advantage gained by having Djibouti and its neighbors working with the United States. But the mission there is not all about strategic troop placement and eliminating the bad guys, it’s also about people. It’s about improving the way of life for the “good guys” as well.

ENTER THE WELL DRILLERS

With units like the 1132nd Well Drilling Detachment from the North Carolina Guard, the good guys in Djibouti and the surrounding areas are seeing a change in their quality of life. Clean drinking water in the desert can be hard to come by, especially in the most remote areas and villages. But SSG William Brown, the lead well driller and the acting first sergeant for the



A lot of people don't know anything about Djibouti, even where it is, or what we are doing here.

—CSM David Hudson
Senior Enlisted Advisor of the National Guard

1132nd, knows where to find it. Problem is, in Djibouti, it's usually under several feet of sand and rock. That's where SSG Brown's drilling expertise comes in. But all the knowledge in the world is useless without good equipment. Unfortunately for the well drillers, equipment was a major issue—that is, until they got some help from Indianapolis, IN.

ENTER THE RIG

Indianapolis is home to the Laibe Corporation, which manufactures state-of-art drilling equipment. The 1132nd received one of the corporation's most advanced drilling rigs in May and has been impressed with the new system. It includes the drilling rig, the water truck and a recycling station—a vast improvement over the old drilling system.

“Before we got the new rig, it took almost a week to set up the old rig to drill,” SSG Brown told me. “Now with the new rig, we are ready to drill within a day or two.”

Besides being labor intensive, the old drilling rig was also a maintenance nightmare. Any repair parts that were needed had to be shipped from the States. And because of the dense geological makeup of the ground in Djibouti, the 1132nd needed a lot of parts. This caused considerable delays in operations and frustrated the Soldiers. But as of May 24, 2007, that's all in the past. And the results are amazing. The 1132nd has completed five wells during their time in Djibouti, with several more planned in the near future.

VISITING THE ASSAMO WELLS

CSM Hudson, MSG Morris and I had the chance to see three of the five wells that the 1132nd has completed during their time there. We took a five-hour drive on rugged dusty roads (or what passes for roads in Djibouti) to get to Assamo. Once at the village, it was apparent the villagers were excited to see the North Carolina Soldiers again. Their appreciation was reflected in the faces and smiles of the young children as

::ALL IN A DAY'S WORK:: (Top) SSG William Brown uses a hydrologist water testing kit as SPC Danny Hunter records the results from a well in Assamo. (Bottom) CSM Hudson (center) chats with Guam Guard Soldiers at base camp.

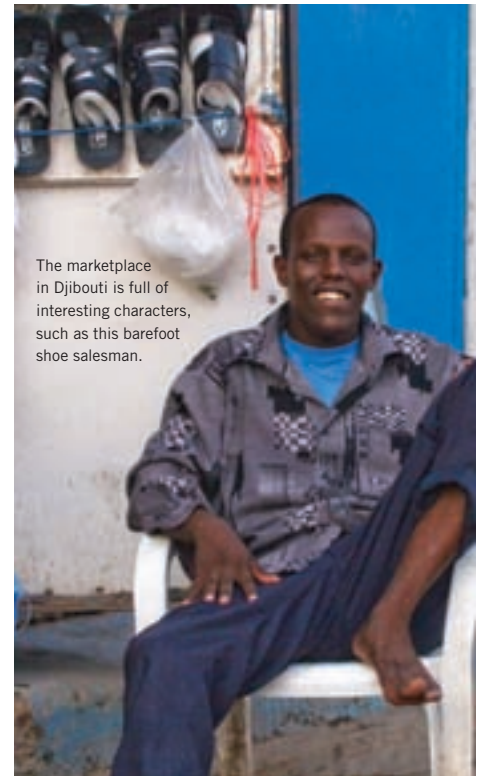




Even in Djibouti City, Soldiers can find a few reminders of home, including a Planet Hollywood.



A Djiboutian boy shows off his soccer skills with a ball given to him by the 1132nd.



The marketplace in Djibouti is full of interesting characters, such as this barefoot shoe salesman.

There is a huge strategic advantage gained by having Djibouti and its neighbors working with the United States. But the mission there is not all about strategic troop placement and eliminating the bad guys, **it's also about people.**

This castle on the Djiboutian/Ethiopian border houses a small group of Djiboutian border guards.



they proudly showed us the wells. The 1132nd had drilled three wells and had a large school constructed by local contractors. The school was supplied with electricity from several solar panels. As I gazed over the desert landscape, I saw a large castle on the far ridge high above the school. I asked SSG Brown what it was. "Oh, that's the border guards ... right over that ridge is Ethiopia," he said matter-of-factly and then went back to testing the well water. Sometimes I am amazed at what a Soldier can get used to.

WELL COVERED AND WELL FED

Although the new rig can drill to a depth of 2,000 feet and drill 100 feet in just five hours, well drilling is still a time-consuming process. The operators must be focused at all times. So in order for the Soldiers to focus on the drilling, the security is handled by C Company, 294th Infantry out of Guam. But the Soldiers of the 294th do more than provide security. The Guam Soldiers are also amazing cooks, a skill that comes in handy when you are several hours from base camp. The infantrymen/chefs of C Company are famous for their resourcefulness—they purchase supplies from the locals. This allows the units to stay out in the field longer and also pumps money into the local economy.

The Guam unit also helps train other military forces in the area. They have worked with units in Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. This is just another way they interact with the people to improve force protection and add stability to the region.

VISITING THE MARKET

Being in Djibouti isn't all about work. Soldiers who are deployed there have the opportunity to experience life in Africa. Djibouti

U.S. TROOPS KEEP TERRORISM AT BAY IN DJIBOUTI

By Donna Miles, American Forces Press Service

CAMP LEMONIER, Djibouti, Dec. 3, 2007—Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates traveled to see firsthand how combining multiple elements of U.S. national power toward a common goal is helping to prevent terrorism from taking a foothold in the Horn of Africa.

He emphasized that the military can't go it alone in standing up to threats the country will face in the future. He urged greater funding for diplomatic and other non-military aspects of U.S. national power to better complement the military's kinetic "hard-power" capabilities.

Gates said he looks at CJTF-HOA as a model of that concept through its military-to-military efforts and humanitarian and civic-support activities.

"It's a good model for U.S. Africa Command, but also an indication of the mix of activities I think we should be doing more of," he said.

The task force initially stood up in 2002 as a seafaring force aimed at blocking terrorists fleeing Afghanistan from setting up safe haven. Within six months, it moved ashore and its mission morphed

into a blend of military cooperation, training and humanitarian assistance over a massive region two-thirds the size of the United States.

Gates talked with commanders about lessons learned and how they can be applied elsewhere. Those lessons will be critical as the new U.S. Africa Command takes shape, and in many ways, looks to CJTF-HOA as its model.

Gates' discussions with Djiboutian officials included an assessment of the role CJTF-HOA will play in the new command and how to enhance efforts under way on the Horn of Africa. That's critical in this area, which is full of real or potential flash points, including Somalia; Darfur, Sudan; the border region between Ethiopia and Eritrea; and ungoverned areas where terrorists who are driven from Afghanistan might seek refuge.

While visiting, Gates saw signs of the huge growth taking place that will expand Camp Lemonier from 97 to 500 acres. The expansion will provide vast quality-of-life improvements for troops, replacing the tents some live in with permanent structures.

City is a rather large urban environment and, as a port city, it offers a wide range of goods. The Soldiers from the 20th Special Forces Group out of Alabama gave us an awesome tour of the city.

The 20th is involved in a number of operations throughout the region. As Special Forces Soldiers, they train local military forces and snag a bad guy or two. But tonight isn't about training or war fighting; it's about the market. The marketplace in Djibouti City put me right back in the *Indiana Jones* movie (minus the crazy, sword-wielding bad guys). The colors and excitement were intoxicating. Every Djiboutian had something I just had to have. They sold everything: foods of all kinds, clothes, even "antique" African coins and masks. One of the most interesting vendors we saw was a barefoot shoe salesman. There he sat, completely barefoot, next to at least 100 pairs of shoes. The market was a strange place.

OUT ON THE TOWN

After we left the market, we walked a short distance to the city center. As we walked, I saw a familiar sign—in the middle of Djibouti City was a Planet Hollywood. But as I got closer, I noticed it was spelled "Planete." Somehow, I doubt Arnold Schwarzenegger attended the grand opening. Luckily, the 20th Soldiers lead us past the "restaurant" and on to a Lebanese restaurant I had heard many of the Soldiers rave about—and with good reason: The food was amazing.

The next morning, as we said our good-byes and the Soldiers thanked CSM Hudson for his

visit, I thought of what he said when we first arrived. A lot of people may not know where Djibouti is, or what the Guard is doing there, but that's not the point. The Djiboutian people know. They see the improvements in their lives every day.

"It was an awesome opportunity to come and see what kind of impact the Guard is making here," CSM Hudson said.

A TEAM EFFORT

Soldiers from Guam, Alabama and North Carolina work side by side to offer the Djiboutian people hope. Sure, their mission is to prevent conflict, to promote stability in the region and to protect coalition interests in the Horn of Africa, but it goes farther than that. They are developing relationships that will shape the future of the region—a region that has potential to be either a breeding ground for terrorism or a place of freedom. Everything the Soldiers do offers opportunity to the people and, in the long run, their work here will have a huge impact on the War on Terror. And fighting for what's right is what makes the job of being a Soldier worth it. To Guard Soldiers stationed in Djibouti, it's a job they are more than proud to do. **CX**

Editor's note: The Guard members from Alabama, North Carolina and Guam are all part of the CJTF-HOA (Combined Joint Task Force—Horn of Africa) mission and proudly serve with more than 1,800 U.S. and Coalition service members.



The Wolverine Guard

Michigan Soldiers exemplify daring and dedication during 300 years of service at home and abroad

BY JASON HALL

The birthplace of the Michigan Army National Guard (MIARNG) is regarded as Detroit, where, in a proposal dated Nov. 13, 1708, Sr. de Lamothe recommended forming four companies of “savages” to protect the colony. Citizens opposed this idea, fearing that if the “savages” were trained in the art of war, they would pose an even greater threat to the colonists. Nonetheless, the concept of a militia in what is now known as the state of Michigan is now 300 years old.

The first mention of a formal organized militia involved participation by the First Regiment of Wayne County in a Detroit parade on May 11, 1803. With the establishment of the Territory of Michigan on June 30, 1805, a territorial militia, consisting of males aged 18 to 45, was dictated.

This organized militia existed only on paper until the War of 1812. With the outbreak of a second war against Great Britain, 200 men from the Michigan territory enrolled in the militia. The only major action they saw—the campaign to capture Sandwich—ended in disaster, with almost the entire force captured and later paroled.

The Michigan militiamen were again raised in 1832 for a tribal/territorial war known as the Blackhawk War. These Michigan militiamen played a small role in this conflict, and the Soldiers never saw combat.

1st SG James Zwarenstejn, right, and Soldiers of the Michigan Army National Guard's 126th Army Band wait for their turn to practice for former President Gerald Ford's funeral, held in Grand Rapids, MI, on Dec. 31, 2006.

From 1835 to 1836, the territory had to defend itself from an unlikely enemy—the state of Ohio. This bloodless “war,” known as the Toledo War, started over a boundary dispute between Ohio and the adjoining Michigan territory. Both sides claimed sovereignty over a 468-square-mile parcel of land known as the “Toledo Strip.” The militias of both Michigan and Ohio were mobilized and sent to defensive positions along the Maumee River.

Because of a growing financial crisis, Michigan surrendered all claim to the land in a compromise that admitted the territory into the union as a state. As compensation for the loss of the Toledo Strip, Michigan was given three-quarters of the Upper Peninsula. At the time, this compromise was considered a defeat for Michigan; however, it would ultimately prove to be a profitable victory with the discovery of copper and iron deposits.

Civil War tests Michigan Soldiers

It would not be until the Civil War that Michigan militia Soldiers would be able to prove their worth. With President Abraham Lincoln's

SSG HELEN MILLER

“I cannot find language to express my high appreciation of the gallantry and daring displayed by the officers and men of the 1st Michigan Cavalry. They advanced to the charge of a vastly superior force with as much order and precision as if going upon parade; and I challenge the annals of warfare to produce a more brilliant or successful charge of cavalry than the one just recounted.”

—BG George A. Custer, after leading Michigan cavalrymen in a charge against the Confederates during the Battle of Gettysburg.



MIARNG IN HISTORY:

(above) The 107th Observation Squadron, Michigan National Guard, was ordered into active Federal service on Oct. 15, 1940. Along with 4,000 other National Guard Air Corps personnel, the men of the 107th expanded the rapidly growing U.S. Army Air Forces.

(left) The 32nd Infantry Division, known as the “Red Arrow” Division, consisting of units from the Michigan and Wisconsin National Guards, was mobilized on Oct. 15, 1940. Slated to depart for Northern Ireland after WWII began, the division was diverted to the Pacific in 1942 in order to halt the Japanese invasion, which threatened Australia.

call for Soldiers to defend the Union in the spring of 1861, Michigan quickly raised the First Regiment again. By the end of 1861, Michigan had raised and sent 13 infantry regiments, three cavalry regiments and five batteries of light artillery to the war, totaling 16,475 Soldiers in all.

During the war, many Southern rebels had sought refuge in Canada. This made Michigan, which lies on the Canadian border, vulnerable to invasion. To defend the state, six companies of the Second Regiment Veteran Reserve Corps, three companies of the State Troops, the Scott Guard, Detroit Light Guard and Lyon Guard, with a section of light artillery, were retained in the state.

As these Michigan Soldiers protected their state, their brothers-in-arms fought in the South. In all, Michigan supplied 90,747 Soldiers in more than 30 regiments of infantry, one engineer regiment, two batteries of artillery, a sharpshooter regiment and 11 regiments of cavalry. One of the infantry regiments was the 102nd Infantry, United States Colored Troops, composed of African-American Soldiers.

One of the more famous Michigan units from the Civil War was the 4th Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment. The ladies of Adrian had made and presented the Regimental flag to the 4th Michigan on June 21, 1861. On it, they had sewn the words “The Ladies of Adrian to the 4th Regiment—Defend It.” The commander of the regiment, COL Dwight Woodbury, vowed that, “While I have the honor to command these brave men, while my life shall be spared, the flag shall never be surrendered to the foe.”

COL Woodbury was killed during the Battle of Malvern Hill on July 1, 1862, and the flag was “reduced to tatters,” but it was never surrendered. A year later at the Battle of Chancellorsville, GEN George G. Meade, commander of the Army of the Potomac, would question the resolve of the 4th Michigan. According to the diary of Private John Houghton, Company K, GEN Meade asked COL Griffin, “But will they hold their ground?” and COL Griffin replied, “General, they are Michigan men! They will hold it against hell!”

Here come the Wolverines

On July 3, 1863, the final day of the Battle of Gettysburg, several regiments of the Michigan Cavalry found themselves under the command of a flamboyant young brigadier general named George Armstrong Custer. As he led the Michigan cavalrymen in their charge against Jeb Stuart’s Confederate cavalry, BG Custer yelled, “Come on, you Wolverines!”

BG Custer ended his after-action report by stating, “I cannot find language to express my high appreciation of the gallantry and daring displayed by the officers and men of the 1st Michigan Cavalry. They advanced to the charge of a vastly superior force with as much order and precision as if going upon parade; and I challenge the annals of warfare to produce a more brilliant or successful charge of cavalry than the one just recounted.”



“Please convey to your staff and to all the boys the expression of my confidence in their loyalty and efficient service. I have had reports from all sources, and they are all praiseworthy as to the splendid behavior that they have manifested ... I realize that many of them have families at home depending upon them for support and for daily encouragement and good cheer. I do not believe that there is any governor in the United States who has greater reason for being proud of his state militia than has the governor of Michigan.”

— Gov. Woodbridge N. Ferris, on the successful attempt of Michigan Soldiers to quell riots during a copper mining strike in 1913

Camp Custer, today Fort Custer, was named in honor of the man who led Michigan men into battle at Gettysburg. The camp was built in 1917 for military training of Michigan men during WWI. Another interesting twist of fate: At the end of the war, it was the 4th Michigan Cavalry that captured President of the Confederacy Jefferson Davis.

Because of public pressure after the Civil War, the Michigan militia forces were drastically reduced in number. It would not be until the Spanish-American War that the MIARNG would be utilized as a vital fighting force again. With the outbreak of the war in the spring of 1898, four regiments were organized at Island Lake, near Detroit: the 31st, 32nd, 33rd and 34th Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiments. The 33rd and 34th participated in the Battle of Santiago. Though they did not take part in the attack up San Juan Hill, they were engaged in a diversionary attack at Aguadores to prevent the Spanish from reinforcing their men on San Juan Hill. Thus, the Michigan men helped fellow Guard member Theodore Roosevelt take San Juan Hill.

Heroism at home and abroad

The largest state duty ever performed by the MIARNG began on July 24, 1913, with the outbreak of a strike by copper miners. According to Adjutant General Roy C. Vandercook, “The strike of the employees of the mining companies of the Upper Peninsula came on without warning, and the Michigan National Guard was called into service for an extended period on telegraphic notice.”

The entire copper district quickly turned into a complete state of chaos as strikers began rioting and took control, rendering local authorities helpless. The MIARNG was called in to quell the riots and did so without a single death. Gov. Woodbridge N. Ferris wrote BG P.L. Abbey, “Please convey to your staff and to all the boys the expression of my confidence in their loyalty and efficient service. I have had reports from all sources, and they are all praiseworthy as to the splendid behavior that they have manifested ... I realize that many of them have families at home depending upon them for support and for daily encouragement and good cheer. I do not believe that there is any governor

in the United States who has greater reason for being proud of his state militia than has the governor of Michigan.”

On June 18, 1916, the National Defense Act was adopted, giving the President of the United States the power to mobilize the National Guard in times of a national crisis. Fifteen days later, the MIARNG was called into federal service for duty on the Mexican border. The First Michigan Infantry Brigade, composed of the 31st, 32nd and 33rd Michigan Infantry, was sent south for a tour of duty that proved to be uneventful, but this service did help to prepare the Michigan men for an upcoming test of their strength, bravery and tenacity.

After the American entrance into WWI, the MI-



(Top) The peaceful occupation of Flint, by detachments of Michigan's National Guard, followed orders in the auto strike that resulted in injury to a dozen striker sympathizers and police. Here is a machine gun company in full kit and with gun unlimbered. (Bottom) Michigan Guard Members with fixed bayonets move rioters back from a burning building on Detroit's riot-torn west side in 1916.

COURTESY OF CORBIS



THE MICHIGAN NATIONAL GUARD :: SGT Brandan Hodges rides in a CH-47D Chinook helicopter during a mission for Exercise Vigilant Guard near the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center in Indiana on May 12, 2007. Hodges is assigned as a flight engineer with the Michigan Army National Guard.

ARNG merged with members of the Wisconsin Army National Guard to form the 32nd Infantry Division. Michigan supplied 8,000 troops to the 32nd Division, which participated in three major offensives—Aisne-Marne, Oise-Aisne and Meuse-Argonne—and fought on five fronts. The Soldiers of the 32nd fought and defeated 23 German divisions from which 2,153 prisoners were taken. However, the 32nd paid a heavy price for its victorious record, suffering 14,000 casualties from all causes and ranking third in the number of battle deaths among all Army divisions. The shoulder insignia of the 32nd Division was a red arrow piercing a red line, an emblem that represented the division's breaking through the German line.

Fighting war, civil unrest, Mother Nature

A little more than 20 years after WWI, the Michigan Guard was involved in another world war. The 32nd Division was sent to the Pacific Theater and was among the first American Soldiers to engage the enemy in WWII. The men of the 32nd fought continuously for more than a year and a half, with six Soldiers receiving Congressional Medals of Honor.

The Michigan Guard served in both theaters of the war. Members of the 254th Combat Engineer Battalion stormed ashore with the first wave at Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, now known as D-Day. Even before these Soldiers set foot on French soil, fellow Michigan Guard members of the 107th tactical reconnaissance squadron had flown several photographic recon missions over the proposed landing beaches. Originally, the 107th had been mobilized to deploy as a part of the 32nd "Red Arrow" Division, but was instead sent to patrol along the Atlantic Coast to search for enemy submarines, before being deployed to England in August 1942.

After their spectacular service in WWII, the men of Michigan were called upon again when war erupted in Korea. Michigan's 1437th Engineer Company, 107th Ordnance Company and 1806th Engineer Aviation Company served there.

Unfortunately, the next form of combat Michigan Soldiers would see involved residents of their own state. The 1960s in America proved to be a tumultuous time for the country. Tensions over the Vietnam War and segregation grew ever higher and ultimately erupted into rioting on the streets

of Detroit. On July 26, 1967, more than 12 square miles of Detroit were on fire. The Michigan Guard was mobilized to restore order and protect the safety of Detroit residents. During the Detroit riot, there were 42 deaths, including one Michigan Guard Soldier, CPL Larry L. Post.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Michigan Guard had to protect its residents from Mother Nature. The Guard responded to several incidents of statewide flooding, snowstorms and forest fires. It wasn't until Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm that the Michigan Soldiers would face a human foe again.

Present contributions

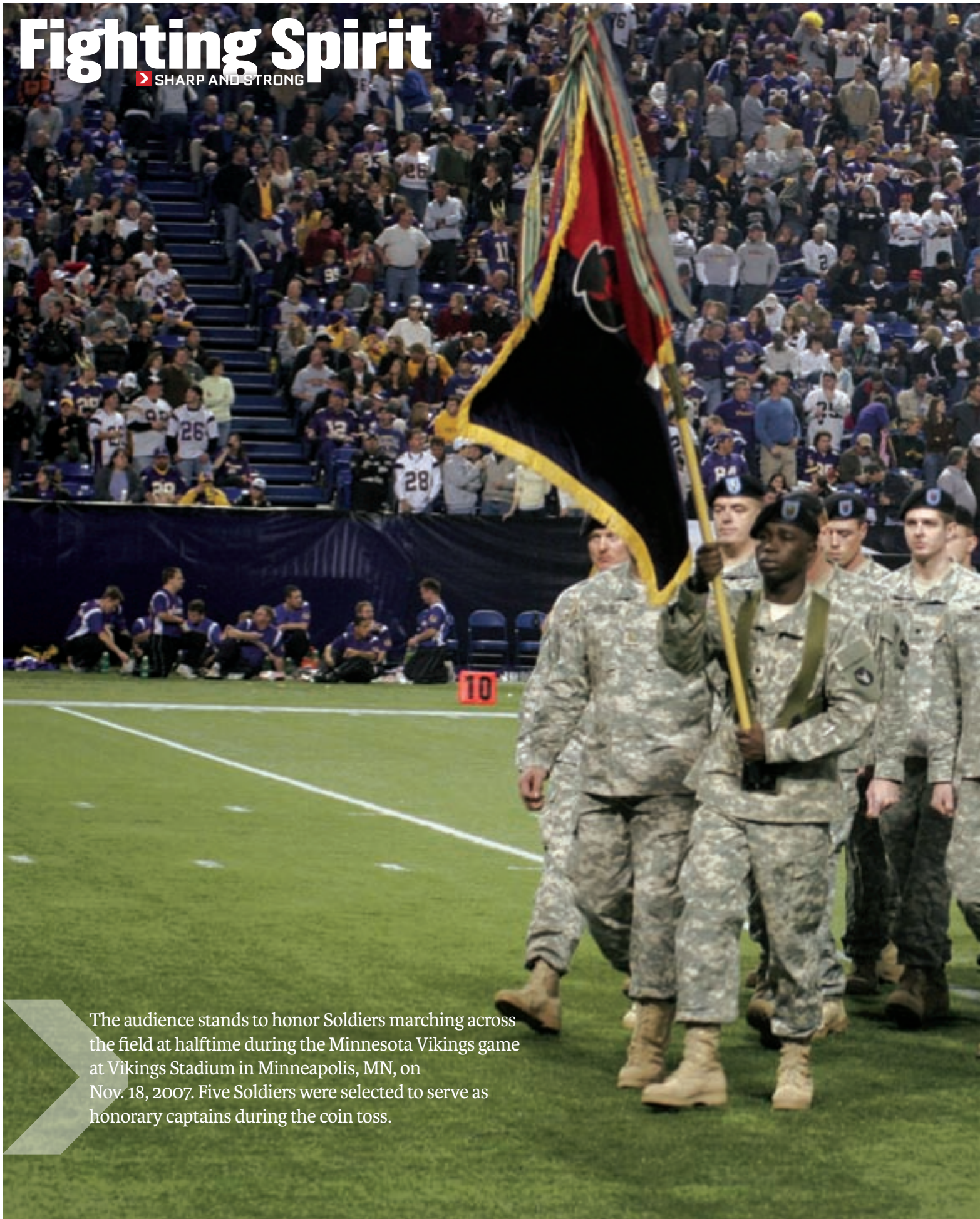
Thirteen units of the Michigan National Guard served in Desert Shield and Desert Storm: the 1009th Transportation Detachment from Lansing; 460th Service and Support Company from Midland; 1461st Transportation Company from Jackson; 1073rd Maintenance Company from Greenville; 1439th Engineer Detachment from Grayling; 1440th Engineer Detachment from Grayling; 207th Evacuation Hospital from Detroit; 745th Ordnance Detachment from Grayling, Headquarters; 210th MP Battalion from Detroit, Headquarters; 146th MP Battalion from Owosso; 144th MP Company from Owosso; 1776th MP Company from Detroit; and the 1072nd Maintenance Company from Sturgis, Coldwater and Lansing.

The world stood still on Sept. 11, 2001, but the MIARNG did not. Within hours of the terrorist attack on America, Michigan aircraft patrolled over the state and ground forces mobilized to protect key areas around the state. In the following days, Michigan Soldiers patrolled airports and protected bridges and other vulnerable areas.

The Wolverine Guard has helped liberate both Afghanistan and Iraq. The men and women of the Michigan Guard have been there since the beginning of hostilities. Michigan's Joint Force headquarters served in Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom and the 144th Military Police Company, Company A of the 182nd Field Artillery and the HHD of the 177th Military Police Brigade have served in Iraq. The Wolverines of the MIARNG continue to defend their state, as well as their country, as they have for 300 years. **GX**

Fighting Spirit

▶ SHARP AND STRONG



The audience stands to honor Soldiers marching across the field at halftime during the Minnesota Vikings game at Vikings Stadium in Minneapolis, MN, on Nov. 18, 2007. Five Soldiers were selected to serve as honorary captains during the coin toss.



SPORTS

Get to know the National Guard's newest driver of car No. 88, Dale Earnhardt Jr., as he takes on NASCAR.

65

COMBATIVES

Learn Guard defense moves that will prepare you for hand-to-hand combat.

69

FITNESS

Ready to shape up for the new year? SGT Ken challenges you to ramp up your workout plan.

70

GEAR

Learn about Sabre rifles, tourniquets and the latest game in the "Call of Duty" series.

75

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[DALE JR.]

SOLDIER APPROVED

>> NATIONAL GUARD'S
NEWEST NASCAR
DRIVER TALKS TO GX
ABOUT PATRIOTISM,
RACING AND PROMOT-
ING HIS NEW SPONSOR

By SPC Miko Holloran

“Breathe.” That was the first word that went racing through my head. “Relax” came in a close second. I twisted and turned in my swivel chair, with my body and mind running on pure adrenaline and nervousness.



I was about to get a call from one of the greatest NASCAR drivers of all time.

The phone rings; I tell my left hand to aim for the receiver, and I give it a tight squeeze. I raise it to my ear, and after my greeting, a gentleman tells me, “Miko, I’ve got Dale Jr. right here, waiting to talk to you.”

I had only been given 10 minutes with Dale Earnhardt Jr., so I start shooting off the big questions immediately.

We begin to discuss his new sponsor: Uncle Sam.

Before, Dale Jr. tried to promote and sell all the beer he could—but pushing beer is much different than promoting the National Guard. “Now we’re giving Americans awareness of the National Guard,” Dale Jr. says. “It’s a completely different demographic. It’ll be a lot easier, I think, because there are so many ways we can showcase the National Guard.”

Switching lanes

This driver has found himself running into some controversy about the change of his number from eight to 88, but he says he’s optimistic about the switch.

“I’m really split down the middle between missing everything that I was used to, then to getting a new toy,” he says. “Everything that is coming next year is new and different. It’s sort of like rearranging your furniture in your living room. It’s different; it’s a change of pace, and it’s something to look forward to when you come home from work.

“I’m going to miss a lot of things I became accustomed to and was used to, but for the most part—my number goes in with this—the change of pace is going to be nice, and I think it’s going to



be fun to build from that and to be able to create something and start from scratch.”

But with the backlash from his fans about all of the new changes, what kind of criticism has there been about the new sponsor?

“There has been no negative feedback,” Dale Jr. reports. “The majority of Americans are behind the military in what [it is] trying to accomplish. It’s a great sponsor to have, and I think a lot of the fans will appreciate it, especially because [of] the times we’re going through now.”

With the new season approaching, Dale Jr. is excited to race at his favorite track: the legendary Daytona. Daytona not only features a great race, it also attracts a show of movie stars and other

celebrities looking for a good time.

“The area around Daytona is really nice,” he explains. “It’s the grandfather racetrack on the circuit; it has a lot of history, and we run the biggest race of the season there. It’s a fun racetrack to race on, but I think it’s just because you get a certain feeling inside that you don’t get from any other racetrack. You know you’re at the biggest deal. You’re on the largest stage, and it’s very motivating and provokes a very good feeling.”

Committed to excellence

Dale Jr. has set himself apart from other drivers in the world of NASCAR. He’s the only third-generation NASCAR champion. He earned this accomplishment after winning the 1998 and 1999 Busch Series titles. With a family history of race-car drivers, the military didn’t seem like the next choice in sponsorship.



“I can’t ever say that I thought about joining the military,” Dale Jr. says. “But I did go to military school. I thought I had an idea of what military service would be like.”

But Dale Jr. recently realized that he had only scratched the surface of what the service means.

“There is the same commitment,” he explains. “But after working with the Navy and now the National Guard, I’ve really gotten a crash course over the past few years of what the true commitment is. I’ve got a better idea of what it’s like to be devoted to one thing.”

Participating in a sport that practically screams red, white and blue, Dale Jr. sees himself as a patriot.

“There is a sense of pride in your country, in where you’re coming from. I feel that being a patriot is as simple as being proud of the United States,” he says. “I think serving in the military is the highest form of that. I don’t always agree with my politicians, but for the most part, I want the same thing for this country that everyone else wants. I’m here for the same reasons. I’m proud of the United States.”

“There is a sense of pride in your individual country, in where you’re coming from. I feel that being a patriot is as simple as being proud of the United States. I think serving in the military is the highest form of that.”

Wavin’ the flag

With a love for both the stars and stripes and the checkered flag pumping through his veins, Dale Jr. is excited about the National Guard sponsorship.

“It’s a good thing; it’s really going to be fun,” he says. “It’s always nice when you can go to work, and you’re not doing the same thing every day.”

A frequent guest on the silver screen and in music videos, Dale Jr. says he doesn’t have any guest appearances planned for the near future, but he’ll be in Daytona in January testing cars.

“No, no movies, no music videos on tap for now,” he says with a chuckle.

When I realized that I had gone over the allotted time, I quickly thanked him and wished him good luck for the 2008 season.

“Well, thank you, ma’am. Have a good day!” he replied.

There you have it. Hard-working, honest and most definitely a daredevil, Dale Jr. still has manners. Dale Jr. is definitely Soldier-approved. **EX**

Defending Champs

MISSOURI GUARD MEMBERS EARN BACK-TO-BACK FIRST-PLACE TITLE AT ARMY TEN-MILER

By Regina Turner, Unit PA Representative, MOARNG

MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD Soldiers succeeded in defending their title as the first-place National Guard Mixed Team participants in the Army's 23rd annual premier running event, the Army Ten-Miler, on Oct. 7.

Despite the heat and humidity, the top four Missouri Militia team finishers completed the Army Ten-Miler with a combined time of 4:51:03, achieving first place for a second time.

Missouri Militia mixed team members participating in America's largest 10-mile running event included CWO Mitch Simpson (team captain), CWO Roger Fillmer, SFC Kannon John, SSG Michelle Elliott and SSG Mark Turner.

CWO Simpson is a member of Joint Force Headquarters in Jefferson City. He has served in the Guard for 22 years and is currently the Telecom Manager. This was his sixth time participating in the Army Ten-

Miler. He maintained a 7:21 pace, finishing the race in 1:13:30. In addition to running, he is the team captain of the Missouri National Guard Biathlon team and a member of the Jefferson City Cycling Club. He is the father of two girls, Jessica and Brooke.

CWO Fillmer is the senior electronics and armament repair branch chief with the 1107th Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot in Springfield. He has been a member of the Guard for 36 years. Participating in the Army Ten-Miler for the fourth time resulted in a 7:55 pace and an overall time of 1:19:11. CWO Fillmer has been participating in long-distance running events for the past 12 years. His year's running highlights have included the Lincoln Marathon and the Bataan Memorial Death March Marathon. CWO Fillmer resides in Marshfield with his wife, Nedra. They have two sons, Greg and Brent.

SFC John serves as the battalion supply sergeant for 203rd Engineer Battalion in Joplin. He has been a member of the Guard for 17 years. This was his third year competing in the Army Ten-Miler. He finished with a 7:43 pace and an overall time of 1:17:10. His previous long-distance running events include the Baghdad Army Ten-Miler and the Bataan Memorial Death March Marathon. SFC John and his wife, Angela, live in Joplin with children, Matthew and Morgan.

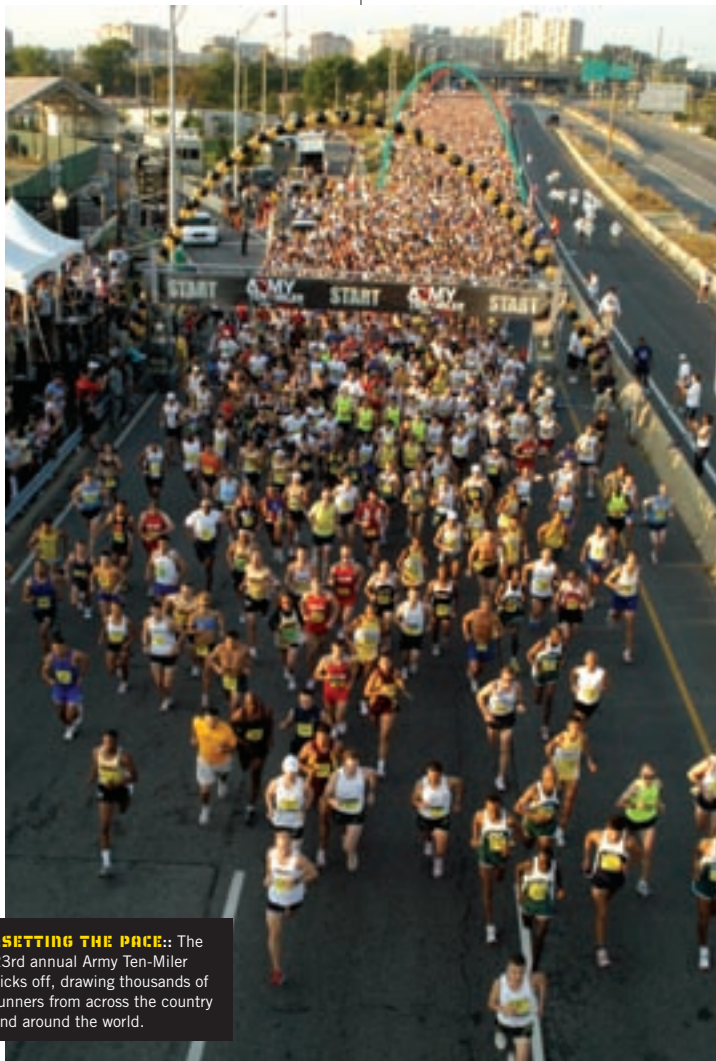
SSG Elliott is a member of the 1107th Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot in Springfield. She serves as the senior Apache section sergeant. Military service has included two years with the Army Reserves and five years in the Army National Guard. She participated in the Army Ten-Miler for the second

>> ABOUT THE 2007 ARMY TEN-MILER

The 2007 Army Ten-Miler registered 26,000 runners in a record 42 days, and about 17,600 participated in the event. Participants represented 50 states and 12 countries. Opening ceremonies included the U.S. Army Golden Knights skydiving team and the Canadian SkyHawks parachute demonstration team. The race started and finished at the Pentagon, passing national landmarks including the Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument and Capitol. Civilian participants were estimated at 68 percent; the remaining 32 percent were military service members. Thirty military amputees, members of the Missing Parts in Action team, participated in the event, including LT Ivan Castro. LT Castro lost his right eye during a mortar attack and was blinded in his left eye; he ran tethered to his training partner and completed the race in 1:25. Shadow runs of the event were held at Camp Taji, Al Asad and Camp Victory, Iraq.

time with a 7:23 pace and an overall time of 1:13:54. As a member of the National Guard Marathon Team and Team Inertia, she participates in numerous long-distance running events throughout the year. She lives in Knob Noster with children, Devon and Hallie.

SSG Turner serves as supply sergeant for the 1107th Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot in Springfield. His military service includes four years in the Army and seven years in the Army National Guard. This is his third year participating in the Army Ten-Miler. He maintained a 6:39 pace, completing the course in 1:06:30. In addition to participating in several 10K races throughout the year, he enjoys cycling and is a member of the Ozark Cycling Club. SSG Turner resides in Rogersville with his wife, Regina, and children, Sesily and Alexis. **GX**



SETTING THE PACE: The 23rd annual Army Ten-Miler kicks off, drawing thousands of runners from across the country and around the world.

SHAPING UP FOR COMBAT

Courtesy of CATC

FIRST AND FOREMOST, I want to thank my close friend SFC Donnie Moseley for giving me and SGT De La O the opportunity to write this article while SFC Moseley is out doing what Soldiers do best. To SFC Moseley, the rest of our CATC brothers and all the warriors deployed around the globe, we wish you good hunting, Godspeed and a safe return home. That being said, let's get down to training.

This month I'd like to talk about the physical training side of combatives. Does the biggest guy always win the fight? The answer is "no," and this is seen in the early days of the UFC. As the sport of mixed martial arts has progressed, it's the well-rounded fighter who is standing with his hand raised in victory at the end of the fight. The same should be considered when working out. If all I do is toss iron around in the weight room, I may not have the endurance I need to fight off multiple threats if I'm not working my cardio. If I'm concentrating too much on my bench muscle, I also run the risk of not being flexible enough to win a fight if it goes to the ground, and I find myself on my back. Here are more ways to shape up:

- Kettlebells are an excellent way to build not only your core body strength but also your cardio. A kettlebell is simply a cannon ball with a handle. The great thing about working with kettlebells is they provide a full body workout with practically any exercise. Most kettlebell workouts at some point work all of the body's major muscle groups. To avoid boredom in the weight room, kettlebell workouts are really only limited to the imagination. Though kettlebells give us a powerful, well-rounded weight workout to include our cardio system, it doesn't complete us.

- Many of us run a couple miles to build our cardiovascular strength. Running the same pace and the same distance a few times a week isn't necessarily going to improve your cardio. One way to do that is to change your running workout. Cycle your workout with distance running, sprints and, of course, jumping rope. Even by changing your cardio workout on a regular basis, there's nothing like rolling hard for an extended period of time over and over to build that "breath" needed for a long fight. After the kettlebell workouts and miles of sprints we run, there is one workout that is often overlooked.

- Stretching is necessary for the body, especially in the world of fighting. Eddie Bravo, who ties his opponents up in the rubber guard, exemplifies how important stretching is. A good stretching regimen will not only help prevent injury, but also build the dexterity needed to submit or escape from your opponent in seemingly impossible positions. Talk to your training partners and find out what kind of workouts they use. Soon enough, you'll be well on your way to becoming that perfect package: the well-rounded fighter. Let's roll! **GX**

X-GUARD SWEEP TO KNEE BAR



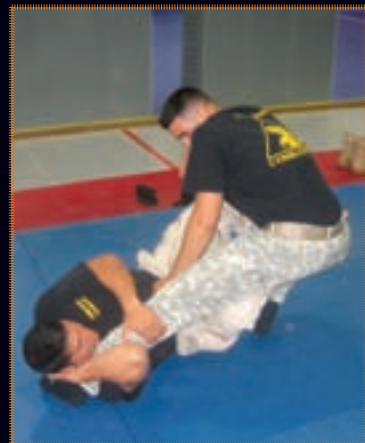
STEP 1 If I find myself on my back with my opponent standing above me, I can control him by using the X Guard.



STEP 2 To set up the X Guard, I shoot one arm between my opponent's legs, trapping the leg by wrapping my arm around his leg and grasping the back of my head. I secure the other leg by placing one foot under his knee and the other hooking his hip with my legs, forming an "X" to prevent escape.



STEP 3 With both legs secured, I stretch my body out, taking my opponent off balance.



STEP 4 As I stretch my body to take my opponent off balance, I use my momentum to push him back for the sweep. After taking my opponent down, I can immediately move into a dominant body position.



STEP 5 Another option is to apply the knee bar by maintaining control of my opponent's trapped leg. I drape my leg over my opponent's leg and pinch my knees together preventing escape. To finish, I shoot my hips into my opponent's knee, stretching my body out while keeping my opponent's leg secured close to my body.



REVEILLE: SSG Ken Weichert leads Tennessee National Guard Soldiers through morning physical training.

OPERATION FRESH START

By SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

SSG Ken Weichert,

How is everything going? I have to tell you that we [my unit] just got back from Iraq. The entire advanced party did your "Operation Living Fit" DVD series before we left. We could see a big difference, and we all improved our PT scores. That's an awesome program!!

The biggest reason I'm writing is after I [returned from Iraq] the high school weight [training] coach asked if I would be interested in helping him coach. He does all the weight training, and I do the endurance training. I started with the "Living Fit" program and put in some other things like stair steps, lunges, 20-foot side shuffle, and we do laps in the gym with variations of hopping and jumping rope. But I think that teenagers may get bored with the same routine. I was wondering if you had any other suggestions [of] what we can do? Any suggestions would be greatly appreciated!

Looking forward to hearing from you and your wife.

Stay strong,
SSG Gregg Wolff

SSG Wolff,

Hello! It is great to hear from you! You are right about the need to provide challenging and exciting programming in order to prevent boredom. We have found that multi-station fitness circuits are a great way to challenge the newest as well as the most advanced students. In fact, our START Fitness™ studio in San Francisco performs fitness circuits twice each week.

A typical week looks like this:

- Monday: "Operation Living Fit" indoor workout
- Tuesday: Outdoor long-distance running followed by abdominal exercises
- Wednesday: Indoor multi-station fitness circuit
- Thursday: Outdoor sprints and stairs day, followed by abdominal exercises
- Friday: Indoor and outdoor multi-station fitness circuit

This circuit should serve as a fresh start to a healthier lifestyle and help combat boredom! Please refer to the articles in issues 4.10 and 4.11 of GX for more information about weight training and body weight circuit training.

We hope your team enjoys the fresh material! Keep up the great work, SSG!

HOOAH!

SSG Ken and Stephanie Weichert

“The most effective way to cope with change is to help create it.”

—Anonymous

WARM-UP PHASE

Note: If you're leading group exercises, perform warm-up phase prior to dividing up groups into smaller teams.

“Be always at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let each year find you a better man.”

—Benjamin Franklin

- 1. Aerobics (3 Minutes):** Includes running in place; side straddle hops, jumping jacks and high steps/knees.
- 2. Push-ups (1 Minute):** The number you do depends on your fitness level and experience. Here's a quick guide:
 - Basic: 1–10 repetitions
 - Intermediate: 11–20 repetitions
 - Advanced: 21–30 repetitions
- 3. Aerobics (4 Minutes):** See the options above.
- 4. Stretching (4 Minutes):** See cool-down exercises for examples.

MUSCLE TARGET AND SUMMIT PHASES

Note: Some of these exercise instructions are included in past issues. Please go to GXonline.com and visit "Past Issues" in "START Fitness™" for any exercise instructions not listed in this issue.

“Here is a chance to change your life. Change your life by changing your body!”

—SSG Ken Weichert

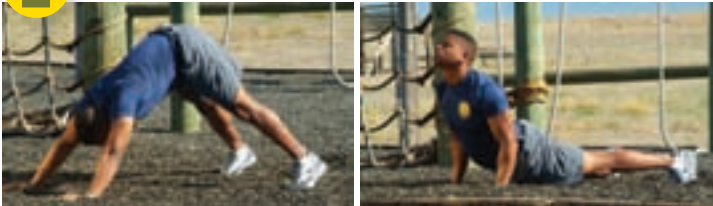
1 Medicine ball triceps push-ups or close-grip push-ups



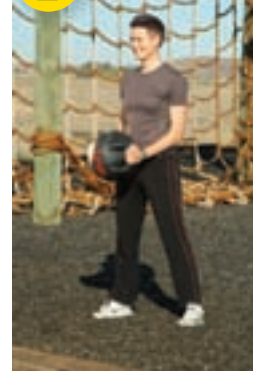
5 Medicine ball Russian twists



2 Dive-bomber push-ups



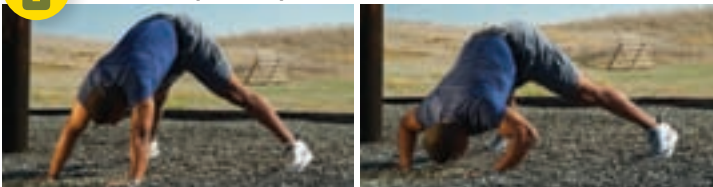
6 Medicine ball scoop squats



- Instructions for medicine ball scoop squats:**
- Stand with your feet a shoulder width apart.
 - Hold a medium heavy medicine ball or dumbbell in front of your abdomen with arms straight and elbows slightly bent.
 - Lower your body by bending your knees. Stop when your knees are at 90 degree angles or before you lose the natural arch of your back.
 - Stand up by contracting your gluteus muscles and legs while stabilizing your body with a strong torso. Do not lock your knees.
 - Repeat steps 3–4 until you have reached your goal.
- Breathing tip:** Inhale through your nose while lowering your body and exhale through your mouth while standing up.
- Warning:** Never allow your knees to exceed your toe line. Prevent this by bringing your rear end back while lowering your body.



3 Shoulder push-ups



4 Dragging knee thrusts in the plank



“The only way of finding the limits of the possible is by going beyond them into the impossible.”

—Arthur C. Clarke

7 Medicine ball wall squat



Hold the squat position until you have reached your goal or until you lose proper form.

8 "T" Push-ups with dumbbells



The "T" push-up variation offers all of the benefits of the standard push-up, plus the added benefit of training for balance and coordination.

Instructions for the "T" push-up:

- Begin the exercise in a standard push-up position with a light set of dumbbells.
- Lower your body by bending both elbows while maintaining a neutral spine, tilting your chin up slightly and looking forward.
Tip: Looking forward improves posture and opens the airway to allow for better breathing.
- Push away from the ground by extending your arms, tighten your abdominal muscles, balance on your right side, raise your left arm and point your knuckles upward until your body forms a leaning "T."
Tip: Much like a side plank, this requires stabilization through the shoulder girdle and spine.
- Hold the "T" position for a couple of seconds before returning to the start position. Keep a wide arc on the way down. Perform the actions on the other side of your body.
- Repeat steps 2-4 until you have reached your goal.
Alteration note: Another way to perform this exercise is to repeat the actions on one side before performing the actions for the other side.
Breathing tip: Inhale through your nose while lowering your body and exhale through your mouth while pushing away from the ground.

9 Plank pose on forearms



10 Jumping rope or running for 90 seconds

Stamina Stopwatch

Each station should be performed for 90 seconds. Rotation time between stations should not exceed 15 seconds. Here's a guide to keep your times in check:

Quick Fix: 1 full set = approximately 15 minutes

Full Metal Jacket: 2 full sets = approximately 30 minutes

Max Load: 3 full sets = approximately 45 minutes

"Live up to the best that is in you: Live noble lives, as you all may, in whatever condition you find yourselves."

—Henry W. Longfellow

OPERATION FINDING FLEXIBILITY™

Keep Reaching:

Staff Sergeant Ken Weichert leads Tennessee National Guard Soldiers through a series of stretching exercises.



PHOTO BY EVAN BAINES

COOL-DOWN PHASE

Note: Each stretching exercise should be performed for 30 seconds.

1 Gluteus stretch



"The tree that is unbending is easily broken."

2 Trunk stretch



"Thus, an Army without flexibility never wins a battle."

—Lao Tzu

PHOTOS BY JONATHAN MILLER

“Stay committed to your workouts,
and stay flexible in your approach!”

—SSG Ken Weichert

3 Straddle stretch



Final fitness formula:

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:

WARM-UP PHASE:

12 MINUTES

MUSCLE TARGET AND SUMMIT PHASES:

15, 30, 45 MINUTES

COOL-DOWN PHASE:

6 MINUTES

START Fitness™ is a group exercise and hiking business based in San Francisco where Soldiers and civilians can experience the thrill of military-style drills performed in cadence or with music. START Fitness™ now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors. We encourage you to send your questions or requests for additional information to askthetrainer@STARTfitness.com. You can experience our workouts at home with our “Operation Living Fit™” DVD series available on sale at www.STARTfitness.com or www.american-soldier.com/skwoor.html.



4 Standing quad stretch



5 Hamstring stretch



Perform this exercise twice.

6 Sidebends



SSG KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT



A six-time Soldier of the year and veteran of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, SSG Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie, a certified personal trainer, run the START fitness program, a San Francisco-based group exercise and hiking business that delivers military-inspired, boot-camp style workouts to Soldiers and civilians. The program now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors.

Always seek the advice and guidance of a qualified health provider with any questions or concerns you may have prior to commencing a fitness program. This article should not be relied on or substituted for professional medical diagnosis or treatment. The exercises presented are for suggestion only. Participate at your own risk. Stop if you feel faint or shortness of breath.

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Sabre Defence Industries sets itself apart in the assault rifle market by manufacturing critical components of its weapons in-house.

Ready, Aim, Shoot

DAY AT THE RANGE PROVES CONSISTENCY OF SABRE DEFENCE'S ASSAULT RIFLES

By Jason West

It's good to be part of a team. In this case, I'm referring to the fact that *GX* is published by a company called Iostudio, which has a wide range of clients. One day, as I was wandering through the office, I noticed a designer working with a photo of a particularly cool looking rifle.

I paused to inquire, "Whatcha got there?"

"New rifle from Sabre Defence," the designer says. "I'm working on their catalog for next year." I whistled admiringly, "I'd love to get my hands on that."

"Why don't you call David? I'm sure he'd be happy to take you to the range."

What followed was a lot of excited whooping and hollering and a phone call to David Power, sales and marketing director for Sabre Defence.

Sabre Defence Industries is an international company that manufactures gun barrels (.50 caliber, 7.62 mm minigun and others) for the U.S. military as well as top grade assault rifles (AR) for law enforcement and civilian use. Sabre sets itself apart in the AR market by manufacturing the

critical components of its weapons in-house, allowing for tighter tolerances, which result in a more consistent, reliable and accurate weapon. Make no mistake, Sabre rifles aren't cheap, but you get what you pay for.

It was a rainy day at the range, but our spirits were still high as David broke out two new additions to the Sabre line of products: the Competition Extreme and the PMR (Precision Marksman Rifle). The two weapons had just been assembled that morning—there's nothing like that new rifle smell. (Okay, so they don't *really* have a smell, but they should!)

First up was the PMR. Now this was a sweet piece of hardware: It ships with an attached bipod, tactical scope and Magpul PRS stock. It's lighter than most precision rifles, but Sabre's specially designed Gill-Brake keeps barrel rise to a minimum, allowing for increased consistency during rapid fire. Out of the box, it needed only a minimum of adjusting to

get it sighted in. I settled in beside the weapon and prepared to take some shots.

Now just to clear up any misapprehensions: I grew up shooting, I love shooting, but I'm pretty bad at it. I've always been more of a "spray and pray" kind of guy—too much time in video games, I suppose. I sighted in on a "woodchuck" target (about 4 by 8 inches) at 50 yards. With that scope, it looked like the varmint was sitting on the end of the rifle. All 14 rounds went straight into the little critter. I shook my head; it was clearly the weapon, not the shooter. David told me to take some shots at the same-sized critter at 100 yards. I laughed. Without the optics, I could barely



The PMR (Precision Marksman Rifle) ships with an attached bipod, tactical scope and Magpul PRS stock.

see the thing at that distance. The thought of hitting is was a joke. Twelve of 14 rounds hit him, including one perfect bull. All I can say about the PMR is if it can let a joker like me shoot like that, I can only imagine what it's capable of in the hands of professionals.

Next up was the Competition Extreme (CE). Picking up this rifle, I could truly feel the difference that Sabre's exacting standards produce.



The CE comes with mounted holographic sites and iron sights mounted at a 45-degree angle.

I've fired the M-4 and M-16 and a lot of civilian versions of those weapons but, other than the few times I've handled custom-built competition rifles, this was the most solid, tight-feeling AR I had ever used. You truly can feel the difference in the quality of the materials when you handle these weapons. When

I commented on what a pleasure it was to handle, David said that was the company's goal "to produce precision made, custom-built rifles in a production environment. Off the shelf, it's a complete package; all you have to do is zero the sites."

The CE comes with mounted holographic sites (which, again, needed only the slightest adjustment to sight in), and mounted at about a 45-degree angle from the holographic sites were traditional iron sites. By simply lifting your arm, David explained, you could roll smoothly from the holographic to the iron sites and back. I have a hard enough time with one set of sites, so the thought of trying to change sites mid-shoot sounded like a nightmare. But the year and a half that Sabre spent tweaking on the design had paid off. With only a minute's practice, the motion was smooth and comfortable. Reacquiring the target after the move was remarkably easy. I have to confess, I'm still not entirely sure why I would want to do this; apparently it's related to competition shooting, but as usual, I accept that people far more qualified than I am have come up with something that's just too clever for me to grasp.

All too soon our time was up, and I stared longingly as David put the weapons away. If, like me, you'd love to lay your hands on one of these ballistic masterpieces, you'd better start saving. The CE retails for around \$2,500, and the PMR comes in at a hefty \$3,599, but they

are worth every penny. (Sabre does offer a full line of products in a wide range of prices—all of them top-notch.) Or they would be if I could scrape together that many pennies, but as Ferris Bueller says, "It is sooooo choice. If you have the means I highly recommend picking one up." **GX**

When Seconds Count

BLACKHAWK INTERNAL TOURNIQUET SYSTEM TENDS TO WOUNDED SOLDIERS IN RECORD TIME

By the Brothers West

EVERY SO OFTEN we come across an idea so simple, yet so revolutionary, that our only response is: "Wow, how come no one thought of this before?" In September, we got a chance to take a look at the prototype of just such an invention: the Blackhawk I.T.S., or Internal Tourniquet System.

The brainchild of Dr. Keith Rose, the I.T.S. is essentially a

shirt or pair of pants with four integrated tourniquets. Sounds pretty simple, right? Well, in essence, it is. However, Blackhawk didn't stop there. They've made this system so easy to use that an injured Soldier or his buddy could apply a tourniquet to a wounded limb within seconds.

A tourniquet is a simple device that compresses the arteries of



The brainchild of Dr. Keith Rose, the [Blackhawk] I.T.S. is essentially a shirt or pair of pants with four integrated tourniquets.

an injured limb in order to stop bleeding. It consists of a flexible wrap tightened around the limb by means of a windlass (essentially a stick) until bleeding stops. For many years, tourniquets have been an indispensable piece of a Soldier's kit and have saved countless lives.

This is especially true on today's battlefield. According to Dr. Rose, "The majority of preventable deaths [on the battlefield] come from loss of blood resulting from leg and arm wounds that are not protected by body armor. Sixty percent of preventable combat deaths are from extremity bleeding and 50 to 70 percent of all combat injuries are extremity wounds."

The problem is that tourniquets, by their nature, are difficult to use. First they must be located, wrapped around the injured limb, tightened and then secured. This seemingly simple process becomes a nightmare when under fire or

confined in the cramped conditions of a military vehicle.

The I.T.S. solves many of these problems by integrating the tourniquets into the clothing the Soldier wears. Invisible until needed, the windlass itself is a clever piece of engineering that can be easily tightened and locked in place with one hand. It has the additional advantage of being tough enough to be used again and again, allowing Soldiers to train with this equipment until its use is committed to muscle memory. This is a huge advantage over current designs that must be discarded after each use.

Mike Noell, President and CEO of Blackhawk, told us, "At Blackhawk, we get up every morning dedicated to using our resources to help save lives. When medics and doctors who deal with combat and tactical medical needs see the system, they at once understand the immediate lifesaving potential."

We certainly did. The elder brother West has insisted on a full set of I.T.S. clothing before his next overseas assignment.

We haven't gotten our hands on a production model yet, but when we do, you can be sure it'll be put through its paces, and we'll bring you the full report. **GX**

>> A PIECE OF HISTORY

TOURNIQUETS IN AND OF THEMSELVES ARE NOTHING NEW. SIMILAR DEVICES HAVE BEEN USED AS FAR BACK AS ANCIENT GREECE AND ROME. THE TOURNIQUET AS WE KNOW IT TODAY WAS CREATED BY FRENCH SURGEON LOUIS PETIT IN 1718. PETIT USED CLOTH BANDAGES AND A SCREW FOR THE FIRST TOURNIQUET, WHICH HE NAMED AFTER THE FRENCH VERB *TOURNER* MEANING "TO TURN."

Get Ready for Battle

INTENSE. FUN. SATISFYING. "CALL OF DUTY 4: MODERN WARFARE" IS DEFINITELY A GOOD TIME.

By *Dustin McNeal*



CPT Tim and I sat down with the game and a bit of food at my place because the Xbox 360 at the office had crapped out. I believe we called it a night sometime after 1 a.m., with the game's campaign mostly completed. The next day at work it seemed like the only correspondence between the two of us was to ask each other when we were getting back together for more fruit-smashing action. This game is addictive, folks.

"Call of Duty 4: Modern Warfare" (COD4), developed by Infinity Ward and published by Activision, is the first game in the series to veer away from the WWII genre. I'm sure veterans of the series were skeptical of the move; however, I applaud the developer on this decision. A great WWII game is always fun, but it seems the bandwagon is getting full. Infinity Ward's venture into "Modern Warfare" is a successful one—and who knows? If it chooses to go back to WWII in the future, at least this was a breath of fresh air.

COD4 is filled with modern environments, weapons, gear, situations and dangers. The weapons and gear are detailed and accurate in their depictions. The environments are simply stunning. From the first level, you will appreciate the time the developers took to immerse you into the hellish parallels of warfare. Bravo, Infinity Ward. And all of this looks amazing in high-definition.

The rest of the package comes complete with intense sound, incredible lighting effects and remarkably believable character models. The story itself is one of the best in a first-person shooter (FPS) to date. You start as SGT John "Soap" MacTavish, the new guy for 22 SAS Regiment. After the quick introductory level, you're thrown into a mission, taking out baddies and securing sensitive intelligence on an Estonian cargo ship in the Bering Strait. Right after the air assault-like insertion onto the bow of the ship, you and your homeboys hose everyone in the bridge through the windows.

It was at that point I knew—oh, it's on!

Your teammates are A-class snake-eaters: They throw flash-bangs, waste tingos asleep in their bunks and call in support from the Black Hawk and its on-board M-134 minigun (yeah, it's sweet).

You finish out the rest of the level in an all-out assault on the rest of the crew, securing the intelligence and easily skipping, humming and whistling off the ship. Yeah, right.

Right about the time you secure the intelligence, a couple of MiGs engage the ship with missiles, and you're chaotically put in a mad dash to make it off the quickly sinking ship.

Oh, and just a tip: Don't forget which button makes you jump. We made it onto the deck, saw the extraction helicopter and got a nice running start, only to plummet to the waves below. CPT Tim didn't think it was a high-speed way to end such an intense opening level. To my defense, a little note appeared on screen: "Nobody makes the first jump." We tried the jump again, safely made it aboard, and the opening credits started to run.



For the rest of the game you're shot around Eastern Europe and the Middle East as you uncover new intelligence and pursue enemy targets, desperately working to avoid a nuclear apocalypse. Your character will swap identities between the SAS Soldier you started the game as, SGT Paul

Jackson of 1st Force Recon, U.S. Marine Corps and a couple of supporting characters. I won't ruin all the surprises that COD4 throws your way, but one level puts you behind the controls of an AC-130 gunship to provide support for a ground team. One word: Wow. This was one of my and CPT Tim's favorite parts of the game. Your screen turns into a targeting monitor that looks exactly like the real thing. The AC-130's entire arsenal is under your control, and as overkill as it may seem, using the 105 mm M-102 howitzer as an anti-personnel round is extremely satisfying!

Not to mention the in-game dialogue from others in the aircraft, like: "I see lots of bits and pieces down there," and "Ka-boom!"

Multiplayer is where there's going to be the most replay value. This level includes a structured ranking/class-based system, where new weapons and their customization become available the more you play. You can also add special attributes to your Soldiers like added health or bullets with more stopping power. One very cool or very annoying (depending on which team you're on) addition to multiplayer is being rewarded air support for killing sprees. Make five enemy kills without dying, and you can call in jets for an airstrike on a certain location. Survive long enough to make the spree's seven kills, and you're rewarded by being allowed to call on an AH-1 Cobra for air support. The helicopter shows no mercy and can have the other team scrambling for cover.

Overall, COD4 is an absolute blast. It's a gritty, chaotic rush that had both CPT Tim and myself screaming, "Get some! Get some!" and, at other times, "What just happened?!" Have fun, and you just might run into us online. I give it a 9.5 out of 10. **GX**

IT'S A GRITTY, CHAOTIC RUSH THAT HAD BOTH CPT TIM AND MYSELF SCREAMING, "GET SOME! GET SOME!" AND, AT OTHER TIMES, "WHAT JUST HAPPENED?!"

A little COMFORT

Mikayla Vandergriff brings joy to families of deployed Soldiers with her handmade dolls

BY MICHELLE KEY

PHOTOGRAPHY
BY CHRIS CUMMINS





Before Girl Scouts and in between playing with her friends, 9-year-old Mikayla Vandergriff of Windsor, MO, is providing comfort to military children enduring the deployment of a parent. Mikayla's dad, SFC James Vandergriff, is currently deployed to Iraq with the Missouri National Guard's 735th Force Provider Company, based in De Soto. When Mikayla's mother, Melissa, saw how much she missed her father, she decided to surprise her with a doll.

"Mikayla was upset about Jim being gone," Melissa says. "I saw the idea for a doll on a Web site, so I had my friend Elizabeth Sielestad help me make a doll for Mikayla and her brother James. I wasn't sure how the dolls would turn out, but I was hoping it would work.

"Mikayla takes that doll everywhere," Melissa says. "She takes it to school and keeps it in her backpack."

"I take it wherever I go," Mikayla says. "I really like to just snuggle with it."

An idea is born

Mikayla gets to talk to her father on the phone and even see him using a Web camera. "I love our Webcam," she says, "it's like we're on 'Extreme Makeover.'"

After talking to her father on the phone one day, Mikayla came up with an idea to help other Soldiers' families.

"At first, she wanted to build a house for a family. I think she got the idea from 'Hannah Montana,'" Melissa jokes. "We talked about it and decided to make a few dolls for other Soldiers in Jim's unit."

The original plan was to make five dolls for fellow military kids at no cost to the families. After word spread, Mikayla and her crew had orders for 20 dolls in just two weeks.

"I ordered two dolls, one for my daughter, Paris [who is eight] and one for my son, Parker [who is four]," said SSG Arthur Carrell, who is also deployed with SFC Vandergriff. "They haven't received them yet, but I've sent in my photo. They're really going to be surprised; only my wife knows I've ordered them."

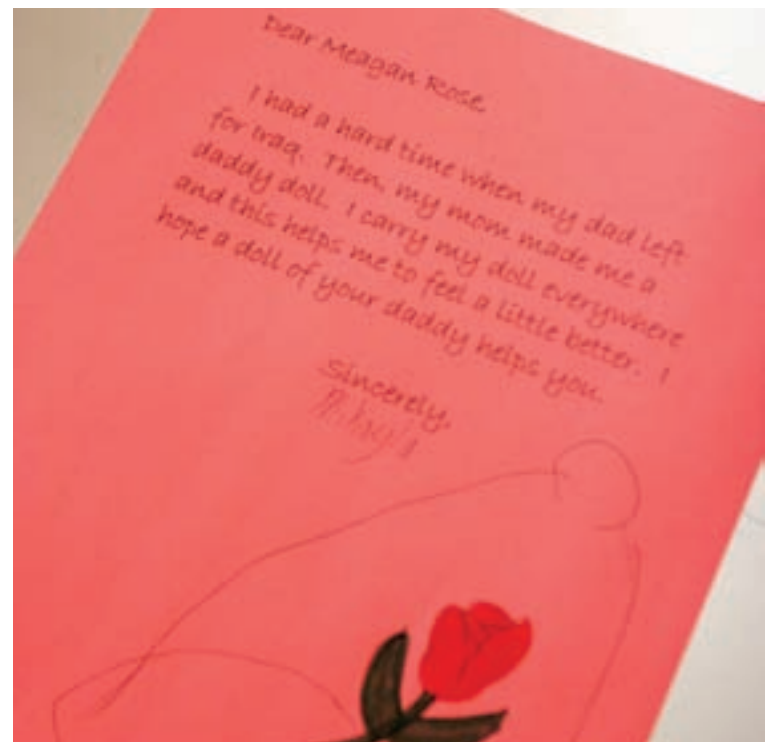
A family project

The whole family gets in on the project. First, deployed Soldiers have their picture taken by SFC Vandergriff.

"When my dad takes the pictures, he takes two — one with their hat on and one with it off," Mikayla explains. "Then, the Soldier chooses the one they like the best."

He sends the image to Melissa who prints and irons the image onto fabric. Grandmother Mary Lou Vandergriff sews the dolls, and then Mikayla and James stuff them.

"I think that James just likes to watch, but he does help a little," Mikayla says. "One day, we were working so hard that he called us elves because we were making toys like Santa's elves. He even made a beard



out of paper towels, so he could pretend to be Santa."

After each doll is finished, Mikayla writes a personal letter to each child, complete with a hand-drawn picture.

"The letters say things like, 'It broke my heart when my dad left. Then, my mom made me a doll. This helped me a little. I thought it might help you, too,'" Mikayla explains. "I draw pictures, too."

While the project started as a small gesture, Mikayla and her crew are still staying busy. SFC Vandergriff has posted fliers around his Forward Operating Base (FOB) and the FOB Commander even ordered two for his children. Mikayla's main focus is Soldiers' families in her father's unit and the Missouri National Guard.


"I just want to tell Mikayla, 'Thank you,'" SSG Carrell says. "This is an extremely honorable gesture, especially for a 9-year-old."

"Mikayla is just a tremendous little girl," Mikayla's dad SFC Vandergriff says. "She has a huge, huge heart. She's just amazing."

Her mom agrees. "Mikayla just wants to save the world," Melissa says. "And I don't think that she will stop anytime soon."

Mikayla reasons for making the dolls are simple but profound.

"I want to help all children," she says. "I just want to make everyone happy, because then the world will be a happy place. The dolls make me happy; I hope they will make other kids happy, too." **GX**



“The dolls
make me happy;
I hope they will
make other kids
happy, too.”

—MIKAYLA VANDERGRIFF,
ON HER PROJECT TO MAKE DOLLS
FOR FAMILIES OF DEPLOYED SOLDIERS

> HOW TO HELP

To volunteer to help with
Mikayla's project or to send
donations, contact
Melissa Vandergriff at:

Email:
mikaylasoldierdolls@yahoo.com

MySpace:
www.MySpace.com/MikaylaSoldierDolls

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

BY DON LOMAX

KUWAIT, A COUNTRY ROUGHLY THE SIZE OF RHODE ISLAND, CAN BE A TRAFFIC NIGHTMARE WITH MORE THAN A MILLION VEHICLES ON THE ROAD. IT CAN BE EXTREMELY DANGEROUS JUST GETTING FROM ONE PLACE TO ANOTHER.



OCTOBER 2, 2007. 2LT PHILLIP COMPEAN, PLATOON LEADER FOR 708TH MEDICAL COMPANY (GROUND AMBULANCE), ILLINOIS NATIONAL GUARD AND CPT JIMM DODD, COMMANDER OF THE 708TH, ACCOMPANIED BY TWO CIVILIANS, WITNESSED AN OUT-OF-CONTROL DRIVER LOSE IT AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED.

THE VEHICLE FLIPPED ON ITS SIDE AND SLAMMED INTO A UTILITY POLE IN FULL VIEW OF THE AMERICANS.



CPT DODD AND 2LT COMPEAN RACED TO THE WRECK AND EXTRACTED THE TWO KUWAITIS TO FURNISH AID WHILE THE AMERICAN CIVILIANS ACTED AS TRANSLATORS.

THE DRIVER HAD BROKEN HANDS AND LEGS, AS DID THE PASSENGER, WHO HAD ALSO SUSTAINED CHEST INJURIES AND WAS UNCONSCIOUS. IMPROVISING WITH SOME PIECES OF PVC PIPE AND SCRAPS OF CLOTH, THEY SPLINTED THE FRACTURED EXTREMITIES AND RENDERED WHAT AID THEY COULD.



2LT COMPEAN AND CPT DODD STAYED WITH THE INJURED INDIVIDUALS UNTIL HELP ARRIVED. "WE MADE DO WITH WHAT WE HAD," 2LT COMPEAN REMARKED. "WE JUST HAPPENED TO BE AT THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME."



AS GOOD SAMARITANS, 2LT COMPEAN AND CPT DODD EXEMPLIFY THE TAKE CHARGE ATTITUDE OF THE HIGHLY SKILLED, HIGHLY MOTIVATED INDIVIDUALS TYPICAL OF THE 708TH AND ALL OTHER NATIONAL GUARD UNITS SERVING IN EVERY THEATER OF OPERATION THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.



Drum roll, please.

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